

CALIFORNIA WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL MODELING FORUM

## MINUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

For January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

*(This meeting was conducted online via Zoom meeting)*

Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ED P. Hutton to send out a notice that registration is opening for the 2025 CWEMF Annual Meeting in the following week starting on January 20, 2025.</li><li>• ED P. Hutton will reach out to Dr. Steve Andrews (RMA) to confirm his commitment to moderate the Grab Bag Session 31.</li><li>• ED P. Hutton will work with the Website Subcommittee to post the moderator guidelines on the CWEMF website.</li><li>• The Awards Subcommittee will provide a recommendation for the Hugo B. Fischer and the Career Achievement Awards to the Steering Committee for vote by email no later than mid-February 2025.</li><li>• K. Nam to draft simple instructions for the recording devices and their function used at the annual meeting to capture the screen-audio recordings.</li><li>• ED P. Hutton to correspond with former CWEMF webmaster Xiaojun Li to solicit recommendations for a potential successor.</li><li>• ED P. Hutton will resend the webmaster vacancy announcement out to the full CWEMF listserv to again solicit proposals.</li><li>• ED P. Hutton to work with Website Subcommittee Chair K. Nam to ensure he can access the website files through hosting service and get the necessary updates to facilitate registration for the 2025 AM.</li><li>• Convener J. Jankowski requests that a report on the CVHM2 workshop finances be included as part of the Workshops Subcommittee report for the March CWEMF Steering Committee meeting.</li><li>• ED P. Hutton to follow-up via email to poll Steering Committee members regarding in-person attendance for the March Steering Committee meeting.</li></ul>
Motions Passed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Motion to approve the November 15 SC minutes with the revisions discussed made by T. Kadir, seconded by S. Tanaka is unanimously approved (23-0).</li><li>• N. Sandhu Motion for a 50% discount for no more than 10 seats or 50% of the expected attendance whichever is lower for both the IWFM and the IDC workshops be reserved for DWR staff by N. Sandhu, seconded by T. Kadir, passes by unanimous rollcall vote with three abstentions noted (17-0).</li></ul>

### REFERENCES INCLUDED IN THE MEETING PACKET

1. Attachment 2-1: Executive Director's Report For the January 17, 2025 Steering Committee Meeting. 1p.
2. Attachment 2-2: Treasurer's Report, FY2024 SC Meeting: January 17, 2024[sic]. 1p.
3. Attachment 3-1: Proposed 2025 Annual Meeting Program. 17p.

4. Attachment 3-2: 2025 Annual Meeting Moderator Guidelines, Presentation Abstract Submittal Form, and Presentation Recommendations. 4p.
5. Attachment: 2025 Annual Meeting Sponsors. 1p.
6. Attachment: CWEMF November 15 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes Final Review Draft<sup>1</sup>. January 15, 2025. 17p.

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## 1. INTRODUCTIONS – DESIGNATE QUORUM / REVIEW ACTION ITEMS (JANKOWSKI)

Convener J. Jankowski called the CWEMF Steering Committee (SC) meeting to order at 9:31 AM and a quorum was declared with 18 participants online. Convener J. Jankowski also wishes the SC a Happy New Year for this first meeting of the CWEMF Steering Committee in 2025. A. Huber is designated proxy for K. Heidel for the later portion of the meeting after K. Heidel leaves the meeting due to a conflict<sup>2</sup>.

Convener J. Jankowski begins the meeting with a brief review of the action items from the November 15<sup>th</sup>, CWEMF Steering Committee (SC) meeting. Convener J. Jankowski reviews each item on the list indicating the action items completed and the actions that will be follow-upped under a later item on the meeting agenda.

## 2. CONSENT CALENDAR

- Executive Director’s Report (Hutton): Attachment 2-1  
Executive Director (ED) P. Hutton refers to the Executive Director’s report in the agenda packet (Attachment 2-1) adding that he has no items to highlight as most of the items in his report will be discussed as part of the agenda.
- Secretary’s Report (Bray):  
Secretary B. Bray refers to the final review (*i.e.*, camera ready) draft of the CWEMF Steering Committee meeting minutes for November 15, 2024. Secretary B. Bray adds that he got behind schedule over the holidays and was unable to complete the final review draft in time to be included in the SC meeting agenda packet. As a result, Secretary B. Bray sent out the final review draft of the November 15<sup>th</sup> SC minutes to the SC listserv the morning of January 16, 2025. Secretary B. Bray expresses his appreciation for the SC members that reviewed and offered revisions on the initial draft sent out January 8<sup>th</sup> that are reflected in the final review draft. He notes most of the proposed revisions were formatting corrections, misspellings, typos, misused punctuation, or corrections to misspelled names.

Secretary B. Bray reports that he received one set of additional proposed revisions since sending out the final review draft on January 16<sup>th</sup>. Secretary B. Bray shares his screen and reviews the four additional proposed revisions received. Secretary B. Bray also takes a moment to explain his convention for abbreviating names in the meeting minutes.

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<sup>1</sup> Sent to CWEMF Steering Committee Members via email January 16, 2025 8:21 AM.

<sup>2</sup> At approximately ten minutes into the meeting at 9:30 AM, Puneet Khataavkar comments via chat that he is, “[s]tepping away for a 1 hr meeting. Yiwei has agreed to be my proxy.”

T. Kadir makes a clarification of the information in the minutes. T. Kadir refers to the Awards Subcommittee report (page 8) and to the Workshops Subcommittee report (pages 11 through 13) in the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Before continuing, T. Kadir explains that he is not seeking a change in the minutes, rather that he wishes to clarify that he is stepping down as chair in both the Awards and the Workshops Subcommittees because he is retiring from DWR and wanted to offer the opportunity to others that may want to be chair. Continuing, T. Kadir adds that he intends to remain active in CWEMF as a public member and may be interested in chairpersonships in the future, though he is no longer affiliated with DWR.

Motion to approve the minutes with the revisions as discussed earlier by T. Kadir, seconded by S. Tanaka. Convener J. Jankowski asks for unanimous consent for approval of the minutes. With no objections raised, the November 15, 2024, SC minutes are unanimously approved (23-0).

- Treasurer's Report (Tanaka): Attachment 2-2

Treasurer S. Tanaka wishes the SC a happy new year. Referring to Attachment 2-2 Treasurer S. Tanaka reports that there are no significant highlights in the finances since the last SC meeting. She anticipates there will be some accounting activity coming with the annual meeting registration opening soon. There was no additional discussion.

ED P. Hutton reports on an informational item as part of the Treasurer's Report.

