

Meeting RWQCB Goal and Objectives by the End of 2002

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This document is an attempt to explain my understanding of what the RWQCB staff believe the Steering Committee and stakeholders should produce by the end of 2002. By putting this in writing, I hope to stimulate a discussion and ultimately the writing of a clearer Plan of Action that can deliver to the Regional Board the agreements and documents they wish to receive from the stakeholders.

A. Goal: Solve the low DO problem.

B. Objectives (to be accomplished by the end of 2002):

1. Agree on where funding will come from over the next five years for the operation and maintenance of an aeration system in the DWSC. These aerators are expected to meet the Interim Target performance goals and milestones. MOUs or other legal agreements need to commit stakeholders to pay costs for the best and worst case aeration scenarios for five years.
2. Develop funding for a feasibility and pilot project program that will evaluate alternative implementation options for meeting the final D.O. objective. The study program should provide the analysis needed for the EIR/EIS that will be feasible for the selection of a long-term implementation plan.

C. Notes:

1. The five-year aeration solution only has to result in the installation and operation of aerators that are expected to meet the interim milestone targets. If the aerators are operated but do not accomplish what they expected to do, the stakeholders will not have to install and operate more aerators during the interim five-year period and will not be considered to be in violation of the interim performance goals and milestones.
2. The cost-sharing MOUs will include a schedule regarding changes in costs over time. For example, it is unlikely that there will be operation and maintenance costs in 2003-2004 while the initial pilot project testing is occurring. In 2005, all the needed aerators could be installed with the result being that stakeholders could begin paying the O&M costs in 2006. In 2008, the Regional Board is expected to adopt the final implementation plan with the associated costs to be renegotiated at that time.
3. The RWQCB does not need to have a Load Allocation determined by the end of 2002. They want an agreement on how the costs will be shared. This initial cost sharing could be written so that the party agreeing to pay a percentage of the costs is not agreeing to any responsibility or load allocation. .

4. The worst and best case aeration cost scenarios could be developed from the Peer Review and a 2002 implementation workshop review of aeration options. Aeration pilot projects on the best options are expected to be tested in 2003 with the results guiding the selection of a final aeration scheme. 2004 is likely to be taken up with the EIS/EIR process. The soonest a full aeration scheme could be rolled out appears to be in 2005 or 2006.
5. Russ Brown's estimates that in 2001 to meet the 5-6 mg/L objective, aerators would have needed to add about 10,000 pounds of oxygen per day for 85-100 days. The total of 1 million pounds at ten cents per pound for pure oxygen injection would have cost around \$100,000 for 2001. Even if it ends up being three times this, the cost of aeration to meet the interim milestone may not be that difficult to cover, especially if Port of Stockton, the US Army Corp of Engineers, a number of cities, water districts and other entities were willing to participate. .
6. It is assumed that the capital costs of the aeration system can be paid for with Prop. 13 funds.

II. Goal: Monitor the DWSC to ensure that the performance goals are being met.

A. Objectives (to be accomplished by the end of 2002):

1. Agree on what amount of monitoring is needed in the DWSC. Set the parameters for monitoring costs so Objective 2 (below) can be met.
2. Agree on where funding will come from over the next five years to pay for the annual O and M costs of the monitoring program. MOUs or other legal agreement can be signed that commit stakeholder to pay for the expected monitoring costs for the five year interim period.
3. Agree on who will operate and maintain the monitoring system. (This may not need to be done until 2003.)

B. Notes

1. The Peer Review should advance our understanding of how the monitoring program in the DWSC could best operate while aeration is occurring.
2. The monitoring program for 2003 will likely be tied into the aeration pilot project proposal.
3. The Port of Stockton is likely to have monitoring requirements for its dredging proposals. Some of these requirements could be met by the DWSC monitoring program for DO aeration.

III. Next Steps

- A. Develop a set of options for how aeration and monitoring costs might be shared among the stakeholders. (e.g. A load/distance relationship equation that results in a percentage to each watershed. A distribution by population and/or acreage equation. A distribution by N and P application amounts per watershed. A distribution by voluntary contribution.)
- B. Use the Peer Review process to address a few of the scientific issues and hypotheses that would be most beneficial in gaining information the stakeholders can use to compute some of the different cost allocation options.
- C. Determine some criteria for who should be involved with funding the five-year aeration and monitoring costs.
- D. Develop a process whereby stakeholders can have their preferred implementation plans and methods considered for possible inclusion in an evaluation of feasibility options. Use a public scoping process followed by some type of expert evaluative workshop on the best options to include in a longer-term, intensive study.