

M E M O

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.

SUBJECT: WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN, PART I: EXISTING CONDITIONS
REPORT

DATE: November 29, 2007

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Directors review and accept “Watershed Management Plan, Part I: Existing Conditions Report, Rev. 1.3,” attached under separate cover, and direct staff to distribute the document for public and peer review. It is also recommended that the Board of Directors review and approve the review process described in this memo and in Attachment 1, and the list of invited peer-reviewers in Attachment 2, as recommended by the Environmental Committee.

BACKGROUND:

On November 4, 1985 the District approved Resolution 26 (85-86), which adopted the District’s existing Watershed Protection Plan. Your Board directed staff in 2004 to review and update the document, which had not been revised since its inception. This Administrative Draft results from a complete review and update of the 1985 document. This Administrative Draft represents the work of staff and consultants over approximately three years. Originally, consultant Walter Heady was contracted to update the 1985 plan. In 2005, the first draft was reviewed by the District’s former Watershed Resources Coordinator, Al Haynes. In 2006 and 2007, staff extensively revised and edited the Haynes draft, under the advisement of the Environmental Committee. Staff GIS Technician Rob Menzies completed the maps.

The Administrative Draft for the Existing Conditions Report was reviewed by the Environmental Committee at their January 25, 2007, March 1, 2007, March 15, 2007, April 19, 2007, May 3, 2007, May 24, 2007, June 11, 2007, and July 19, 2007, August 16, 2007, and September 6, 2007 meetings. At its November 1, 2007 meeting, the Environmental Committee recommended that the Administrative Draft be forwarded to your Board for review and acceptance. The Environmental Committee further recommended that your Board review and approve the proposed review process, described below and in Attachment 1. The Environmental Committee further recommended that your Board review and approve the list of expert peer-reviewers, which the committee selected (Attachment 2).

PURPOSE:

This Administrative Draft provides an opportunity for review and acceptance of the Existing Conditions Report prior to final approval by your Board. After review and acceptance by your Board, the Administrative Draft will serve as the starting point for review by the public and peer-reviewers, which is the next critical step in completing the Existing Conditions Report. After final approval by your Board, the Existing Conditions Report will serve as a reference to aid your Board in refining the 1985 watershed management goals and updating its watershed planning policies and practices (to be

documented in Part II of the Watershed Management Plan). The Existing Conditions Report will also serve as a baseline for tracking the success of approved policies and future projects as they are implemented.

REVIEW PROCESS:

Effective watershed management is an ongoing process, which requires active participation from stakeholders, identification of measurable water quality goals, analysis of causes and sources of water quality problems, and specific actions needed to solve those problems. The planning and implementation process is dynamic and adaptive. Even though some of the information in the plan is imperfect, information can be updated periodically as it becomes available.

The generic watershed planning process

Attachment 1 is a chart that depicts, in a generic fashion, the steps of a successful watershed planning and implementation process. The Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) found that watershed plans have the greatest chance of success when stakeholders are brought into the process at the beginning of the planning effort (CWP, 1996). If stakeholders are involved from the beginning, they have an opportunity to provide valuable information. As stakeholders see that their concerns are addressed, they are more likely to participate in developing management options, and to support plan implementation.

The District's watershed planning process

Staff adapted CWP's generic process to reflect the fact that the District is updating its 1985 Watershed Protection Plan, rather than formulating an initial plan. Staff believes that Step 1 of the generic process, "Build Partnerships," (Attachment 1) was initiated by the District's 1985 plan, which identified its constituents, other government agencies, and local institutions as stakeholders. The 1985 plan also identified issues of concern, developed indicators, and set preliminary goals.

Staff believes that the Board's approval of the Administrative Draft places the District at the first bullet point of Step 2, "Characterize the Watershed" (Attachment 1). The Administrative Draft represents staff's knowledge of existing conditions of the watershed, and provides a starting point for public and peer review to identify information gaps, correct faulty information, and/or identify additional causes and sources of contamination.