Representatives from the US Bureau of Reclamation inquired about paying multiple years of organizational dues in advance as a convenience for them. ED P. Hutton responded affirmatively with the caveat that in the hypothetical circumstance of a dues increase in a future prepaid year, the advance payment does not shelter them from any potential increase.

## ACTION ITEMS

### 3. 2025 ANNUAL MEETING PREPARATION (HUTTON)

- The 2025 Annual Meeting date will be May 12-14, 2025.

Unfortunately, CWEMF was not able to reserve the preferred dates. Through ED P. Hutton's discussions with LNI, he inferred that our usual April timeframe tends to have less conflicts with other events than in May. As you move down the agenda, notice that some of the meeting rooms such as the Pavillion, are not available during the dates reserved for the AM. Choosing April is advantageous for several reasons in the long term, although later dates were preferred to allow for a little more of a gap in time since the 2024 AM this past fall.

- Outreach/Registration (Hutton)

In the next week, ED P. Hutton plans to send out notice to the CWEMF listserv that registration is opening for the 2025 AM. (ACTION ITEM)

- Sessions Subcommittee (Heidel, Hutton)

ED P. Hutton reports there was an excellent response to the call for sessions and talk proposals. There are enough session proposals to fill a three-track conference! A draft layout of the schedule and proposed talks are provided in Attachment 3-1. ED P. Hutton asks for any discussion about the proposed three-track meeting or layout of the agenda.

Convener J. Jankowski requests a minor correction that T. Kadir's name be struck and replaced with his name (J. Jankowski) as moderator for the awards on Monday May 12 (pages i and 3). Convener J. Jankowski thanks the subcommittee members and ED P. Hutton for the effort that went into the proposed layout of the schedule. ED P. Hutton responds that CWEMF was very fortunate yet again that the number of proposals lined up perfectly for the three-track program. He adds that several session proposals would have to be rejected to go to a two-track meeting schedule.

ED P. Hutton reports that CWEMF's initial contract with Lake Natomas Inn (LNI) envisioned a two-track program. In speaking with LNI staff, ED P. Hutton found that the Pavillion will not be available for our reserved dates. However, he was able to work out a good alternative. Sierra 2, the room typically reserved for the poster session will be set up as a third conference room that can hold about 100 individuals. ED P. Hutton has also reserved the back half of the Natoma/Folsom room which, with the partition removed, is referred to as the Sutter meeting room. Referring to Attachment 3-1 (page ii), there would be two technical sessions held in the afternoon on Tuesday May 13<sup>th</sup> with the third room held in reserve for the poster session, Sierra 2, so that posters can be set-up mid-day through the afternoon until the poster session and social is scheduled to start in the evening at 5 PM.

Secretary B. Bray observes that the CalSim sessions proposed will follow the CalSim3 training scheduled for February into early March and will likely add a lot of value to members, especially those taking the training.

ED P. Hutton adds that there is a Grab Bag Session 31. There have been five independent proposals for individual talks that will fit into this Grab Bag Session. Typically, ED P. Hutton seeks a volunteer to serve as a moderator for grab bag sessions, although he received a more general offer from one of the speakers to moderate, Dr. Steven Andrews from RMA. With no volunteers, ED P. Hutton will reach out to Dr. Steven Andrews to confirm his commitment to moderate the session. (ACTION ITEM)

- Session Proposals: Attachment 3-1

ED PH reports on his plans to hold a meeting with all the session moderators on-line to go over the moderator guidelines. Our Sessions Subcommittee has cleaned up and sharpened the moderator guidelines. He intends to go through the formality of holding the meeting with the session moderators to ensure they are aware of their role and responsibilities. Convener J. Jankowski agrees and underscores the importance of holding the meeting and going over the specific responsibilities, including the extra information about the screencast recording, providing copies of the presentations on the desktop. He welcomes any comments or input on the moderator guidelines underscoring that it is important guidance to have to support our annual meeting and should be revisited and updated as necessary.

Secretary B. Bray (Via chat) reminds the SC to also post the moderator guidelines on the CWEMF website in addition to emailing them out as was discussed in prior SC

meetings. Convener J. Jankowski and ED P. Hutton agree, ED P. Hutton will work with the Website Subcommittee to post on the CWEMF website. (ACTION ITEM)

- Updated Moderator Guidelines: Attachment 3-2

N. Johns that he is hopeful that the session moderators will share the guidance document with the presenters in their session. Another idea N. Johns had was to send the guidance document to the presenters, although that would be a much greater effort. Rather, it would be preferred to encourage the session moderators to pass the information to the session presenters as part of the meeting ED P. Hutton is looking to schedule. ED P. Hutton acknowledges and confirms he can extend the invite to the Session Subcommittee members if they are interested in attending as well.

Convener J. Jankowski takes a little time to highlight some of the specifics of the speaker guidelines provided given previous discussions (see Attachment 3-2, CWEMF 2025 Annual Meeting Presentation Recommendations).

ED P. Hutton acknowledges this effort to clean up the draft document and formulate a clear guidance document thanking the subcommittee members J. Jankowski, N. Johns, K. Heidel, R. Graziano, and A. Huber, for their outstanding job well done.

Secretary B. Bray suggests that the session moderator guidelines and presentation recommendations be posted as separate documents. Speakers may go to the website to seek the information and may have difficulty finding it if the link refers to moderator guidelines or that's the first thing they see when they open the document. He recommends the session moderator guidelines, the annual meeting proposal template, and the presentation guidelines be posted as three separate documents.

- Awards Subcommittee (Jankowski)

Convener J. Jankowski opens his report reminding the SC that he has agreed to chair the Awards Subcommittee. At the 2025 AM, he will be transitioning officer roles and become the past convener. He plans to remain as the Awards Subcommittee chair as has been traditional for that role. Convener J. Jankowski adds that J. Medellín-Azuara, T. Kadir and Mike Deas have volunteered to continue serving on the Awards Subcommittee in addition to S. Chowdhury who has volunteered to help review and make recommendations for nominations received.

The call for award nominations went out along with the save the date announcement for the CWEMF AM. The nominations were received through to the beginning of January. The Awards Subcommittee received two nominations for the Hugo B Fischer Award and one nomination for the Career Achievement award. Last year J. Medellín-Azuara introduced rubrics to assist members of the Subcommittee in evaluating the nominations received. The subcommittee is in the process of completing those rubrics to inform a recommendation for the SC to consider. The Awards Subcommittee is planning to meet and discuss their evaluations of the nominations and form a recommendation for the March SC meeting. Convener J. Jankowski then reminds the SC that any nominations for the Distinguished Life

Member Award are encouraged at this (the January) and the March SC meetings. Convener J. Jankowski reviews the criteria for the Distinguished Life Member Award<sup>3</sup>.

