

**TAdN Steering Committee Meeting
March 3, 2006**

Minutes

Present: Mark Newhouser, SEC; Eric Htain, EDAW; Ron Unger, EDAW; Stan Schubert, Lake County DPW; Katie Pilat, San Francisquito Watershed Council; Pat Stiefer, SEC; Jessie Olson, SEC; Susan Mason, Chico State U.; Kasey Allen, SEC; Bryan Sesser, SEC; Sharon Weaver, San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust; David Spencer, USDA, Davis; Deanne DiPietro, SEC; Rob Hill, Butte County Ag Commissioner's Office; Todd Adams, Napa County Flood Control District; Dave Dyer, USDA-NRCS; Frank Wallace, CNPS Sacramento Weed Warriors.

PROGRAM UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

Administration/Subcontracts:

All subcontracts for Phase 2 have been signed except Walnut Creek. Subcontract with USDA to be signed shortly. Lake County has already submitted their eradication plan. Phase 1 partners need to submit an updated plan, while Phase 2 partners must submit a new one.

Project Time Extension/Amendment Request

CBDA included upper Putah Creek in the scope of work for the Putah Creek project, and gave us the Phase 2 funds we requested for American River as well as some overhead for program administration. Review panel was unwilling to provide funds for a one-year extension at this time. They suggested we come back in a year to resubmit our request for an extension and funds to administer it. Only two eradication seasons are left during the Phase 2 funding period. We recommend that the original Phase 1 partners continue to plan for two years, and Phase 2 partners for three years, and assume we're going to get a one-year extension.

CBDA Monitoring and Evaluation Proposal:

We are still going to resubmit proposal, focusing efforts on beefing up monitoring protocols: clear instructions on how to measure in field in consistent way. March 10 proposal due. Partners will benefit from this protocol development.

WIMS-3 Datasheets Development:

Data capture technology to use in field to monitor and map all weed occurrences, monitor change, record new treatments. Partnership w/Nature Conservancy to adapt WIMS so can exchange data more widely. Kasey Allen (SEC) and Barry Levine (TNC) have been helping with upgrade. Partners can try out the test version on download site: ice@ucdavis.edu/wims. We invite you to download software and test drive it. Intend to roll it out at end of March 2006. Will be further refinements made after that, based on feedback from users. SEC staff will be available to partners for their spring 2006 mapping efforts. Paper forms are also available that conform to WIMS-3 database if

partners want to use in field instead of or in addition to a hand-held device. Just email SEC if want copies.

Phase 1 Data and Reports

WIMS-3 uses ARCPAD 6.03. If haven't received your license, contact Pat. ARCPAD 7 software is quite different. In future, version 4 of WIMS will move to ARCPAD 7.

Mapping Project

As part of Phase 2, the Arundo mapping task involves the collection of all available Arundo distribution data for the Bay-Delta region. The program will consolidate, catalog, and put it online as part of a map server, if granted secure permission. Brian Sesser will head up that effort. Then will look at gaps in data to see if can fill in that data by remote sensing and other methods. The goal is the creation of a large-range distribution map. This information will be highly valuable on a statewide level—and especially after it is combined with already existing data for southern California. This will result in a statewide Arundo distribution map.

The Bay-Delta Arundo distribution map to be created in Phase 2 will be used to prioritize future eradication efforts, making it more possible to control and eradicate Arundo in the highest priority areas. Will involve rating habitat for value depending on species present—haven't yet figured out how to do this. This is also a three-year effort. The Arundo distribution map showing priority Arundo infestations will be added to the map server. We will then continue to update the map by posting new layers that reflect changes in Arundo distribution (spread and eradication).

PROGRAMMATIC PERMITTING – EDAW

Project Description/Approach

At the previous TAdN meeting, EDAW handed out project description forms regarding permitting needs. Then compiled it into the project description. It reviews permitted weed abatement actions, map boundaries, sensitive resources (cultural, biological) in each watershed, and avoidance protocols partners can use to avoid and minimize impacts to those species, and permit coverage. Since are planning on doing categorical exemptions for all partner projects, hope to have one document for CEQA that explains everything to be done, avoidance protocols, and how won't have any impacts to those species. Will also help to obtain the other needed permits through ACE, Regional WQCB, etc.

