# NOTES: Water Supply Working Group #1

Meeting Held: 05.11.18
Notes prepared by Consensus Building Institute

**Next Meeting:** June (date TBD) / early July @ Sonoma County Water Agency in Santa Rosa

## Action Items (organized by person)

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| All | 5/25 | Submit relevant citations via Google Doc |
| Don S/CBI | 5/25 | Craft draft water supply objectives |
| Don S | 5/25 | Send Julia relevant draft EIR appendices to post to website |
| Don S / Modeling Sub-group | 6/15 | Don will organize a sub-group to develop recommendations on modeling approach / baseline and bring back to Working Group |
| CBI | 5/25 | Set date for June Working Group meeting |
| CBI | 5/25 | Send high level decision making factors document to Working Group |
| CBI (Julia) | 5/28 | Post technical documents submitted by Working Group participants (including docs that David Keller previously sent) |

## Working Group Organization and Work Plan

View Water Supply Working Group Charter

**Water Supply Working Group Charge**

- Identify water supply issues related to the Potter Valley Project
- Develop objectives for water supply
- Identify viable solutions (options) for both the near-term and longer-term
- Assess consequences, opportunities, and challenges for potential futures for the Potter Valley Project.

The Working Group is consensus seeking; consensus can range from enthusiastic support to being able to "live with it." The Working Group will document any areas of disagreement to share with the Ad Hoc.

Congressman Huffman's Potter Valley Project Ad Hoc Committee will receive all of the outputs of the Fish Passage and Water Supply Working Groups. The Ad Hoc will meet three times in 2018, with the goal of determining some possible viable scenarios for the future of the Potter Valley Project and each scenario's implications across a range of key issues.

## Fish Passage Working Group - Progress To-Date

View fish passage draft objectives and meeting summaries

The first Fish Passage Working Group meeting (held March 26) centered around charter development and group organization. At its second meeting (held April 18), the

Working Group reviewed and provided input on draft fish passage objectives, which Joshua Fuller developed to reflect the Working Group's discussions. The Working Group will bring revised fish passage objectives to the May 30 Ad Hoc meeting for refinement.

The Working Group is now developing a filtering tool by which to evaluate a range of fish passage options. The Fish Passage Working Group focuses exclusively on fish passage over Van Arsdale and Scott Dams and will not look at flow regimes.

## Preliminary Water Supply Objectives and Issues for Consideration

*The Working Group identified preliminary water supply objectives:*

- Consider water supply needs and demands across both basins (big picture)
- Consider future hydrographs (that factor in climate change)
- Articulate existing constraints, including cost
- Maximize benefits of ecosystem services, coordinated operations, timing, flow regimes, and biological considerations
- Evaluate a small number of strategic scenarios:
    - Consider options that are constrained by existing regulations, as well as some options with flexibility related to existing regulatory and infrastructure constraints
    - Dam removal

**Brainstorming Issues and Objectives**

- The FERC process calls for balancing the amount of water available with the demand for that water. As such, it is critical to **define how much water is available and when** (there is existing information on this) and to **understand all of the specific needs for that water based on the calendar year**.
- Need to improve water supply reliability and resilience in the face of shifting climate (aim for water efficiency).
- The reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) structure should outline storage-based requirements so that flow is tied to the Lake Pillsbury reservoir water levels, such that water supply does not outstrip what is available in storage.
- Consider the implications of raising Coyote Valley Dam on storage and demand on the Eel River.
- The maximum target storage curve may need to be adjusted, as it is much higher than the actual capacity of Lake Pillsbury.
- It may be useful to gain clarity on who holds water transfer rights.
- Need to look at projected **future hydrology** in the watershed (not only current hydrology), as climate change and reduced snowpack will have significant impact.
- Need to understand the biological implications of each scenario.
- A participant noted that there is lack of data regarding the reliability and stability of Lake Pillsbury and Scott Dam.