After further discussion, it was decided the Awards Subcommittee will meet and provide a recommendation for the Hugo B. Fischer and the Career Achievement Awards to the Steering Committee for vote by email no later than mid-February 2025. (ACTION ITEM)

- Keynote Speaker (Hutton)  
ED P. Hutton reports Dr. Peter Goodwin accepts the invitation as keynote for Tuesday Afternoon May 13. Since Dr. Goodwin's role as Delta Lead Scientist, he has shown an active interest in our organization.
- Screencast Recording Volunteers (Nam)  
Convener J. Jankowski opens by volunteering to lead the effort to collect the presentation files for the 2025 AM and get them processed and posted on the CWEMF website.

K. Nam reports that the screen-cast recording worked well in 2024. He plans to proceed with the same approach to capturing the sound as last year. However, with the third track program this year, he may need to purchase an additional backup. If N. Sandhu and Y. Cheng volunteer to assist in monitoring the recordings in two of the rooms, he may need one additional volunteer to cover the third room<sup>4</sup>. Editing and posting the recordings is another issue, however, and K. Nam proposes to table discussion on this for now.

Convener J. Jankowski asks if K. Nam can put together some simple instructions for the devices and how they work. K. Nam agrees (ACTION ITEM).

- Sponsors (Hutton):  
ED PH refers to the Attachment 2025 Annual Meeting Sponsors in the meeting packet noting he plans to send out another query. He anticipates he will receive more interest than he has garnered to date. ED. P. Hutton adds that in recent correspondence Woodard and Curran has not only responded affirmatively but has submitted payment.

Convener J. Jankowski takes the opportunity to thank Vice Convener V. Bedekar and P. Khatakar in attendance for their organization's contribution. T. Kadir seeks to clarify. Convener J. Jankowski clarifies his appreciation for the firm commitments listed on the attachment and extends that appreciation to Woodard and Curran alluding to ED P. Hutton's recent update and S. Tanaka as a representative in attendance for Watercourse Engineering for their commitments, as well as J. Medellín-Azuara for the commitment (via chat) from his firm, Pacific Agroecology.

ED P. Hutton also reminds the SC that members must be in good standing with their dues paid to participate in the 2025 Steering Committee meetings. For SC members that do not have their memberships covered as part of an organizational membership, please ensure the

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<sup>3</sup> For more information, see <https://cwemf.org/wp/about-2/awards/distinguished-life-membership-award>.

<sup>4</sup> Y. Cheng via chat confirms his commitment to help with the screencast recording for the 2025 AM.

2025 CWENF dues are paid in order to participate in the next SC meeting in March. Most SC members are organizational members or distinguished life members, however.

Convener J. Jankowski asks about the SWRCB membership renewal payment status. ED P. Hutton explains that the SWRCB set up a long-term contracting arrangement that is intended to streamline the membership renewal process. As a reminder, organizational members have their own unique fiscal years, notwithstanding, invoices are sent out in January.

T. Kadir asks whether there is a contact person with DWR for the contract and payments regarding the organizational dues and for the workshop. ED P. Hutton responds affirmatively that his contact for the membership dues is Erik Reyes, although he is unaware of the contact for the workshops as it is no longer the same person. T. Kadir reminds the SC that he is no longer with DWR and does not have contacts there anymore. T. Kadir recommends a DWR representative to check with the appropriate person regarding the contracting. ED P. Hutton responds that there is documentation exchanged every year. N. Sandhu adds that he expects DWR will respond soon, and he will check with Erik Reyes on the subject.

- Theme (Satkowski)

R. Satkowski recaps theme ideas expressed during the November 15<sup>th</sup> SC meeting. Some of the suggestions received then were: *reaching out to modelers*, *diverse coordination and collaboration*, *political changing leadership*, and *disciplinary work* for theme concepts. R. Satkowski reviewed the titles of the sessions proposed for the 2025 AM. He noticed there is certainly a diversity of topics and talks proposed. One recommendation was to communicate with the keynote speaker to get their input on the theme. R. Satkowski plans to follow-up now that Dr. Goodwin has accepted the role. R. Satkowski advises that a theme around Collaboration would be good given the diversity in content the 2025 AM program represents.

R. Satkowski continues adding that he reviewed previous AM themes. He found that CWEMF has not had an AM theme related to collaboration in recent years. R. Satkowski provides a strawman proposal to start discussion, “Collaboration and Conflict in California Water and Environmental Modeling,” or “Collaborative Solutions for a Sustainable Water Future.”

Convener J. Jankowski expresses his preference for the second suggestion over the first. B. Geske concurs with J. Jankowski underscoring that R. Satkowski should reach out to Dr. Peter Goodwin to solicit his input on the theme. Dr. Goodwin was a big part of launching, advocating for, supporting, and leading the Chesapeake Global collaboratory under construction at the University of Maryland. B. Geske likes the idea of using the theme to highlight collaboration and the multi-disciplinary nature of our work.

T. Kadir proposes the following theme, “The Importance of Collaboration in Resolving CA Water Issues.”

Vice Convener V. Bedekar adds to the discussion and agrees with the overall thought process noting this theme concept is consistent with his experience working with other agencies and other consultants. He adds another theme suggestion for consideration, “Collaboration and Consensus Building using Models.”

J. Jankowski refers to a set of artificial intelligence – large language model submissions submitted by T. Slawcki<sup>56</sup>.

R. Sakowski thanks the SC for all the ideas. He understands the direction the SC would like to go for the theme. He will work with the proposals, correspond with the keynote speaker Dr. Peter Goodwin, and work on a final theme proposal for the SC to vote on in March.

In reference to the first of the two proposals posited by R. Satkowski, T. Kadir suggests the word **challenges** in place of the word **conflict**.

There was some discussion of using an artificial intelligence generated image for the cover theme. T. Kadir volunteered to assist R. Satkowski and ED P. Hutton with producing a cover image once the theme text is finalized.

#### 4. WEBSITE SUBCOMMITTEE: WEBMASTER VACANCY (NAM, HUTTON)

ED P. Hutton reports that the CWEMF webmaster job announcement was sent out to the CWEMF listserv via email since the November SC meeting and he did not receive any responses. With regards to moving forward with the recruitment, ED P. Hutton states that one approach could be asking the Website Subcommittee to meet and develop some options to (1) move forward with respect to the process for hiring somebody and (2) how to handle website maintenance functions in the interim.

ED P. Hutton reports that he has spoken with K. Nam the Website Subcommittee chair to see if he would be willing to step in and help get the website setup for 2025 AM registration, one of the most time sensitive and urgent issues for updating the website.