Preliminary Impact Avoidance Measures

Permitted actions: weed control methods (hand tools, equipment, herbicide applications, stockpiling, mulching, tarping and excavation), revegetation (minor plantings), bank stabilization (biorevetment, hydroseed or manual seed, riprap, etc.). Partners should let EDAW know if they want to add or remove any actions, including anything you might do but is not that likely. (i.e., What do you want coverage for?)

Your mapped boundaries are the limits of your Arundo treatment area under these AECP permits. If those maps are incorrect, partners need to let Pat Stiefer and EDAW know within a week.

Confirmation of Special-Status Species

Special status species and habitats: invertebrates, mammals, reptiles/amphibians, fish, birds, plants, sensitive habitats. EDAW has primarily relied on CNDDDB occurrence information, since partners for the most part did not have much information on special status species. EDAW came up with avoidance protocols for each special status species. (One example is buffers, as when certain projects activities can be done within the 100-foot buffer.) Another avoidance protocol involves timing. (Example: no work around elderberry shrubs from March through July during breeding period, unless preapproved by UFWS.) EDAW needs to know from partners if they can live with these protocol restrictions.

Sensitive natural vegetation avoidance protocols: use hand-cutting methods; use focused herbicide application methods; use broadcast application under certain circumstances.

Regulatory agencies may put further restrictions on protocols partners can use to avoid impact to sensitive species and habitats.

Other avoidance protocols to protect: cultural resources, native vegetation protection, weed management, water quality protection. Are also in the Project Description.

Partners can also use the Wildlife Habitat Species Database. Partners need to let EDAW know if they think any of these species may be in their treatment areas, even if don't show up on list of what EDAW has found.

Summary: By March 10 partners should:

- look at permitted actions to indicate if want to add or delete anything
- doublecheck their map boundaries for their treatment areas and let EDAW know if want to extend
- review special status species listed as being in their treatment area, or as not present, and let EDAW know if any changes should be made
- review all avoidance protocols.

Discussion: Permit strategies and Renewals

Road access to getting to treatment sites: how will you get equipment in there? That matters for ACE and Streambed Alternation Agreement permits. Bank access—do you need to go through riparian woodland and take out trees greater than 3” in diameter? Will you need to create access roads, remove some trees, and replace them, or is this not necessary? Will you need access across creeks (low-water crossings) for equipment?

Herbicides: Glyphosate, triclopyr (nonvolatile formulation), and imazapyr. All three relatively low toxicity to fish and aquatic organisms and wildlife, but only first two have a relatively short life. Triclopyr has 2 formulations—one is volatile, the other is not.

Volatile formulation has caused problems in some projects. If sprayed at wrong time of year, causes damage to adjacent vegetation (where it moves onto neighboring vegetation). Current permitting says are not using volatile formulation of triclopyr.

Currently EDAW is stating that partners will be selecting herbicides with low toxicity to non-target wildlife, and low mobility or short environmental half-life. Is this too restrictive if using imazypyr? Partners can also suggest alternative language to EDAW.

Surfactants: depends on type, quantity, and regulator. EDAW doesn't plan to describe surfactants unless regulatory agencies require this.

If no take: EDAW approach is to go to all the regulators and say we don't think we will have impact to any of sensitive species due to avoidance protocols we are using.

If incidental take: First strategy is to go to the regional ACE, and request being given a large area that encompasses more than just our 10 watersheds. If this approach doesn't work, will go for the 10 watersheds as a group. If that doesn't work, will try to get regional district permits. If that doesn't work, will go for individual permits for each watershed. There is a precedent already established here, since southern Ca was given a regional general permit for Arundo removal.

New and Unfinished Business

The next meeting is set for Friday, June 2, 2006, 10am-12noon at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.