Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program

PROGRAMMATIC
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Version 2, September 2016[1]

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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The SWAMP mission is to provide resource managers, decision makers, and the public with timely, high-quality information to evaluate the condition of surface waters throughout California[2]. The three core implementation priorities of SWAMP are Monitoring and Assessment, Infrastructure and Tools, and Coordination (see the SWAMP website for additional information). SWAMP is a key partner of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council. SWAMP staff lead or participate in most Monitoring Council work groups.

2. PROGRAMMATIC STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

SWAMP is administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and functions as a joint-collaboration between California's State and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards, along with partnership scientists from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the University of California, California State University, San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI), the Southern California Coastal Water Research Water Research Project (SCCWRP) and other partners. Figure 1 below displays the organizational structure of the

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[1] This document will be reviewed by the SWAMP Coordinators in August of each year and updated as needed.
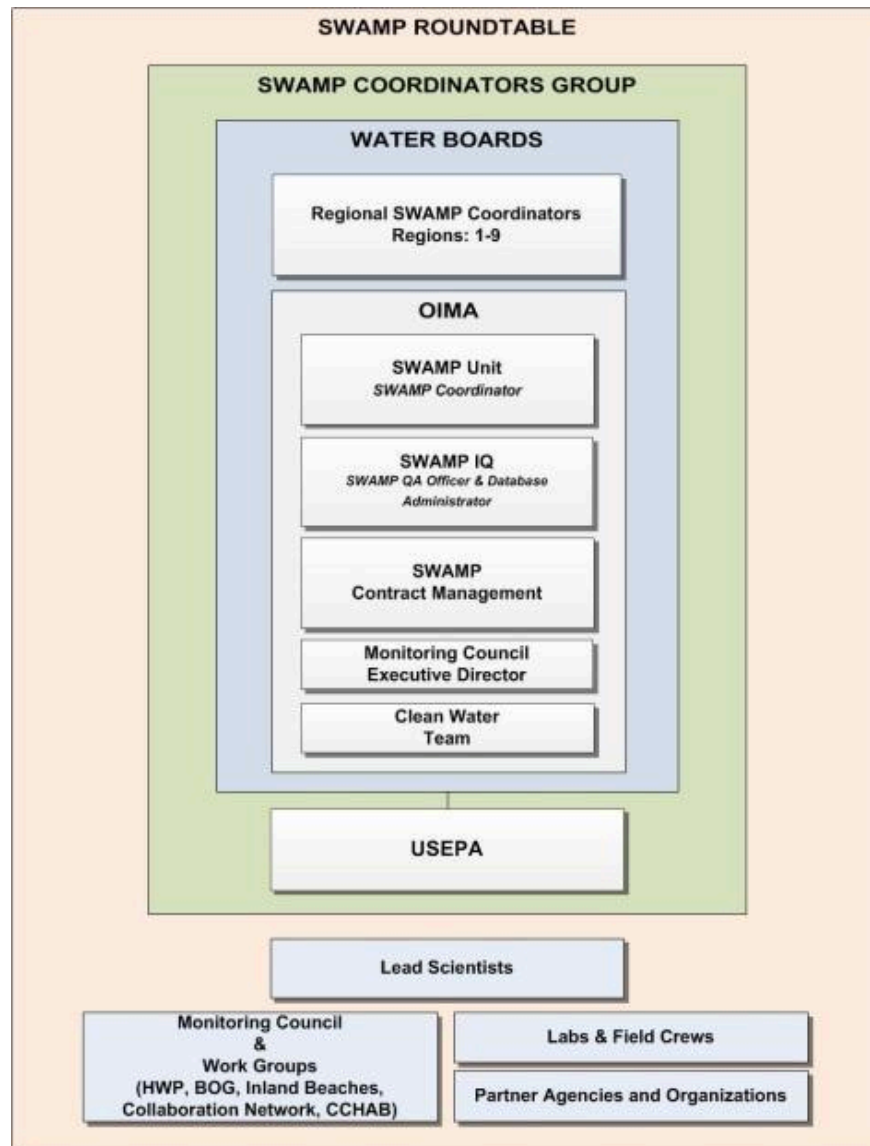[2] The mission statement may be revised in the updated SWAMP Strategy.

program.

FIGURE 1: SWAMP ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

At the State Water Board, SWAMP staff are located in the Office of Information Management and Analysis (OIMA). The staff persons supporting SWAMP within OIMA include: Contract and Budgets staff, two Senior Scientist Specialists, and two SWAMP support units: the SWAMP Unit and the SWAMP Information Management and Quality Assurance Center (SWAMP IQ). SWAMP's program administration and infrastructure is divided into three sections, 1) contract and budget management, 2) SWAMP coordination and statewide ambient monitoring program oversight, and 3) quality assurance and information management. One Senior Scientist Specialist is

responsible for the Clean Water Team. The Clean Water Team (CWT) is the citizen monitoring program of the State Water Resources Control Board.