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<sup>5</sup> The following set of theme suggestions were generated by Gemini (Google LLM)

Short & Punchy:

- Flow Together: Navigating Conflict & Collaboration in California Water
- United Waters: Bridging Divides for a Sustainable Future
- The California Water Nexus: Cooperation for Resilience
- From Conflict to Confluence: Finding Common Ground
- Water Harmony: Balancing Needs & Navigating Challenges

Intriguing & Evocative:

- The California Water Tapestry: Weaving Cooperation & Resilience
- Charting a New Course: Collaboration in a Changing Water Landscape
- The California Water Crossroads: Choosing Cooperation
- Navigating the Currents: Conflict & Collaboration in California Water
- A Watershed Moment: Fostering Cooperation for a Water-Secure Future

Bold & Direct:

- Confronting Conflict, Cultivating Collaboration: A Call to Action
- Uniting for Water: Breaking Down Barriers, Building Bridges
- The Future of California Water: Collaboration is Key
- No More Dry Wells: Cooperation for a Sustainable Water Supply
- California Water: Time for Action, Time for Unity

<sup>6</sup> Secretary B. Bray follows with his own proposal via chat, “Collaboration is the Secret Sauce for the Modeling Soufflé. Secretary B. Bray adds that he likes the AI LLM entry “The California Water Tapestry: Weaving Cooperation & Resilience.” Anne Huber follows in the chat commenting, “[r]elated to the current microphone issues: Collaboration on California water issues, unmuting all voices.”



ED P. Hutton reports he's had some difficulties with our web provider getting administrative privileges set up that he would like to work with K. Nam to resolve.

Convener J. Jankowski expresses his disappointment in the lack of responses to the inquiry sent out within our network. Convener J. Jankowski proposes delegating the recruitment effort to the Website Subcommittee, they can work through a process to develop options to move forward with the recruitment effort. Convener J. Jankowski continues that there may be some websites, or some inquiries that could be made outside our network by the Website Subcommittee to recruit and onboard a new webmaster. Finding a new CWEMF webmaster is a priority and cannot wait until the next SC meeting in March. We need a webmaster onboard as soon as possible given the urgency of the 2025 AM registration. If CWEMF cannot develop the capacity to handle the immediate needs for the website either through the Website Subcommittee or the CWEMF steering committee, the job description and webmaster announcement may need to be sent to a broader network.

T. Kadir asks whether CWEMF sought out any recommendations for the recruitment effort from the previous webmaster. Maybe they have a recommendation or referral for someone that can replace them as CWEMF webmaster.

K. Nam responds that his correspondence with the former webmaster was limited only to technical issues, specifically technical issues that need to be resolved with the web hosting vendor. The correspondence did not include seeking recommendations for a possible successor.

After some further clarification, it was decided that ED P. Hutton will reach out to the former CWEMF webmaster to solicit recommendations for a successor. (ACTION ITEM)

N. Johns volunteers to speak with the technical support specialists within his organization and send around the webmaster position announcement to reach a broader network and hopefully garner some interest. N. Johns ends his comment asking where the webmaster position is posted, is there a link on the CWEMF website?

Convener J. Jankowski responds that he does not believe the webmaster announcement was posted to the website, rather was emailed to the CWEMF listserv. Clarifying, he is not opposed to posting on the website, however. Convener J. Jankowski requests ED P. Hutton resend the webmaster job announcement to the SC email list as a reminder. ED P. Hutton responds that he intends to resend out to the full CWEMF listserv that includes the SC members to again solicit proposals from our network. (ACTION ITEM) ED P. Hutton also clarifies that the maximum hourly rate approved by the SC is not included in the announcement<sup>7</sup>.

Convener J. Jankowski encourages SC members to share the website announcement within their broader professional networks, speak with their IT colleagues about the position, and seek recommendations for appropriate places to post the announcement.

B. Geske reported that he talked with a colleague with website management expertise after the November SC meeting and followed up with K. Nam. Although the position is not something his

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<sup>7</sup> Secretary B. Bray further clarifies. During the November 15, 2024 SC meeting, a motion was approved to authorize the Website Subcommittee and ED P. Hutton to move forward with recruiting a webmaster at an hourly rate not to exceed \$60/hour. ED P. Hutton adds that this was a maximum authorized rate, the rate was not included in the request for applicants where their rate was assumed to be a part of the response to the CWEMF webmaster announcement.

colleague is interested in personally, his colleague was knowledgeable with respect to the technical requirements in the announcement and confirmed that \$60 per hour is a good ceiling, although he expected CWEMF should be able to find someone that would assume the role at a billing rate closer to \$50 per hour. They also discussed how younger individuals just finishing up graduate studies, or engaged in a post-doc, or just out of college with limited experience are good at this kind of work and find it relatively easy. Continuing, this announcement is not as appealing to individuals looking for full-time or part-time work given the intermittent nature of the position, that it is on-call and expected to garner a low number of billable hours in any given week. Again, someone working towards a M.S. or Ph.D. that is already using the prerequisite skills might be better candidates for the position. Perhaps the distribution of the announcement should be extended to reach our colleagues in some of the universities within our network.

Y. Cheng also reached out to a webmaster he worked with before. When Y. Cheng forwarded the document sometime near the end of 2024, the individual expressed some interest in the CWEMF webmaster position. Y. Cheng intends to follow-up and see if she can provide a resume which he can share with the SC. Y. Cheng also volunteers to assist with website updates until a webmaster can be brought onboard.

T. Kadir asks that SC members helping with the webmaster recruitment be cautious that any individuals that also work at a government agency will need to check with their agency to ensure there is no conflict of interest by taking this job.

Secretary B. Bray offers an idea. Given the difficulty recruiting a webmaster within our network, would CWEMF be interested in potentially training an individual within our network that is willing to take on the role, perhaps the individual might already be a member of the Website Subcommittee. Based on his understanding, the webmaster needs experience working with the WordPress software that is key to editing and managing the CWEMF website. Convener J. Jankowski appreciates the thought stating that this option may need to be considered if unsuccessful in our immediate request for proposals.

ED P. Hutton shifts topics from recruitment to maintaining and updating the website until a webmaster can be brought on board. If ED P. Hutton provides the appropriate information, can K. Nam work with the webhosting company Bluehost. K. Nam acknowledges that the biggest thing hindering his ability to access the website is the two-factor-authentication (2FA) adding that once he can get access, he believes he could do more to manage the website. ED P. Hutton responds that it seems urgent enough to get them on the phone; K. Nam was not able to get passed the authentication step in a recent attempt. ED P. Hutton to work with Website Subcommittee Chair K. Nam to ensure he can access the website files and get the necessary updates to facilitate registration for the 2025 AM. (ACTION ITEM)

Convener J. Jankowski closes by reiterating his call for the Website Subcommittee to look for venues for which the CWEMF webmaster announcement could be posted that are independent of the CWEMF network.

