

**United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA)
Science Advisory Board (SAB)/Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC)
Teleconference for the
Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program Breakout Group
July 17, 2014
Meeting Minutes**

Date and Time: July 17, 2014, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Location: By telephone.

Purpose: To: (1) provide SAB and BOSC members with a briefing on the EPA Office of Research and Development's (ORD's) Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program (SSWR) and ORD's initial thinking regarding its 2016-2019 Strategic Research Action Plan and (2) allow members to discuss ORD's charge to their committees and preparations for the SAB-BOSC face-to-face meeting on July 24–25, 2014.

Meeting Participants:

SAB/BOSC Members (See rosters for the SAB¹ and BOSC Executive Committees²)

Dr. Kimberly Jones, Breakout Group Chair
Ms. Shahid Chaudry
Dr. David Dzombak
Dr. Elaine Faustman

Dr. James Mihelcic
Dr. James Opaluch
Dr. Kenneth Reckhow
Dr. Jeanne Van Briesen

SAB Staff:

Dr. Angela Nugent, SAB Staff Office, Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
Ms. Stephanie Sanzone, DFO for the SSWR Breakout Group

Other Attendees:

Dr. Suzanne van Drunick, National Program Director for SHC
Attachment A lists members of the public who requested the call-in information for this meeting.

Meeting Materials:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/a84bfee16cc358ad85256ccd006b0b4b/65b51da5e77ad8a685257cf2006fefcd!OpenDocument&Date=2014-07-17>

Meeting Summary:

Convene the meeting

Dr. Angela Nugent, Designated Federal Officer (DFO), formally opened the teleconference and noted that this federal advisory committee meeting of the SAB had been announced in the Federal Register on June 18, 2014 (79 FR 34738-34739). She noted that the meeting had been announced as a briefing/planning meeting so that members of the SAB and BOSC could prepare for a July 24-25, 2014 meeting in Washington, DC to develop advice for the EPA on strategic

research directions. The SAB and BOSC has established an SAB/BOSC Breakout Group to focus particularly on ORD's SSWR research program.

Dr. Nugent noted that the EPA SAB is an independent, expert federal advisory committee chartered under the authority of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The SAB is empowered by law - the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act (ERDDAA) - to provide advice to the EPA Administrator on scientific and technical issues that inform EPA's decisions. The BOSC is a separately chartered committee established to provide ORD with advice on technical and management issues associated with its research programs. The DFO noted that the Federal Register notice announcing the meeting had provided the public with an opportunity to provide written and oral comment. There were no advance requests for oral comment and no written comments submitted in advance of the meeting.

The meeting generally followed the agenda.³

Goals and agenda for the meeting

Dr. Kimberly Jones welcomed the group. The purpose of the teleconference was to prepare for the breakout session on July 24, 2014. She emphasized that it was most appropriate to provide comments at a strategic level at this time, since ORD had invited early comments on its Strategic Research Action Plan (StRAP).

Presentation on the SSWR Research Program

Dr. Suzanne van Drunick, National Program Director for the SSWR Research Program, began her discussion by thanking members for their service on the group. She provided a slide presentation⁴ that gave an overview of the SSWR program.

Follow-up questions from the Breakout Group members

After Dr. van Drunick concluded his presentation, she responded to questions from SAB and BOSC members. She provided the following responses to questions:

- It may be helpful to provide a clearer graphic for watershed sustainability and other ACTIONS showing the strength of relationships between SSWR and other ORD research programs. That may help readers understand relationships like the relationship of SSWR research addressing nutrients to whatever Human Health Risk Assessment research addresses those problems.
- She acknowledged the importance of uncertainty analysis in the SSWR program. Dr. Steve Jordan from the SSWR program spoke about the importance of uncertainty analysis in ORD's Watership sustainability efforts.
- ORD expects an award to be made for a modeling center in FY 2015.
- ORD's Regional Applied Research Effort Program is funded at \$250,000/year per region, Of the total 28 projects funded by ORD in 2014, half were SSWR projects.
- The SSWR program prioritizes its research after consultation with program offices and regions. The Office of Water and regional offices provided a challenges, which are often near-term oriented. The StRAP was not intended as a workplan, however. It was intended as a strategic plan.

