California Fish and Wildlife Strategic Vision Project

Blue Ribbon Citizen Commission and Stakeholder Advisory Group
October 26, 2011 Meeting Notes

November 1, 2011

1. Welcome, Introductions and Opening Remarks

Welcome and opening remarks from Dave Ceppos, Carol Baker and Melissa Miller-Henson; member and public introductions.

2. Draft Interim Strategic Vision Contents

Presentation of draft table of contents as proposed by staff. Standard contents such as acronyms and abbreviations, executive summary, appendices, references, etc. Seven main chapters. Chapter one is origin of planning process, what is a strategic vision, etc. Chapter two more details about the legislation and what is required. Chapter three summarizes the process approach. Chapter four introduces the concept of past recommendations and efforts to implement; what barriers have prevented successful implementation? This chapter relatively short for draft interim since barriers to implementation report will not be completed until mid-December. Chapter five is focused on the potential recommendations from the process. For the draft interim, chapters five and six will have short description of what they will contain for Feb version (public and employee comments).

Request for clarification: Does that mean that for today we are focused on chapter two or chapter five? Staff clarified that question helps identify a problem with language choice, since chapter two is focused on the legislation and what it is intended to achieve. Focus today on chapter five. At what point do documents come back to the BRCC and SAG for further discussion of the potential actions? Staff responded that during Jan/Feb preparation of interim strategic vision discussions will include potential actions.

Are the potential specific actions being forwarded with the other work BRCC and SAG have developed? Staff indicated that was the intent. No action taken by the BRCC and SAG on these tables, so would require lots of caveats indicating that these are not recommendations nor has there been discussion and concurrence about the potential actions items.

Concerns expressed by members about the specific actions in the framework documents being shared with the public; concern about interpretation, potential reaction, and limited set of potential actions that do not reflect a broader range of possibilities. Working group time in recent weeks focused mostly on the problem and goal statements, not the specific actions; public could be misled by current format that similar amount of attention paid to the examples of potential actions as was spent on the problem and goal statements. Also concern expressed about the common themes and working group frameworks themselves being included in the draft interim strategic vision given the work still needed to reduce redundancy, further distillation of the problem statements, etc. Recognition that the specific examples help provide for the public some context and understanding of the intent of goals; without those the draft may not be very useful.

What is process for receiving DFG employee feedback on the draft interim? Additional outreach efforts will be designed in the coming weeks to reach DFG employees beyond the online survey.

Request to make clear to the public that the draft interim strategic vision is just that, that this is a draft document, and there will be an additional opportunity for public feedback on the interim strategic vision before a final is released at the end of June.

General consensus is that the concern is more about the BRCC and SAG members not having had time to review the details of the documents prior to being released. Concern is that there is additional work needed before materials are ready for sharing with the executive committee or for public consumption. Also, the examples of potential actions need to be more comprehensive since there has not been sufficient discussion among BRCC and SAG members about the few ideas currently in the documents, some of which create concern for some members.

4. Public Comment

This item was moved up in agenda order.

Not sure how the public will be able to understand and use this information in the current format and provide useful commentary; not clear what is meant by some of the problem statements and goals. Concern about the scheduling and timing of second phase product, integration of DFG employee input, and developing a plan for employee input.

Break

2. Draft Interim Strategic Vision Contents (continued)

Staff made a proposal for moving forward given the concerns expressed:

- Additional meeting on Nov. 7 or 8
- Additional actions from SAG and BRCC members – lengthen the list to be more exhaustive, including conflicting actions so that it is obvious to public that these are not being proposed now.
- Divide the specific actions from the problem and goal statements – present separately within the draft interim strategic vision (minimizes formality, but has to be structured in a way that is not more confusing)
- Potential staff work over next week: Develop suggestions for refined problem statements, goal statements, etc. Perhaps a series of questions to better define what is intended and then asking members to confirm.

Suggestion by SAG members that staff go a bit further, that staff both consolidate (reduce repetition) and refine problem statements and goals. Over next week BRCC and SAG members also provide additional potential actions.

Suggestion that matrix format is problematic. Some folks think about these ideas differently. Perhaps refine the goals separately from the common themes; where there are overlapping goals, consolidate those and then indicate to which themes they apply rather than repeating a goal in multiple themes.

Suggestion by SAG member to go back to the original problem and goal statements developed by working groups – "stated problems" language in the themes summary seems to be interpreting differently. Emerging common themes (partnerships, etc.) – there is duplication among working groups coming to the same conclusions.