## 5. STRATEGIC PLAN (JANKOWSKI)

Convener J. Jankowski begins his report recalling that the Strategic Plan Subcommittee convened a retreat about a year ago. There was a lull in activity, although Convener J. Jankowski and B. Geske are collaborating on a newly revised strategic plan. They are looking at the 2024 to

2029 timeframe for the five-year plan. They are working on a draft overall strategic plan highlighting the goals and strategies by which CWEMF can achieve its mission<sup>8</sup>. They are also drafting a companion document, an action plan. The action plan contains specific, measurable, time bound, trackable activities, to achieve these strategies. The action plan is considered a, “living document” used to guide achievement and prioritization of the actions.

Convener J. Jankowski proposes that the draft go from Convener J. Jankowski and B. Geske to ED P. Hutton to circulate to the participants in the strategic planning retreat. From there, they plan to present the draft plans to the SC in March. The ultimate goal is for the SC to approve the strategic plan and action plan recognizing there may be a process for review and taking input from the SC before a final approval.

S. Chowdhury participated in the strategic planning retreat and looks forward to receiving the document and commenting.

T. Kadir inquires whether there is a portion of the document that provides guidance or a strategy regarding CWEMF outreach to other organizations like academic institutions, for example, to either increase membership or participation in CWEMF activities.

Convener J. Jankowski responds that an outreach strategy is a good discussion point. He continues highlighting Goal 3 from the Strategic plan dealing with management and support of the organization and administrative activities, specifically strategy 3.1<sup>9</sup> is intended to ensure adequate participation in the CWEMF SC. Although the strategy is not focused on increasing CWEMF membership broadly, rather on increasing administrative oversight of the CWEMF organization. He adds that there is currently not a specific strategy focused on increasing CWEMF membership as a broad strategy.

T. Kadir responds that he sees a recommendation responsive to his inquiry under strategy 3.2. T. Kadir provides the example of a representative going to a university and providing information about the mission and scope of the CWEMF organization. The idea being that the action is informational, then people find out about it and can join the organization if they are interested.

Convener J. Jankowski responds that this is a great example of an action. An action is something that can easily be tracked. Elaborating, the communication strategy portion of the strategic plan is more focused on the website and branding.

T. Slaweki comments that he does not see membership specifically called out. Perhaps it does not have to be. In his opinion, membership at this level may not need to be, as membership underlies participation and the integrity of finances under the goal 3. It also helps us to provide better educational opportunities. One could certainly put action items that reflect membership activities, however, he wonders whether membership belongs as part of a strategy. For example, maintain or grow our membership.

Vice Convener V. Bedekar asks whether peer reviews—an area CWEMF has focused significant effort on in the past—should be included under the first goal? Is this implicit under strategy 2.1 or should that goal be explicit. Strategy 2.1, develop new models is not a trivial task, can take a

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<sup>8</sup> Convener J. Jankowski shares his screen to provide a snapshot of the strategic plan and action plan documents under development as part of his report.

<sup>9</sup> Via screen share.

lot of funding, involving a concerted effort by an individual or a team of modelers; he asks whether creating new models is something CWEMF has done in the past, and whether this is the desired language as a goal for CWEMF?

In response, Convener J. Jankowski refers to Strategy 2.2 that is focused on developing white papers or special studies pertaining to modeling, but not the creation of new models. Creating new models was not something envisioned through the strategic planning effort. The modeling protocols or the framework for integrated modeling white paper are past examples that would fall under this strategy. ED P. Hutton adds that there is additional language elaborating on each of the strategies. CWEMF has not developed models or model applications, rather, CWEMF supports efforts to develop new models. One example of supporting new model development is through facilitating peer reviews. As they discussed during the retreat, the strategic planning group felt there was an over emphasis on peer reviews. Our organization has been formed for thirty years, and over that period there have only been a few peer review efforts. The strategic planning group agreed that peer reviews should be included as an action, along with other actions that support this strategy of supporting development of new models.

Vice Convener V. Bedekar thanks ED P. Hutton and Convener J. Jankowski for the explanation addressing his concerns related to this strategy. Convener J. Jankowski emphasizes the wording in Strategy 2.1 stating it is framed as supporting efforts to improve **and** develop new models.

B. Geske builds on ED P. Hutton's response to the question noting that today's purpose is not necessarily to go through line items and be sure everything is addressed and worded correctly. Rather, that is the mission of ED P. Hutton, Convener J. Jankowski, himself, and others on the retreat team over the coming weeks and months to prepare for a deeper dive and refined presentation that will go over all this context. The document he and Convener J. Jankowski are previewing at this meeting reflects a bulleted list to provide a summary or overview of what is to come in the document. The final draft of the strategic plan will contain much more information, description and detail around each one of these strategies and sub strategies as well as some examples. An additional, supplemental document to the strategic plan is the action plan. The action plan is the place for examples of ongoing tasks, or one-off tasks, or things that CWEMF can do or might want to support financially. They represent a path of actions that achieve the strategic goals that ultimately connect to CWEMF's overall mission. Their message today is to report to the SC that after a period of inactivity, there is a renewed effort to finalize the strategic plan and action plan documents.

Convener J. Jankowski expresses his appreciation to ED P. Hutton, B. Geske, S. Chowdhury, N. Osorio, W. Anderson and Y. Cheng that participated in the strategic planning retreat that helped to formulate the goals and actions they are working to document in the respective plans.

B. Geske adds an additional request. As he is working on the documents and doing some refinement and enhancement, he is also working on some specific examples of actions and items that will be included in the action plan. B. Geske wanted to encourage the volunteers that participated in the strategic planning retreat with a lot of great suggestions for such actions, do not wait to reach out to B. Geske particularly if any of the volunteers feel passionate about any actions or examples they want to ensure is included as they work to finalize the draft documents.

Convener J. Jankowski adds that the strategic planning group has a google drive where they have been able to upload, share, and collaborate on documents. Convener J. Jankowski plans to share the google drive with the documents and information including the notes he captured during the retreat. He reports they are collaboratively working to review the documents. Furthermore, he appreciates the input from the volunteers, they are collectively coming up with good ideas for how to frame the plan. In closing, he is looking forward to discussing at the next meeting.

