

VTAC Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2011
CAL FIRE Shasta-Trinity Unit Headquarters
Redding, California

Attendance

The following VTAC members attended the meeting:

Mike Liquori (Chair); Dr. Matt O'Connor, Richard Gienger, Dr. Kevin Boston, Peter Ribar, Mark Lancaster. Dr. Kate Sullivan participated by conference line.

The following VTAC agency representatives attended the meeting:

Bill Short (CGS), Bryan McFadin (NCRWQCB), Drew Coe (CVRWQCB), Bill Stevens (NMFS), Pete Cafferata (CAL FIRE).

Attendees:

Duane Shintaku (CAL FIRE), Dennis Hall (CAL FIRE).

[Action items are shown in bold print].

VTAC Announcements

Bryan McFadin stated that the NCRWQB will hear a resolution on a region-wide policy for water temperature protection on March 24th in Weaverville. This could lead to a Basin Plan amendment and guidance document. Bryan stated that the goal is to have consistency in regulations pertaining to water temperature throughout the North Coast region. The resolution will be available before the Board meeting; it will be posted at the following website:

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/northcoast/>.

VTAC Charter

With the addition of a few minor changes, the VTAC Charter was adopted by the VTAC. **The updated final version is posted on the VTAC ftp site at:**

<ftp://frap.cdf.ca.gov/pub/incoming/VTAC/>.

VTAC Guiding Principles Discussion

Pete Cafferata read the eight prioritized VTAC guiding principles he put together following the discussion at the last VTAC meeting held on November 19, 2010, and the group provided input for improvements. **A revised, dated draft document incorporating these suggestions and concepts from Mike Liquori's flipcharts from the November meeting will be posted on the VTAC ftp site prior to the next VTAC meeting (see:**

<ftp://frap.cdf.ca.gov/pub/incoming/VTAC/>).

Development of VTAC Outreach Survey

Mike Liquori summarized the draft VTAC outreach survey that he developed following a VTAC subcommittee conference call held on December 3, 2010. The questionnaire will be sent electronically to landowners, RPFs, agency personnel, and the public, and will provide valuable information regarding their issues and concerns about using Section V of the ASP rules. Additionally, the information obtained will provide feedback to help inform the VTAC's process. VTAC members suggested that one to two paragraphs, borrowing heavily from the VTAC Redwood Forest Science Symposium abstract, should be inserted prior to the actual questions in the survey. The group agreed that a single survey would be used (as opposed to multiple surveys focused on each constituent group). It was suggested that the email list compiled by CAL FIRE's Chris Browder be used for distribution purposes, since it incorporates all the major stakeholders in California forestry.

VTAC members/representatives are to send suggested modifications using Track Changes in a Word 2003 version of the survey to Mike Liquori by January 21, 2011. Mr. Liquori will edit the document and a new version will be posted on the VTAC ftp site for member review. The goal is to get the final version of the survey sent out by February 1, 2011, so that the initial response can be shared with VTAC members/representatives at the next meeting. Kate Sullivan suggested having a knowledgeable person take a beta version of the survey prior to sending it out for wide distribution. Duane Shintaku suggested that the survey should ask respondents specifically if they are familiar with California's Forest Practice Rules, and secondarily, if they are familiar with the Section V ASP rules. Mr. Shintaku also stated that it would be beneficial to ask respondents if they plan to submit a THP in the near future with a Section V project, and if so, if they would like to have VTAC assistance with the project.

General Framework/Outline for the VTAC Guidance Document

Mike Liquori placed a "strawman" outline for the VTAC guidance document in a PowerPoint slide to allow for group input. **There was considerable discussion and suggested modification; a revised version of the VTAC guidance document outline will be posted on the VTAC ftp site at: <ftp://frap.cdf.ca.gov/pub/incoming/VTAC/>.** The overall structure of the guidance document will follow the direction given in the VTAC Charter (i.e., processing, evaluation, design/analysis, and monitoring). Peter Ribar provided handouts for an example of how to complete a Section V large wood placement project, including a detailed outline for the processing, design, analysis, and post-approval phases. **Mr. Liquori stated that he would integrate Mr. Ribar's material into the draft "strawman" guidance document outline.** Bill Short stated that the guidance document needs to include a short, clear summary telling stakeholders what they need to include to submit a Section V project.