Review logistics

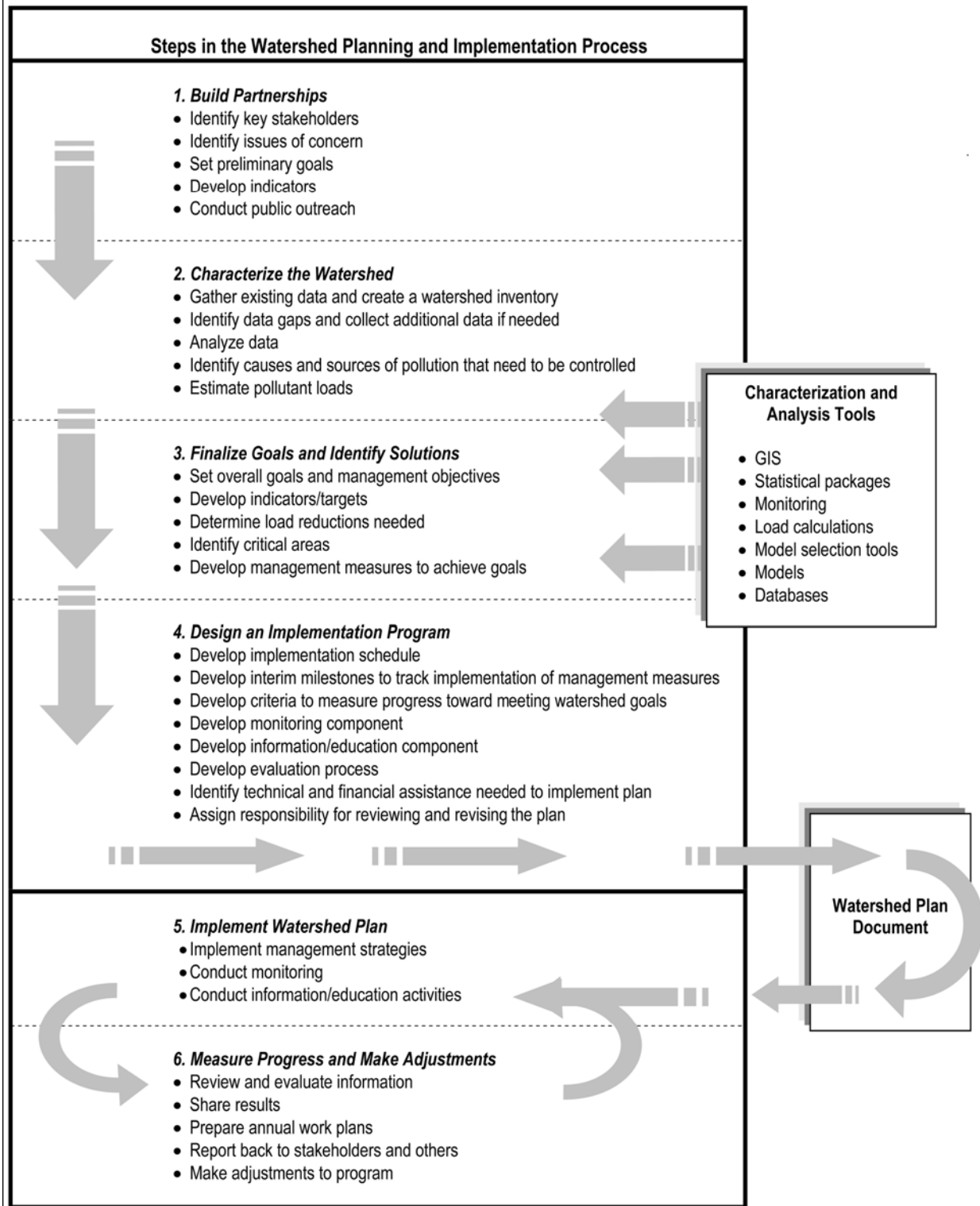
Public review will consist of posting the Administrative Draft on the District's website, and soliciting comments from the public. Digital copies will be available at the front desk, and a printed copy will be available at local libraries. Posting will occur within one week of the Board's approval. The comment period shall be 60 days from the posting date.

Peer-review will begin as staff contacts all the experts selected by the Environmental Committee (Attachment B) to invite their participation. To all those who choose to participate, staff will distribute a printed and/or a digital copy, within one week of Board approval. The comment period shall be 60 days from the distribution date.

It is recommended that the Board of Directors review and accept the Administrative Draft of the Existing Conditions Report, review and approve the review process described in the memo and in Attachment 1, and review and approve the list of peer-reviewers in Attachment 2.

Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.
Environmental Analyst

Attachment 1



Source: US EPA. 2005. Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters. Office of Water. Nonpoint Source Control Branch. Washington, DC. EPA 841-B-05-005.

Attachment 2.

Peer-reviewers recommended by the Environmental Committee. After approval by your Board, staff will invite each person on the list to review the Administrative Draft of the Existing Conditions Report.

Name	Area of expertise	Agency, if applicable
Bob Curry, Ph.D	Hydrology & geomorphology	
Nicholas Johnson, Ph.D.	Hydrology & geomorphology; climate change	
Steve Singer, M.S.	Biotic resources; esp. plant communities	
Chris Maser, M.S.	Biotic resources, esp. forest ecology	
Max Moritz, Ph.D	Fire ecology	
John Stanley, M.S.	Fire, aquatic resources	
John Ferriera	Fire	CalFire
Kathy Lyons	Biotic resources; esp., plant communities	
Don Alley, M.S.	Fisheries biology	
Brian Spence, Ph.D.	Aquatic resources, fisheries biology	National Marine Fisheries Service
Serge Glushkoff	Biotic resources	State Fish and Game
John Ricker	Water resource management	County of Santa Cruz
Chris Berry	Water resource management	City of Santa Cruz Water Dept.
Mike Eggleston	Water resource management	Lompico County Water District
Charlie McNeish	Water resource management	Scotts Valley Water District
Chuck Comstock	General	City of Scotts Valley
Matt Freeman	Biotic resources	Mid-Peninsula Open Space District
Larry Ford, Ph.D.	Biotic resources	
Jodi McGraw, Ph.D	Biotic resources: esp. sandhills and sand parklands communities	
Tim Hyland	Biotic resources	State Parks
Al Haynes	Watershed management	
Boulder Creek Historical Society	Historical resources	
Nancy McCarthy*	Historical resources	

*Author, Where the Grizzlies Roamed the Canyons. The Story of the San Lorenzo Valley. Palo Alto, California: Garden Court Press, 1994