## 6. WORKSHOPS (SANDHU)

N. Sandhu is acting chair of the Workshops subcommittee with T. Kadir vacating the chair to make an opportunity for others to serve in the role. T. Kadir plans to remain an active member of the subcommittee. Convener J. Jankowski recalls that the Vice Convener is designated as the backup chair for the subcommittee. Vice Convener V. Bedekar acknowledges, and N. Sandhu will extend an invitation to Vice Convener V. Bedekar to join the next subcommittee meeting.

T. Kadir seeks to clarify that he vacated the chair to make an opportunity for others to volunteer for the chairperson position, however, if there are no other volunteers he is willing to self-nominate to serve as chair. Vice Convener V. Bedekar withdraws his intention to participate in the Workshops Subcommittee given physical limitations on his ability to participate being based out of State. Convener J. Jankowski adds that N. Osorio has been nominated to serve the role of Vice Convener, and recommends she join the subcommittee to get more involved depending on interest and availability. N. Sandhu closes the discussion asking that T. Kadir and N. Osorio take some time to consider serving as chairperson.

N. Sandhu continues moving to the next item in his report. At the November 15 SC meeting, Chairperson T. Kadir of the Workshops Subcommittee brought forward a proposal for the SC to consider. However, due to lack of a quorum at the end of the meeting in November, the motion was not taken up and tabled for future consideration. N. Sandhu, acting as chair and representative from DWR, requests that the motion be reconsidered given a quorum has been declared for this meeting. Recall that the IWFM and IDC workshops are conducted by DWR instructors, on DWR facilities. The proposal is for 10 seats or half of the registration, whichever is the lower number, be held in reserve for DWR staff.

Convener J. Jankowski takes a moment to add some context. CWEMF workshops are generally designed to be cost neutral. Factors that go into the cost CWEMF typically charges for the workshop are related to the cost of equipment, facility rental, and covering the costs of instructors giving the training occasionally including an honorarium. Use of DWR or CNRA facilities, equipment, and providing the instructors for the training at no charge can be considered an in-kind contribution by the agency partner bringing down the cost of the workshop. Other costs may include refreshments like coffee or pastries for attendees, as well as certificates of completion, and CWEMF ED time handling registration. However, J. Jankowski makes clear he has not researched the finances of past workshops to understand the relative costs and does not have a good feel for the value of the in-kind contribution. The value could range quite a bit on a case-by-case basis depending on the workshop.

ED P. Hutton asks whether this might set a precedent for future workshops. To avoid doing so, perhaps CWEMF should not partner with DWR in this case and allow DWR to fully organize and execute the workshop. ED P. Hutton underscores the cost neutrality, that the finances for the

workshop should be reviewed to verify it will remain cost neutral. From his review of the organizational membership dues versus value received, DWR is one of the few organizational members that receives a greater value than their annual dues payment. If each of the individual from DWR were to pay as an individual member, the amount of revenue would exceed the \$5,000 dues payment. In addition, CWEMF is required to retain liability insurance for the ability to partner with DWR on workshops.

T. Kadir underscores that the SC decision for DWR would likely be precedent setting for other organizations as well. He recalls a similar request made by USGS was made in the past. The fee that CWEMF charges for participation in workshops is generally low relative to what other organizations charge for a similar training<sup>10</sup>.

Convener J. Jankowski responds that in his mind an organizational discount was a new proposal. He wonders if the CVHM2 workshop might provide a recent, representative example with some costs and number of participants. After further discussion, it became clear that the finances and circumstances regarding the instructors are different for these cases.

N. Sandhu brings the discussion back to the current proposal. In this case, the IWFM workshop requires DWR staff time to conduct the training at DWR facilities. From CWEMF, there is ED time (handling of the registration and logistics) and refreshments.

If DWR held the workshop independently and charged for the workshop, it could be considered a so-called barrier to entry for a public agency to provide training on a public model. DWR would likely not charge for a public service already paid for by taxpayers. Also, DWR may also record the workshop to have for DWR employees and potentially the public if it is beneficial. Adding further, that the proposal was for a portion of the seats to be reserved for DWR employees that has a nexus to the in-kind services. He suggests the liability insurance discussion be tabled for another day.

T. Kadir clarifies that there are two workshops, one for IWFM and one for IDC. Contrast these with the recent example for the CalSim3 training offered without cost and a limit on the number of in-person participants.

B. Geske shares the perspective that in the spirit of collaboration, given the theme of the annual meeting, DWR has a different community and mission than CWEMF. DWR approaching CWEMF to collaborate on a workshop is mutually beneficial for a variety of reasons. He thinks it is reasonable to have some seats made available for DWR employees.

Convener J. Jankowski restates he would like to see a cost and revenue break down to understand the financial impact for any proposed discount. These workshops could be a good test case for the evaluation.

N. Sandhu makes a motion that for the IWFM and the IDC workshops, DWR management is requesting a 50% discount for no more than 10 seats or 50% of the expected attendance whichever is lower be reserved for DWR staff to attend the workshops, T. Kadir seconds the

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<sup>10</sup> In response, T. Slawewski shares the following via chat, "w/r/t cost-neutral - when I was Sec'y/Treasurer of a Michigan water organization we found that potential participants were sometimes dissuaded because the cost was too low - the perception was that the value must not be there. Registrations went up when we set a minimum - maybe \$150 12 years ago." T. Kadir responds via chat as follows, "[a]greed. I think the costs we've set in the past were low but not too low, *i.e.*, in the range of \$100-200."

motion. A. Huber recommends there should be a general policy for providing for discount, such as the case where a partner may be providing the venue and instructors then members of the partner organization may receive a discount. T. Kadir asks that any general policy discussion or other workshop discounts be tabled for now and discussion be focused on the proposed motion.

Convener J. Jankowski calls to question via a rollcall vote:

T. Kadir: yes	J. DeGeorge: yes	P. Khatavkar: yes	J. Jankowski: abstain
A. Huber <sup>11</sup> : yes	T. Traum: yes	R. Graziano: yes	V. Bedekar: yes
T. Slaweki: yes	K. Nam: yes	R. Satkowski: yes	S. Chowdhury: yes
B. Geske: yes	N. Sandhu: yes	S. Tanaka: abstain	N. Johns: yes
B. Bray: abstain	N. Osorio: yes	Z. Zheng: yes	

The motion carries with 17 affirmative, 0 opposed, and 3 abstentions noted (17-0).

N. Sandhu inquires whether there is an attachment in the agenda packet for the workshops report that shows the workshops schedule. T. Kadir refers to the agenda packet stating the two upcoming workshops were the IWFM and IDC workshops, and then the proposed CE-QUAL-W2 workshop. Convener J. Jankowski clarifies that a Workshops Subcommittee report is not included in the agenda packet.