Regional SWAMP Coordinators manage the regional monitoring programs, work with the SWAMP IQ Unit to implement QA and data management elements of the regional monitoring programs, and coordinate with the SWAMP Coordinator, staff at OIMA, and scientist partners to manage the overall SWAMP program.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All SWAMP activities follow these guiding principles:

Transparency. We are committed to open, transparent communication in all aspects of the program.

Service. We serve both internal and external stakeholders by providing data and information to be used in preparing accurate, fair, and unambiguous assessments.

Data Quality. Reliable monitoring and assessments builds trust with stakeholders. We report data and information in a way that is complete, precise, accurate, and understandable to stakeholders and the general public.

Consistency. We seek consistent approaches to policy and program implementation recognizing the distinct obligations, issues, and authorities of each Water Board.

Collaboration. We collaborate internally, as well as with agencies and other key stakeholders to effectively address issues.

Outreach. We provide education opportunities so that Californians understand their responsibilities and abilities to protect water quality.

Innovation. We strive to make available new ways to analyze and evaluate environmental monitoring data and information.

Reasoned. We use best available science-based approaches for collecting, analyzing, and evaluating environmental monitoring data and information.

Results. We provide timely assessments of data and information to support the decision-making responsibilities of the Water Boards.

Defined expectations. We provide priorities for monitoring and assessments that consider available resources and decision-making needs.

4. SWAMP ROUNDTABLE

The purpose of the SWAMP Roundtable is to coordinate and share information among state and regional SWAMP staff and partners to manage the SWAMP program consistent with the SWAMP Mission, the [SWAMP Strategy](#)[3], the SWAMP Timeline, and other applicable procedures and processes.

Roundtable discussions include technical issues related to monitoring and assessment, quality assurance and data management issues, updates on Regional and Statewide monitoring programs, liaison reports from other programs, messages from Water Board management, and similar items.

MEMBERSHIP
- OIMA Director & Assistant Director
- SWAMP Coordinator & SWAMP Unit (OIMA)
- SWAMP QA Officer & Database Administrator & SWAMP IQ Unit (OIMA)
- Regional SWAMP Coordinators (Regions 1 - 9)
- USEPA Representative
- Clean Water Team
- SWAMP Partners (lead scientists, laboratories, field crews, technical consultants)
- Liaisons
    - Monitoring Council
    - DMC
    - Other Water Board programs (TMDL, NPS, QA, etc.)
    - Other partner agencies (e.g., OEHHA)
    - California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN)

ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS

Scheduling
The SWAMP Roundtable meets monthly, alternating between in-person meetings and teleconferences (3 two-day, in-person meetings per year and 9 half-day or full-day teleconferences). Dates and locations for meetings in the following year will be determined during every November Roundtable and placed on the Roundtable calendar for the following year. OIMA staff is responsible for scheduling meetings (using Outlook appointments), setting up Global Meet and web and phone based teleconferences, and taking notes for all Roundtable meetings.

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[3] The SWAMP Strategy is under revision in 2017.

Agenda

Two weeks prior to the meeting, the designated OIMA staff person will prepare a draft agenda using the agenda template (Attachment A) and send it to the Roundtable for review. The Roundtable will have one week to comment. The agenda will generally include the following:

- Standing agenda items – announcements, liaison reports, contracts, SWAMP IQ update, and CEDEN update
- Tasks and upcoming deadlines on the SWAMP Timeline
- Agenda items decided upon by the Roundtable group at the prior meeting
- All other relevant or requested discussion topics
- Wrap up and next steps
- "Parking lot" items
- Items for next month's agenda

The designated OIMA staff person will finalize the agenda no less than one week prior to the meeting. That person will then post it to the SWAMP Wiki website and email notification of the agenda's posting to the SWAMP Roundtable List.

If agenda item background information was not provided in advance of the meeting, and is necessary to the discussion, the person assigned to that agenda item will make the material available to the group prior to the discussion.

During Meetings

At each meeting the SWAMP Coordinator, or designated **meeting chair,** will facilitate the event, keep track of time, recognize speakers, keep individuals and the group focused on the agenda items and their purpose, and move agenda items to conclusion. Following each agenda item, the chair will summarize the outcome (decision[s], action item[s], parking lot items, etc.) or confirm the note taker's summary.