Need to think about how (format) to include some actions to help public better understand the goal and problem statements. Concern about listing the examples of potential actions without some further discussion or at least expanding the list to show broader range of ideas, including those that conflict. Easy to find commonalities, but have not discussed differences and those examples is where likely to find more of those differences. Contradictions help underscore that examples are just that, and not actual recommendations. Suggestion that the initial assessment coding of funding, timing, etc. are important f or the dialogue. Add prefatory, proactive text that BRCC and SAG recognize that some of the example actions are conflicting, which is not accidental.

How will dissenting opinions/perspectives will be expressed in the reporting? No bar for unanimity in this process. "Can you live with it" for the SAG and vote of the BRCC.

Suggest staff take first stab at the editorial review for the common themes and frameworks, create something then that can be the foundation of a more precise document for public review. Eliminate redundancy in problem and goal statements, issues. Suggestion to take an aggressive approach to simplifying the materials and information, maintaining the original intent. SAG and BRCC members focus over next week more on the examples of potential actions.

Homework volunteers? Needed for check in or maybe even assistance in the editing over next week. Common themes document is not intended to be all-encompassing. There are important goals, problem statements, etc. that are not reflected in the common themes document. Not intended to be all-encompassing.

3. Reports from the Stakeholder Advisory Group Working Groups and October 18/19 Meetings

References in this section to specific goals are identified first by the working group acronym and then the goal number in the table for that working group (i.e., CEO 6). Acronyms for each working group are: Communication, Education and Outreach (CEO); Governance and Mission (GM); Natural Resource Stewardship (NRS); Regulatory and Permitting (RP); Science (Sci); and Sustainable Financing (SF).

Science Working Group Update

Most recent work has been on formatting, clarifying terms and such. Homework team believes table is mostly complete. Would ask that when staff do review and consolidation, use existing framework

language as much as possible and also be sure to integrate most recent framework language in the common themes document. Suggestion that need a definition of science, since appears to be used differently by different working groups. Diminished science capacity within DFG in and of itself is not necessarily the problem – what is the problem if science capacity has been reduced within the organization? Don't see real problem statement. Restore and enhance scientific capacity is not necessarily the real goal – why? Something else behind that?

Sci Goal III – science and policy without political influence. Difference between politics affecting the science versus politics affecting policy decisions – the former is not appropriate while latter is simply part of decision-making process.

Sci Objectives II5 – independent scientific review. Agree, but also talked about how it causes delay. May add "as appropriate" to this statement.

Governance and Mission Working Group Update

Almost everything in GM table had been transferred to the common themes document. Discussion yesterday focused on the items not transferred – took the "so what" question to heart and further refined and drilled down to actual problems and goals to significant degree. Two key issues discussed were the science being trusted and the decision-making process be transparent. This working group asked for an extra meeting and was able to make more progress on the drilling down exercise than perhaps other groups have been able.

Suggestion to rename the department – seems appropriate for the GM working group issues framework (first goal of GM table?) as an example of one way to achieve the first goal. Specific language for renaming department was read to the group: Department of Wildlife Conservation and Management. More broadly and succinctly describes the mission of DFG and is similar to other states.

Another issue perhaps not identified or discussed in working groups though resonates with several – diversity of California and its changing population. Affects much of what DFG and F&GC do - staff development, recruitment, engaging with fish and wildlife in recreational activities, etc.

Common Themes Document and Summary

Staff developed to help focus the conversation today. In summarizing the themes and problem statements it became clear to staff that there is still overlap in the problem statements.

Partnerships – definition of partnership for DFG and F&GC generally has a formal approach to achieve common goals. Intent of SAG with the common theme is perhaps less formal and encompasses idea of working together, collaborating, without necessarily requiring a formal arrangement (i.e., a memorandum of understanding or agreement). Would like to see non-governmental organizations added to the list of organizations. Suggestion that the stated problems are in fact not really the problems(s); back to the "so what" question. Perhaps reference to bureaucratic red tape and

increasing efficient delivery of services. Missing from theme statement is recognition of buy-in for the community. Capacity-building and leveraging external resources needs to be captured in this theme.

Broadly-Informed and Transparent Decision-Making – perhaps add "best available" to the "diverse" information. Summarizes a lot of difficult issues; could be tightened up and make problem statements more explicit as it seems like something is missing. Want to explicitly state a need for an insulating mechanism to separate the gathering of science (and its funding) and its interpretation from political influence. Transparency is broader than just science and more about how decisions are made – science is part of the decision-making but only one piece of the decision-making. Needs clarity: Statement about insufficient technical staff support for decision milestones. Statement that much of today's science is being conducted through private funding and the private foundations providing that funding have agendas; concern that scientists have to worry about what they science they pursue or say in public in order to continue to receive private funding.