T. Kadir provides an update on CVHM2 workshop. The workshop was originally scheduled for January. The workshop had to be rescheduled. One of the dates scheduled was a federal holiday. USGS requested that the workshop be postponed. There was a significant effort invested to reschedule and find a new venue for the workshop. Woodard and Curran offered their training facility because DWR did not have their training facility available. USGS had requested the training to be held at DWR facility. Unfortunately given the rescheduled dates, DWR had no available training facility. Woodard and Curran graciously offered their training facility located in downtown Sacramento on the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> and T streets, which should be adequate for the number of individuals anticipated to attend the training. USGS requested the workshop attendance be limited to no more than 40. Once T. Kadir gets concurrence on the dates currently proposed for February 25, 26 and 27, he plans to move forward with remaining logistics to prepare for the workshop. Specifically, he will work with DWR to ensure the equipment is available for the workshop. He will work with Woodard & Curran on the logistics for the refreshments. Also, T. Kadir will be preparing the badges and certificates of completion. T. Kadir also plans to send out a notification to all attendees on the revised date. J. Traum apologizes for having to postpone. J. Traum tried to go through his management for a waiver to participate on the federal holiday but, “would have required a literal act of congress to allow [it].”

Convener, J. Jankowski requests a future report out on the workshop finances for the CVHM2 workshop at the March SC. (ACTION ITEM) There was a lot of effort invested to develop the budget. He feels it would be good for the SC to show how costs and revenue would be affected were a discount to a specific agency offered in that case. T. Kadir acknowledges, clarifying that he may not be able to provide a complete picture of all the costs including staff time to plan and

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<sup>11</sup> Note that K. Heidel left the meeting and A. Huber has her proxy. Also, at approximately 10:25 AM J. Medellín-Azuara leaves the meeting and designates his proxy to A. Huber.

attend, but can provide a partial accounting of the workshop finances from the perspective of CWEMF costs and revenues.

Z. Zhang inquires about the proposal for the CE-QUAL-W2 workshop. T. Kadir reviews the proposal presented at the November 15 SC meeting. As part of the SC meeting packet, he introduced a draft flyer for the workshop (see page 16 of November 16 SC Minutes). Z. Zhang requested an honorarium for conducting the workshop, a precedent that was set in previous workshops (*e.g.*, the PEST and METRIC workshops). These workshops are unique in that instructors are coming from out of state or from another country where Z. Zhang is a professor in another state in this case. Based on the consideration of expenses for the workshop, T. Kadir estimated the workshop fee to be \$300 for members and \$100 for students. They are planning for a two-and-a-half-day workshop.

Secretary B. Bray confirms and recalls an SC member inquired about his assumption for attendance to achieve cost neutrality. At the time, T. Kadir responded that about 15 to 20 participants were the estimated minimum participation to break even on the costs resulting in the workshop fee estimate. Furthermore, it was noted that a venue was not yet identified as of the November SC meeting, and that the venue could affect the cost estimate for the workshop. T. Kadir confirms underscoring the venue is still to be determined. However, he feels with the workshop fee set to \$300 he is confident a venue can be reserved that will not affect the net costs significantly. Originally, the proposal was to conduct the workshop in January or February, although the timing will need to be pushed back. Z. Zhong confirms he should be available if the workshop is pushed back to May, June, or July. If the venue turns out to be expensive, T. Kadir would revisit changing the fee at a future SC meeting before the workshop is held and the registration is opened. Given there were no objections expressed by the SC, and this workshop is similar to other workshops conducted in the past, no SC action is necessary for formal approval and T. Kadir will move forward with the proposal and seek to find a venue and dates for the CE-QUAL-W2 workshop.

## INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

### 7. BRANDING SUBCOMMITTEE (KHAN)

Convener J. Jankoski announces that Abdul Khan has stepped down as chair of the Branding Subcommittee although CWEMF still has a charge and need for this Subcommittee moving forward. Convener J. Jankowski recalls that the Branding Subcommittee evolved from the Logo Subcommittee where the Branding Subcommittee was envisioned to take on activities related to updating the website with the new logo, developing document and PowerPoint presentation templates and other activities to promote CWEMF branding generally.

Convener J. Jankowski had a discussion with B. Geske, a member of the Branding Subcommittee, also a SC member active in the Logo Subcommittee effort. B. Geske is interested in assuming the role of chairperson and continuing to advance the effort. They discussed the available budget approved by the SC to support activities the subcommittee is advancing in collaboration with the contractor that assisted with the logo effort, Mr. Paul Vega.



N. Sandhu adds that as we move forward with the strategic plan, the CWEMF SC should revisit each subcommittee to evaluate which ones are needed or whether new ones are necessary<sup>12</sup>. B. Geske appreciates the question adding that the premise of the question was one of the big catalysts for the strategic planning effort with the intention to include an evaluation as described.

T. Kadir asks for a listing of the members of the Branding Subcommittee. Convener J. Jankowski responds Abdul Khan, B. Geske, T. Kadir, A. Huber, and ED P. Hutton. B. Geske did not want to assume that the members wanted to continue as volunteers with the subcommittee but their participation as well as any new volunteers is welcome. B. Geske underscores he is passionate about this subcommittee's particular charge and the overall goal for CWEMF believing it is, "very important." He plans to convene a subcommittee meeting soon welcoming any and all to participate. T. Kadir confirms he would like continue on as a member