All SWAMP participants, their representatives in attendance, or other participants, agree to respect the agenda.

During meetings, all participants shall respect the following meeting **Ground Rules**:
- Show mutual respect
- Listen to others and refrain from interrupting
- No side conversations
- No personal attacks; use constructive criticism
- Be free to speak without fear of reprisal
- Accept that there will be differences of opinion
- Focus on interests, not positions
- Be prepared: read materials, minutes, etc. and be ready to discuss
- Stay on topic during discussions, minimize repetition
- Respect time allotted for each agenda item
- Be considerate of those on the phone, speak to be heard, avoid paper shuffling, etc.

- Be in attendance for face-to-face meetings. Representation from each region is expected at Roundtable meetings.

When items are being discussed, it is the responsibility of all participants to make their thoughts known to the group. This can occur during the meeting or with follow up emails to the Roundtable list.

Participants should confine their input and comments to issues or points relevant to the agenda items' purpose and desired outcome or to new ideas or modifications of those already presented, and minimize repeating points made by previous speakers in the interest of time.

Phone participants should keep their phone on mute until ready to speak.

Notes
Each Roundtable meeting will have a designated note-taker (OIMA staff person). The note-taker will record discussion highlights, action items, and decisions made during the meeting. Draft notes will be distributed no more than 10 days after the meeting, and reviewers will have one week to comment. After the review period, the note-taker will finalize the meeting notes, post them on the [SWAMP Wiki](#) and MCC intranet site, and then email notification of the posting to the SWAMP Roundtable list.

Face-to-face meetings
The office hosting the meeting will be responsible for the logistics, including:
- A conference room with seating for least 20 people
- Face-to-face seating arrangement
- Phone with adequate speaker capability
- Laptop with internet connection
- Projector
- Technical support available on-site
- Refreshments (optional)

WORK GROUPS
Many important or complex issues are best discussed and framed within a smaller group before being discussed at by Coordinators or Roundtable, in the interest of time. This is accomplished through the creation of small, focused work groups that discuss the issue, prepare a proposal, present the proposal to the larger Coordinators or Roundtable groups for discussion and decision, and to execute approved proposals.

SWAMP WIKIs
The SWAMP [Wiki](#) is the location for day-to-day documents such as agendas, minutes, and draft documents. The Wiki is maintained by OIMA SWAMP Unit staff, but may be edited by any SWAMP staff or partner. There is a password protected section of the SWAMP Wiki, which is used as a repository for internal documents that are shared between SWAMP staff and partners, but not with the public at large.

5. SWAMP COORDINATORS GROUP

The SWAMP Coordinators Group is comprised of staff from the Water Boards and a representative from USEPA. It includes all voting members of the SWAMP Roundtable as well as other key program staff listed below. This group discusses internal issues related to program management and implementation, and develops the annual SWAMP Roundtable Work Plan for the DMC. The Coordinators Group also plans and facilitates the SWAMP Strategy meetings.   A [Wiki](#) for the SWAMP Coordinators Group is located on the Water Board intranet site and is available for internal use only.

MEMBERSHIP
- SWAMP Coordinator (OIMA)
- SWAMP QA Officer & Database Administrator & SWAMP IQ Unit (OIMA)
- OIMA Director/ Assistant Director
- Regional SWAMP Coordinators (Regions 1 - 9)
- USEPA Representative
- Clean Water Team Representative
- Monitoring Council Liaison
- DMC Liaisons

6. COMMUNICATION AND DECISION-MAKING GUIDELINES

Open, transparent, and timely communication is essential for SWAMP. When decisions need to be made that affect group members, the informed person(s) will notify the group, who in turn will seek clarity on the decision-making authority. The informed person(s) will also share their justification/rationale/recommendation for determining the authority to make the decision.

If the decision-making authority resides with the group, consensus will be sought. If consensus cannot be reached, a vote may be called. There are ten voting members of the SWAMP Roundtable, which include one designated member from each of the nine regions and the SWAMP Coordinator at the State Board. Any voting member can request a vote, either in-person or via email. A simple majority decides a vote, and if the result is a tie, the SWAMP Coordinator shall decide. Any group member can request an anonymous vote. The anonymous vote will be administered via email by either the SWAMP coordinator (default) or an outside party agreed upon by the group.

If the decision-making authority does not lie with the group, the decision-maker will seek out and consider input from the group whenever possible. The decision-maker will subsequently inform the group of the decision made and rationale for making the decision.