- In addition to consulting agency stakeholders, SSWR has conducted gap analysis in some cases. The SSWR is the lead program for the Nitrogen and Co-pollutant roadmap and has conducted a formal gap analysis for this effort. Such an analysis helps to identify where the EPA can make the greatest contribution. The same approach is being used for inter-agency research coordination and planning by the Center for Environment and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water Availability and Quality.
- The StRAP is intended to be visionary but needs to be scaled to EPA resources. ORD will need “people to do the work.” It wouldn’t be prudent to plan a research portfolio with a best-case research scenario.
- In response to a question about SSWR’s short and long-term plans involving human behavioral research, she stated that ORD does not have a strong social science workforce, but it is trying to enhance social science and behavioral work through partnerships and extramural research through the Science to Achieve Results program. An example of behavioral science research is ORD’s participation in the net Zero project, which includes an outreach study looking at behavior and attitudes related to water resource conservation willingness at the Fort Riley demonstration project. Such research would inform choices about the best management options. She also acknowledged the importance of considering community aspects in watershed protection efforts. The EPA had promoted green infrastructure and its co-benefits in a demonstration project, but these efforts were not embraced by the community because a rodent problem had developed. She also noted that, to the extent ORD has enhanced its social science capabilities, it has focused on the economic perspective.
- The SSWR began its green infrastructure efforts with an initial focus on storm water and combined sewage overflows. It has expanded this focus to include green infrastructure for flood management or hydrologic flows with consequences for soil permeability and a one-water perspective.

Discussion of ORD’s Charge to the SAB and BOSC and preparations for the face-to-face meeting

Dr. Jones reviewed the SSWR charge questions relevant to the Breakout Group discussion on July 24, 2014. The relevant charge questions for the SSWR workgroup are 2a, 2b, 2c, and 5a. She also asked members to review charge questions 1a, 1b, 8a and 9a related to the overall StRAPs and crosscutting areas. She asked that members send comments to Angela by July 21st.

Dr. Jones thanked breakout group members, representatives of the agency, and members of the public for participating. Dr. Nugent adjourned the teleconference at 2:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Certified as Accurate,

/Signed/

/Signed/

Dr. Angela Nugent
SAB Designated Federal Officer

Dr. Kimberly Jones
Breakout Group Chair

NOTE AND DISCLAIMER: The minutes of this public meeting reflect diverse ideas and suggestions offered by committee members during the course of deliberations within the meeting. Such ideas, suggestions, and deliberations do not necessarily reflect definitive consensus advice from the panel members. The reader is cautioned to not rely on the minutes to represent final, approved, consensus advice and recommendations offered to the

Agency. Such advice and recommendations may be found in the final advisories, commentaries, letters, or reports prepared and transmitted to the EPA Administrator following the public meetings.

Attachment A: Members of the public attending the public teleconference:

Scott B. Ahlstrom, Lower Colorado River Authority
Amy Dindal, Battelle
Annie Jarabek, EPA
Marjorie Jones, EPA
Robert Kavlock, EPA
Alan Lindquist, EPA
Richard Matthws, EPA
Walt Nelson, EPA
Ed Ohanion, EPA
Maya Pachnowski, EPA
Matthew Richards, EPA
Tara Rothschild, House of Representatives
Gregory Sales, EPA
Blake A. Schaeffer, EPA
Nicole Shao, EPA
Li Sylvana, EPA

Materials Cited

The following meeting materials are available on the SAB website,
<http://www.epa.gov/sab>, at the page for the [July 17, 2014](#)

[http://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/a84bfee16cc358ad85256ccd006b0b4b/65b51da5e77ad8a685257cf2006fefcd!OpenDocument&Date=2014-07-17 0](http://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/a84bfee16cc358ad85256ccd006b0b4b/65b51da5e77ad8a685257cf2006fefcd!OpenDocument&Date=2014-07-17%20)

¹ Roster for the Chartered SAB

² Roster for the BOSC Executive Committee

³ Agenda

⁴ Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program, Presentation by Suzanne van Drunick, Reposted with corrections-07/17/14.