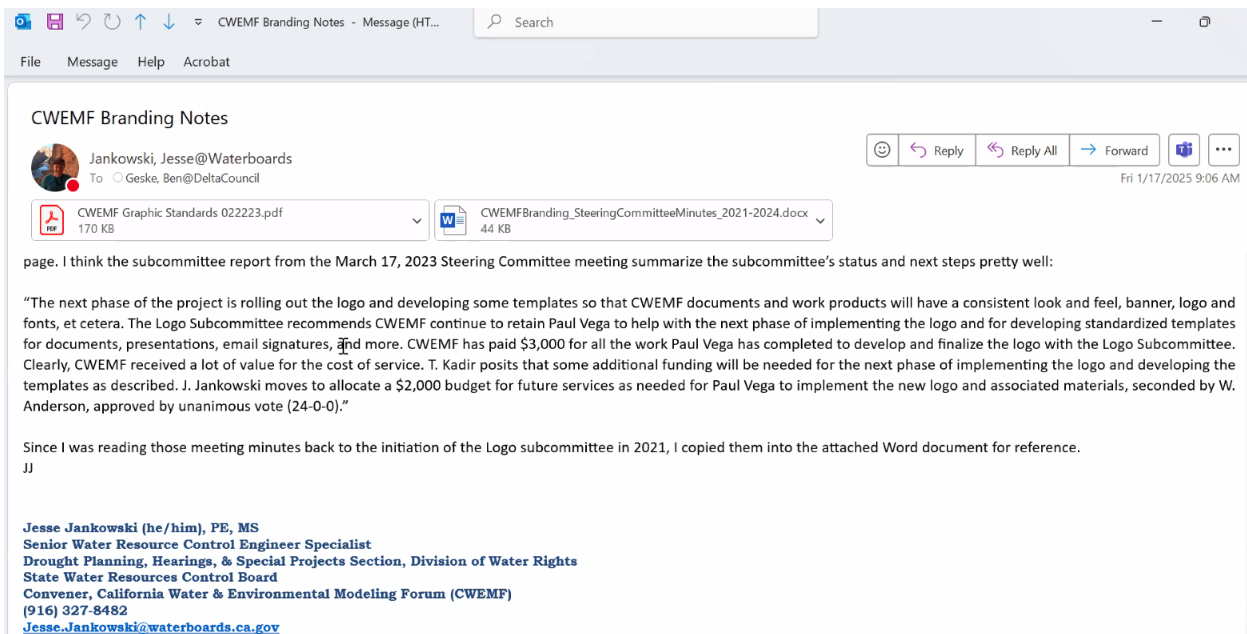
ED P. Hutton speaks to the need for the Branding Subcommittee. In his view, the Logo Subcommittee accomplished their charge, however, with implementation activities associated with the logo, the Branding Subcommittee has just scratched the surface. There is a lot that can be accomplished internally as an organization that the Branding Subcommittee can work on. Developing standards for our communications, templates for some of our documents, updating the website, PowerPoint presentation templates as some examples of actions. These actions are the most important thing for the Branding Subcommittee to accomplish in the short term. He acknowledges our ad hoc effort to utilize the new logo, however, CWEMF has a long way to go to standardize and that is the implementation aspect of the entire branding effort. There is also a lot of work to be done even outside of having future contracts with Paul Vega.

T. Kadir asks whether there is a list of memberships for all the CWEMF standing and ad hoc subcommittees. Convener J. Jankowski responds he recalls seeing such a list in the 2023 business meeting, but the list may have only included the chairs of the subcommittees. T. Kadir recommends that this information be included on the website for transparency and to facilitate other members getting involved. The list should include the name of the subcommittee the name of the chairperson, and the members. As was recommended in the chat (see footnote 12) these subcommittees need to be reassessed after a period of time. Convener J. Jankowski agrees adding there is a nexus between this topic and the strategic planning effort and expects to get into that discussion at the next SC meeting.

Convener J. Jankowski shares the following email to B. Geske highlighting the report from the March 17, 2023, SC meeting as a good summary of the current status of the Branding Subcommittee and the overall branding effort.

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<sup>12</sup> T. Slawecki comments via chat that, "[a]t WEF (national organization) each committee's existence is reassessed every three years."



B. Geske closes discussion recalling that as the logo subcommittee was ending, there was a lot of thought that the branding effort is really where some resources need to be invested. There was a lot of thought invested into the logo update with the intention that following through would be important. He adds that he looks forward to reengaging with Paul Vega and agrees with the sentiment expressed by ED P. Hutton.

## 8. MODEL USER GROUPS (NAM)

K. Nam reports that the Delta Modeling User Group meeting was held on December 5, 2024. The next meeting has not been scheduled. There was a CalSim user group meeting yesterday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. N. Osorio adds that the first CalSim users group meeting was held yesterday at the CNRA building in downtown Sacramento. There was good attendance with about 20 people in attendance and about 50 people online. The spring user group meeting is set for Monday May 12 as part of the 2025 AM.

## 9. DSC INTEGRATED MODELING FRAMEWORK UPDATE (GESKE)

B. Geske has no report.

## 10. OTHER BUSINESS (ALL)

T. Kadir raises the topic of outreach for CWEMF. Based on his experience recruiting for DWR he always included information about CWEMF. With his retirement, he feels it is still important to continue the outreach effort. While he does not have a specific proposal, he thinks an official representative of CWEMF responsible for outreach is necessary. They could travel to different venues and promote CWEMF, talk about membership, explain the benefits, and how to join.

T. Slaweki endorses the idea of a CWEMF ambassador, or multiple ambassadors. T. Slaweki has had a sidebar conversation about membership and demographics with Convener J. Jankowski. In some of the other organizations he is involved with, they recognize the importance of engaging with young professionals and students. He acknowledges that CWEMF does make

some efforts to do so and wonders if we could do more as an organization to be more deliberate with outreach. He adds that he can see how this topic can connect with a future conversation about the Strategic Plan.

Secretary B. Bray takes a moment to congratulate T. Kadir on his well-deserved retirement and he is thankful T. Kadir is committed to stay involved with the organization.

ED P. Hutton notes that he has not reserved meeting rooms with Solano Irrigation District for CWEMF SC meetings in 2025 given the preference for the past few SC meetings has been online. Convener J. Jankowski asks the remaining SC members in attendance whether they would be interested in attending the March 14 SC meeting in person. Several members express their intention to attend in person. ED P. Hutton to follow-up via email to get a firm commitment from SC members regarding in-person attendance for the March meeting. (ACTION ITEM)

## 11. NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING – MARCH 14, 2025

## 12. ADJOURN

Respectfully Submitted  
Ben Bray, Secretary, CWEMF

### ATTENDANCE

Jesse Jankowski	Convener	SWRCB
Vivek Bedekar	Vice Convener	S.S. Papadopoulos & Assoc.
Paul Hutton	Executive Director	Tetra Tech
Ben Bray	Secretary	EBMUD
Stacy Tanaka	Treasurer	Watercourse Engr.
Tariq Kadir	Past Convener	Public Member
Anne Huber		ICF
Ben Geske		DSP
John DeGeorge		RMA
Jon Traum		USGS
Josué Medellín-Azuara		UC Merced
Katherine Heidel		Tetra Tech
Kijin Nam		DWR
Nicky Sandhu		DWR
Nicole Osorio		DWR
Norman Johns		DWR
Puneet Khataavkar		Stantec
Regina Graziano		SWRCB
Rich Satkowski		Public Member
Shyamal Chowdhury		US Army Corps of Engineers
Tad Slawecki		LimnoTech
Will Anderson		SWRCB-ODWM
Yiwei Cheng		DWR
Zhong Zhang		PSU

K. Heidel announced she had a conflicting appointment, was unable to stay for the full meeting, and assigns her proxy to A. Huber upon the indication of her departure from the meeting.