Funding Decisions
Each Regional Board receives a percentage-based yearly allocation of State (WDPF) funds for

Regional monitoring programs. Each Region budgets their SWAMP allocation at their discretion, consistent with the SWAMP Strategy and Quality Assurance Program Plan. Federal (106) funds are allocated to SWAMP's statewide monitoring programs. The SWAMP Coordinators Group discusses and evaluates the direction of the statewide monitoring programs during the triennial SWAMP Strategic Review process. The Coordinators Group develops a recommended budget and submits it to the USEPA Representative and OIMA Director for review. Final decision-making authority for 106 funds rests with the USEPA Representative and the OIMA Director.

7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Staff responsible for the support of SWAMP's quality assurance and information management is organized in a unit designated as the "SWAMP Information Management and Quality Assurance Center" or "SWAMP IQ". This unit is headed by the SWAMP QA Officer and Database Manager, and is responsible for the development and implementation of quality assurance and data management elements of the SWAMP infrastructure as well as project management over SWAMP funded Information technology projects. The roles and services provided by the unit are grouped into two categories: SWAMP core support, SWAMP infrastructure and comparability services.

SWAMP Core Support
Core support functions are the day-to-day data/information management and quality assurance activities that are crucial to the functioning of SWAMP. These tasks include, but are not limited to, (1) the development and maintenance of project documentation and standard operating procedures; (2) data review, upload, and storage; (3) querying datasets upon request; (4) maintenance of databases, tools, and resources; and (5) tracking of project and quality control completeness. These tasks will be detailed within and carried out in a manner consistent with the most current version of the SWAMP Quality Assurance Program Plan[4]. These functions will be carried out transparently through sharing of file tracking information and logs, status updates at regular meetings, and individual SWAMP member information support. SWAMP members may contact SWAMP IQ staff at any time.

SWAMP Infrastructure and Comparability Services
Infrastructure functions include the application and maintenance of quality assurance and information management systems for surface water quality data for the SWAMP program at the Water Boards. These systems include: 1) policies for planning and documentation of quality assurance activities; and 2) technical systems for the processing, storage, and reporting of surface water quality data. Comparability services include providing SWAMP information resources, tools, and guidance to other projects, programs, and partners for quality assurance and data management to ensure comparability throughout the state. Services may include review of documentation, informational guidance, training, public workgroup coordination, solicitation of

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[4] The SWAMP QAPrP is under revision in 2016/2017.

feedback on SWAMP tools, and the spearheading of SWAMP infrastructure design implementation for CEDEN.

SWAMP members may individually, or as a group, request changes to the current SWAMP system or the development of new SWAMP tools, resources, measurement quality objectives, and documentation as needed. All requests will be evaluated to determine if the project is feasible, and the types and amount of resources needed to complete the project. If the requests can be completed by internal staff, the requests will be prioritized and scheduled as the workload for the unit permits. If the request will require external resources, the SWAMP Roundtable and OIMA management will be consulted to discuss the available options. Changes to the current systems or development of new tools may also become necessary due to Water Board policies or technology updates. The SWAMP Roundtable will be notified of the required change and provided the reasoning for the change and anticipated affect. Further discussion may be requested, if necessary.

Where applicable, SWAMP members will be provided the opportunity for discussion, testing, and feedback during all phases of a project that affects them or in which they are interested. The SWAMP program's day-to-day functions, schedules, workload, and resources will be taken into consideration in the planning and implementation of any change to current systems. The SWAMP Roundtable will be notified and will have the opportunity, early and often, to review and provide input on SWAMP system changes and new projects.

Due to SWAMP's systems being integrated within other Water Board surface water quality programs, the update and design of these systems must consider SWAMP comparability guidelines, and whether or not the data is appropriate for CEDEN. All applicable Water Board laws, regulations, policies, missions, and technical requirements will be taken into consideration in the application, design, and evolution of these systems.

The SWAMP IQ unit will provide an ongoing log of all SWAMP infrastructure and comparability project requests with status updates and proposed schedules for completion. When SWAMP projects are nearing completion, the appropriate parties will be notified to discuss announcement options. Announcement options include SWAMP email lists, formal SWAMP Roundtable meeting presentations, public announcements through appropriate SWAMP media channels (e.g., Lyris), or private notification (e.g., data query projects, QAPP reviews).

Some projects may also require solicitation for input outside of SWAMP. If a project is intended to be used for SWAMP comparability, or has the potential to be used as such, the project requestor and SWAMP Roundtable will be notified prior to solicitation to SWAMP comparability groups.

ATTACHMENT A: ROUNDTABLE AGENDA ITEM TEMPLATE

1.		ASSIGNED TO:	TIME: MIN; From: ?:?? to ??:?? AM
Purpose:			
Desired Outcome:			
Background:			
Attachment(s) and Homework:			