

FINAL

To: Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group Members
From: CBI and Water Forum Staff
Date: July 20, 2017
Re: Draft Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attached is the final Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference. This document has been revised to incorporate discussions at the July 19, 2017, Working Group meeting.

This document, unanimously endorsed by the Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group, will serve to guide TAC deliberations. It will be updated in the future, as needed, by the Working Group.

Please feel free to share these Terms of Reference as informational items with your respective governing bodies.

Technical Advisory Committee to Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group

Terms of Reference

Revised July 20, 2017

Charge

The purpose of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to provide input and recommendations to the Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group on technical aspects of groundwater sustainability plan development.

The Technical Advisory Committee will review and/or provide recommendations to the Working Group on groundwater-related issues that may relate to the technical aspects of:

Near-Term

- Supporting development of a Prop. 1 application for the Cosumnes Subbasin including:
 - Providing guidance on a draft SOQ/RFP for needed technical support
 - Reviewing SOQ/RFP responses and preparing recommendation for Working Group review and action
 - Working with Water Forum staff to provide necessary oversight and guidance to selected technical consultant; identify issues for discussion with Working Group
- Meeting with TACs from neighboring subbasins to understanding modeling approaches and identify possible opportunities for cross-basin coordination

Longer-Term (up until 2022)

- Development of the GSP(s)
- Sustainability goals and objectives
- Best management practices
- Monitoring programs
- Modeling scenarios
- Inter-basin coordination activities
- General technical advisory

Working Group Oversight

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) works in service of the Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group. Accordingly, Water Forum staff will seek Working Group confirmation of Technical Advisory Committee tasks. Similarly, Technical Advisory Committee recommendations will be forwarded to the Working Group for review, revision and confirmation.

Technical Advisory Committee Composition, Staffing and Logistics

The Technical Advisory Committee consists of representatives from each groundwater sustainability agency in the Cosumnes subbasin. The criteria for Technical Advisory Committee members are to:

- Offer relevant technical background and expertise
- Have familiarity with the Cosumnes groundwater subbasin
- Work collaboratively with others
- Commit time needed for ongoing discussions
- Maintain group size to support focused deliberations

Each GSA may name one representative and one alternate. The primary representative is encouraged to attend as frequently as possible to maintain continuity. When unable to attend, the representative is expected to brief the alternate on issues under discussion.

Consistent with best practices, the Water Forum will provide staff to support TAC deliberations and will collaborate with GSA representatives in developing agendas, relevant discussion materials and identifying any outside experts with relevant expertise. These activities are intended to be in service of the full group.

The TAC will meet, as needed, either by phone or in-person. Discussions will be facilitated, as needed.

Technical Support

The TAC will be supported in its work by technical advisor(s) selected by the Working Group to (1) foster joint fact-finding and (2) ensure the TAC, Working Group members and GSAs have the opportunity to consider diverse opinions subbasin-wide, or within their individual GSA(s), and to facilitate the opportunities to contrast and compare differing methodologies. Individual GSAs may opt to bring in consultants, whom they deem relevant, to support their GSA's effective participation; but such experts are not considered members of the TAC and their role should be made explicit. In all cases, members are asked to foster continuity in participation and a collaborative dialogue.

Funding

GSAs are responsible for covering the costs associated with their representative's, alternate's or outside consultant's participation. Any potential cost-shares associated with outside technical consultants will first be discussed with and decided by the Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group.

Timeline

The Technical Advisory Committee is expected to meet during the course of GSP development. Meeting frequency will vary. Water Forum staff will set a meeting schedule well in advance to foster full participation. The role of the TAC during implementation will be determined when the Working Group discusses longer-term planning.

Decision Making

To inform Working Group decision-making, the Technical Advisory Committee will provide written recommendations. The recommendations will identify areas of agreement and disagreement. The Technical Advisory Committee will strive to reach consensus on its

recommendations. The definition of consensus spans the range from strong support to neutrality, to abstention, to “I can live with it.” When unable to reach consensus on recommendations, the Technical Advisory Committee will outline the areas in which it does not agree, providing some explanation to inform Working Group decision-making.

The Technical Advisory Committee may request that one or more members present its recommendations to the Working Group, including areas of agreement and disagreement, consistent with Technical Advisory Committee deliberations. Alternatively, the Technical Advisory Committee may ask Water Forum staff to present to the Working Group.

Whenever the Water Forum Staff prepares “written recommendations” or written reports to the Working Group, the report from the Water Forum will be reviewed and confirmed by TAC members prior to forwarding it to the Working Group. TAC members may include “minority opinions” as attachments to Water Forum reports.

Process & Participation Agreement

Technical Advisory Committee deliberations are grounded in the principles of joint fact-finding, which call on all parties to jointly pool their respective knowledge to foster the deepest possible understanding of issues under discussions. Participants commit to share all relevant expertise and data in support of Technical Advisory Committee work. Consultant assistance acquired by either the Working Group or individual members will recognize the importance of sound, independent technical work and data interpretation.

More broadly, Technical Advisory Committee members commit and agree to abide by the Process and Participation Agreements outlined in the Working Group’s Framework Agreement, unless an exception is specifically set forth in the Framework (or other) Agreement.

Media Communication

The Water Forum will serve as primary contact for the media.

If contacted by the press concerning the discussions, participants are asked to:

- Point out that they are not speaking on behalf of the group
- Present their views only and conscientiously refrain from expressing, characterizing or judging the views of others.
- Avoid using the press as a vehicle for negotiation.

The facilitator will avoid speaking with the media.