Mr. Liquori then presented several slides from a PowerPoint presentation he gave to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in June 2008 at a one day workshop on spatially explicit riparian management as one potential method for a framework for the design/analysis phase (see the complete PowerPoint presentation at:

http://www.soundwatershed.com/uploads/2/3/8/1/2381599/bof_sermon_presentation_060209.pdf). This approach is built off of watershed analysis and is conducted at two scales: site-level and watershed-level. Contrasts were drawn between the two for differing scales, expertise needed, flexibility, and cost distribution. The site-level scale is better suited for small landowners, isolated THPs, and smaller alterations from the standard rules. A common methodology for both scales involves: (1) evaluation of site conditions, (2) diagnosis of functional objectives, and (3) design of site treatments. A functional priority rating scheme was shown for large wood, water temperature, nutrients, and erosion. Mr. Liquori stated that there are four protection levels available for each riparian function: protect, maintain, improve, or generally available (i.e., not limiting) (note that these are generally similar to the ASP rule categories of protect, maintain, or lead towards restoration). At the site-level scale, functional priority is rated against site condition for each riparian function, using the four protection levels.

It was agreed that the VTAC guidance document must show how to define “functionality” and there was considerable discussion regarding how to deal with temporal scales (i.e., short-term degradation vs long-term improvement). Ultimately, the group agreed that the approach described by Mr. Liquori in the PowerPoint provides a good ranking system/framework and should be kept in the VTAC’s current toolbox as an option for the guidebook, since it avoids the need for a complete expert system approach.

VTAC Redwood Forest Science Symposium Abstract/Presentation in Santa Cruz

The VTAC briefly discussed the abstract developed for a VTAC presentation at the upcoming Redwood Forest Science Symposium to be held in Santa Cruz on June 21-23, 2011. Richard Gienger, Bill Stevens, and others had corrections for the member/representative list provided with the abstract. **An updated version is posted on the VTAC ftp site at: <ftp://frap.cdf.ca.gov/pub/incoming/VTAC/>. Mike Liquori stated that what will actually be presented will be discussed in greater detail in May.**

VTAC Funding Discussion

Mike Liquori led a discussion of possible mechanisms for funding VTAC monitoring work. Kevin Boston suggested that the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund could potentially be used, but Mark Lancaster stated that the federal money is only available this year for migration barrier/fish passage design work, as per direction from DFG. Mike Liquori informed the group that his contract for designing a process for spatially explicit riparian management with Dr. Doug

Martin for Washington and California allows for application for Phase 2 funding (up to \$500,000 over two years). Applications are due either March 1, 2011 or March 1, 2012. Due to poorly defined monitoring goals for the VTAC pilot projects at this time, the VTAC decided it would be better to wait until 2012 to apply. Mark Lancaster also suggested that Salmon and Steelhead Stamp Program funds may be available for monitoring work. **The goal is to locate approximately \$50-80K for a short-term source of funding for pilot project monitoring work.**

Discussion of Richard Gienger's VTAC Document

Richard Gienger briefly summarized a handout he provided at the last meeting titled "Some Thoughts and Suggestions Regarding Pre-Consultation and Basic Information Needs for Three Types of 14 CCR 916.9 (v) Projects." He provided this material to help the VTAC decide what information is important to include for Section V evaluations for differing types of potential projects.

Next VTAC Meeting Date/Agenda

Pete Cafferata stated that he would send out another "Doodle" poll for an acceptable date for the next VTAC meeting, aiming for mid-February. **When a final date, agenda, and location are available, he will email the announcement to the group.** It was suggested that the landowners that CAL FIRE's Crawford Tuttle initially contacted in the Fall of 2010 be re-contacted to gauge their current interest, THP plans, etc. **Mike Liquori stated that he would talk to Stacy Stanish prior to the next meeting to better define pre-consultation needs.** Analytical procedures to tentatively be used for the VTAC guidance document will be further discussed at the next meeting. There was also discussion regarding the possibility of field meeting to observe large wood placement projects near Weaverville, to be coordinated by Mark Lancaster.