**Scenarios and Modeling**

Scenario development presents an opportunity to think creatively about possible changes to existing regulations and infrastructure. However, some participants recommend that the Working Group be realistic about which existing rules can and cannot plausibly change.

A participant suggested that the Working Group move away from abstraction and instead conduct preliminary analyses on a small number of concrete scenarios to get a sense of issues in need of further analysis. Possible scenarios include:

1. Existing Conditions
    - Lake Mendocino as is
    - Coyote Dam raised
2. Scott Dam
    - Existing
    - Modified
    - Decommisioned
3. Modify Rule/Coordinated Operations (modify existing reservoir rules and make rules that allow for more efficient water at Scott Dam and Lake Mendocino)
4. No diversion

Several participants support developing book-end scenarios, including a scenario in which Scott Dam is removed.

A participant suggested maintaining a single, official version of a model ("principle model"), which would be available to stakeholders to run scenarios and compare scenarios against baselines.

**Next Steps**

- Don Seymour will synthesize the above key concepts in a draft Water Supply Objectives document, which the Working Group will review at its next meeting.
- Based on assessment interviews, CBI developed high level decision making factors that any scenario will need to speak to. CBI will send this document to Working Group members.

## Modeling Sub-Group

The Working Group formed a **modeling sub-group** with the following participants: Chris Delaney (SCWA), John Mendoza (SCWA), Scott McBain (Round Valley Indian Tribes), Craig Addley (Cardno), Michelle Lent (PG&E), Andres Ticlavilca (NOAA Fisheries), Ed Cheslak (PG&E). The sub-group will develop recommendations on the modeling approach to bring back to Working Group.

## Existing Information and Available Science

CBI requested that Water Supply Working Group participants submit citations for relevant technical studies via this Google Document, for posting on the Ad Hoc information page.

**Priority review list** for Water Supply Working Group – *suggestions for required pre-reading for the next Working Group meeting*:

- **Read draft EIR modeling report** (the appendix for SCWA models; describes assumptions, etc.)
- **Term 17 report**

Relevant technical studies - *CBI will post to website*:

- 2015 SCWA report on Lake Mendocino Upper Russian River reliability; looks at a number of scenarios going out to 2040 with current climate and climate change scenarios, land use changes, and a no Potter Valley Project scenario with no winter transfer (channel gone).
- Draft EIR appendices; one appendix describes model development and another analyzes Russian River demands.
- Chapter 3 of draft EIR provides an excellent description of the Russian River; useful background information.
- UC Davis analysis of raising Coyote Valley Dam
- Excel spreadsheet of unimpaired flows (started by Greg Kaiman)
- Eel-Russian River Commission minutes
- PG&E contracts for water delivery through PVP (PG&E to SCWA, PG&E to PVID)
- FERC EIR for 2004 amendment for PVP (involved last round of water modeling for PVP)
- Climate futures (developed by SCWA and others; can use to consider future impacts)

## PG&E Announcement: PVP Auction

On May 15, PG&E announced to the Eel-Russian River Commission that it will auction the Potter Valley Project in fall 2018. The announcement will not change the FERC relicensing process and thus does not change the Ad Hoc's charge; PG&E will continue with the relicensing process until a time when a new party takes over the project. The auction will likely take 18 to 24 months and will then need FERC and CA Energy Commission approval.

If no interested parties come forward, the Potter Valley Project will become a FERC orphan project, at which point FERC would take responsibility for finding a party to take over the project. If FERC does not find a party, the project would revert to PG&E for decommissioning.

Study plans have been accepted by FERC; any new owner takes over in the midst of relicensing would need to accept that.

## Next Steps and Future Agenda Items

At the May 30 Ad Hoc Committee meeting in Ukiah, Don Seymour will provide an update on the Water Supply Working Group's progress to-date.

At its next meeting (to be held in June - date TBD), the Water Supply Working Group will discuss the following topics:

- Refine water supply objectives
- Review preliminary fish passage solutions
- Modeling approach (determine a baseline)
- Scenarios planning