Integrated Resource Management (IRM) – like partnerships, is IRM the end goal? Or is IRM a tool? IRM makes sense as an end goal (so resource management agencies don't "run into" each other ad waste lots of time and money). Does "resources" means natural or staffing – could lead to confusion. Concern raised about the term IRM since it may have agricultural history baggage. Intent with the term "integrated" was less about partnerships and more about "ecosystem-based" management that considers different aspects of resource management (i.e., water, air, plants, fish, etc.). Not sure the text is a theme, but rather more of a goal. Who and how (partnerships) versus the what (ecosystem management). Not looking at single-species issues, not just separating land and water, but also that can't separate species from their habitats, etc. IRM term has been used by the California Natural Resources Agency in recent years to try to pull multiple departments, commissions, etc. out of their "silos" and work more closely together. Hearing three different themes coming out of this conversation: (1) Ecosystem based management, (2) integrated resource management among agencies to integrate policies and objectives and (3) think "integratively" about the various ecosystem elements (watersheds connected to the ocean, etc.). Perhaps slightly modified theme statement? EBM may not fit here. Perhaps more political integration across and among agencies. Goal is not just to bring those folks together, really is EBM and perhaps improved political integration is one way of achieving.

Compliance (Enforcement) – greater comfort with term compliance rather than enforcement. Enforcement is one way to get compliance, but there are other methods such as outreach and education that are important elements prior to enforcement. Perhaps two different ideas being combined with law enforcement (badges) versus regulatory compliance. Request to address the issue of recruiting and retaining game wardens in the field and union representation. Overt detectives needed as well to investigate natural resource crimes in a more open and cooperative fashion with other enforcement agencies. Currently this theme misses concept of partnerships (see CEO4). Stated problem is really that lack of this stuff negatively impacts wildlife resources.

Fish and Game Code - relationship building with individual and organizational stakeholders was really more about the codes. Clarity needs to be included. Priority of mandates exercise fit here? Suggestion that priorities exercise is code as well as budget and more; perhaps more appropriate for defining

success. How is "multi-stakeholder" defined? Does it include the legislature? Staff is encouraged to look at the LAO presentation for ideas. Some don't like wording of the theme statement. Focus on the important stuff. DFG has so many tasks – which one do you do first?

Defining and Supporting Success – need to define what trying to achieve as an organization, as a unit of the organization, and as an employee of the unit/organization. Part of the problem is that there are not adequately articulated goals for individuals as well as performance measures. Legislative Analyst's Office report and presentation to the BRCC captures ideas about work plans, performance measures, etc.; according to presentation when DFG goes to the legislature it has a hard time indicating what it has achieved or how it used resources. As used here is "multi-stakeholder" the more narrow definition or more broadly (i.e., does it include the legislature?). What does "unified metrics" mean? Buzzwords. Suggest look at LAO report which has a good description. DFG as a whole does not have a good way to measure success. Wording of theme statement problematic. Perhaps theme statement is something to the effect of "focus on the important stuff." Part of problem is there is so much mandated, how do you determine what is the important stuff?

Staff Development – theme statement does not seem to reflect the problem, which is retention of staff due to a salary scale inconsistency with other agencies. Idea of longevity means what? Staff more integrated (i.e., outreach staff, science staff, enforcement, etc.). Enforcement is not included in this development process. Problem statements are organizational while the potential theme statement is about individuals. Stated problems and potential theme statement need work to better reflect the breadth of goals suggested in different working groups.

Common theme missing? Communication seems to be referenced over and over again, but not yet included. CEO specific actions related to communication plan and partnership - arrived at quickly.

5. Recommended Draft Interim Strategic Vision (action item)

No action today; this will be moved as an action to the next meeting to be held prior to the Nov. 10, 2011 CFWSV Executive Committee meeting. Settled on Tues., Nov. 8 as next meeting date.

6. Follow up, Staff Direction, Future Meetings

Nov. 2: BRCC and SAG members provide additional specific actions to staff
Nov. 3-4: BRCC and SAG volunteers review materials
Nov. 4 (very late): Staff provides next draft of materials in preparation for Nov. 8
Nov. 8: Joint BRCC-SAG meeting
Nov. 10: Executive committee meeting

7. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 5: 33 p.m.