



Tulare Basin Watershed Connections Collaborative Draft Charter – January 25, 2018

Purpose

This charter explains the history, structure, and decision-making process of the Tulare Basin Watershed Connections Collaborative (TBWCC).

Background

In February and June of 2014, the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (TBWP), Southern California Edison (SCE), and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) sponsored two workshops to bring together water managers in the Tulare Basin to begin discussions about ways to increase interest in collaborating on a holistic approach to water management in the Tulare Basin Watershed. A workgroup was formed to follow up on the ideas generated at the workshops – that group has been called the Tulare Basin Watershed Connections Workgroup (Workgroup).

As of January 2018, the group is ready to transition to a more formalized watershed collaborative that will serve to: provide a forum for discussion about the connections between the upper and lower watershed, develop resources to share scientific research findings about the benefits of investment in the upper watershed, and identify and prioritize opportunities for projects that can deliver multiple benefits related to water supply and ecosystem services resilience. This collaborative will be known as the Tulare Basin Watershed Connection Collaborative (TBWCC).

Goal

The goal statement for the Workgroup was broadly outlined at the second Watershed Connections Summit and was further refined by the Workgroup at the first meeting in August 2014. The goal statement will remain the same for the TBWCC.

Goal Statement: *To advance collaborative watershed planning and resource management in the Tulare Basin based on sound science and mutually identified needs for regional economic and ecological sustainability.*

Values and Principles

Placeholder! – We definitely have them, but haven't specifically agreed on what they are yet.

The TBWCC values regional resilience, ecosystem integrity, natural resources, and the human communities of the region. TBWCC guiding principles are transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, and consensus-based decision making.

Membership

Membership of the TBWCC is very broad since the focal issues for the group affect diverse groups of people and ecosystems throughout the watershed. Membership includes representatives from the water, forestry, agriculture, and wildlife sectors; disadvantaged communities; tribal representatives; and educators.

Roles and Responsibilities









Coordinators: The TBWCC is led by a Coordinator and a Co-Coordinator who serves as an alternate for the Coordinator if s/he is not able to lead meetings or other aspects of the group. The Coordinator will schedule and facilitate meetings, distribute meeting notes and other relevant materials to the group, seek out opportunities to engage new potential workgroup members, and be an advocate for the efforts of the group. To maintain balanced representation of the upper and lower watershed interests, one Coordinator should represent the upper watershed region, and the other the lower watershed.

Note taker: The note taker documents the conversations of the group, including name of speaker and content of their comment or the ensuing discussion. If not taken electronically, the note taker transcribes the notes in Microsoft Word and sends them to the Coordinator for review prior to posting and distribution.

Workgroup Leads: Workgroup leads schedule and facilitate meetings of their topic-based subgroups, take notes and share outcomes of the meetings with the Coordinator. Subgroup leads may be asked to recap meetings and other activities to the rest of the membership at the quarterly meetings.

Workgroups

Topic-based groups comprised of people with expertise and interest in developing strategies and implementing projects to address the challenges related to the topic; the subgroups meet and/or provide input to the broader working group as funding and partnership opportunities arise. There is substantial overlap and it is recognized that subgroup members should communicate with others as appropriate when planning a project or event.

-  Sustainable Groundwater and Surface Water
-  Upper/Lower Watershed Connection: Education, Planning and Project Development
-  Wetland and Wildlife Habitat Protection and Restoration
-  Regional Landscape-scale Project Prioritization and Implementation
-  Extreme Events and Climate Change Resilience
-  Tribal Community Support for Addressing Water-Related Challenges
-  Funding
-  Disadvantaged Community Support for Water-Related Challenges

Meeting Schedule

Meetings will be held quarterly and will be scheduled by the Coordinator after polling the membership for optimal dates. Every attempt will be made to avoid conflicts with other key events that members might need to prioritize over the TBWCC meetings.

Attendance

Attendance at TBWCC meetings is not specifically required to be considered a member of the workgroup, although members who are not able to join the meetings are expected to review the agenda and meeting notes when they are posted on the website. Keeping informed about the presentations and discussions will ensure the group is continually moving forward with ideas and project concepts.

Communication










Members may freely communicate with other members about topics of concern for the TBWCC between meetings. However, discussions that yield new insights or obstacles relevant to the success of the TBWCW should be brought to the attention of the Coordinator.

Decision Making

Decisions about priority actions for the TBWCC will occur during the meetings and will be a consensus seeking process. Types of decisions that could be made by this group include: a) priorities for outreach and engagement; b) approval for providing support for a particular project or effort (e.g. SSIRWMG); c) selecting grant proponents/administrators for a particular grant or funding source the TBWCW pursues; or d) annual workplan activities.

When a decision is to be made, advance notice will be given to members so they are aware it will occur at a particular meeting. Attendance at the meeting (either in person or remotely) will be required to participate in the decision. After the topic is discussed by the group and all feel that their perspectives have been heard, the Coordinator will articulate the specific decision to be made and ask the group “Can you live with this decision?”. If all responses are “yes”, then the decision will be recorded in the meeting notes that are distributed to all members of the TBWCW. If a “no” answer is given, the group will continue the discussion until the member(s) who have problems with the decision feel they can give a “yes” response, time permitting. The decision may need to be postponed to a future meeting if there are still members who cannot ‘live with the decision’ by the time the meeting ends.

Ground Rules

-  Participate and show respect for other members and their time
-  Speak one at a time
-  Share relevant information
-  Be concise
-  Express concerns and interests (not positions)
-  Be solution-oriented
-  Draw on each other’s experience
-  Limit sidebar conversations
-  Focus on what CAN be changed (not on what cannot be changed)

Modifying the Charter

The TBWCC Charter describes the purpose and activities of the workgroup. Changes may be made to the Charter at the concurrence of the members, utilizing the Charter decision-making process.