resources
A G E N C Y

TO: Resources Agency Department Directors and Chief Deputy Directors

FROM: Mike Chrisman
           Secretary for Resources   *Mike Chrisman*

DATE: June 6, 2005

SUBJECT: Environmental Data and Information – Build Once, Use Many Times

It is important that we share environmental data and information. Doing so helps further our mission by enlisting others in a common effort to conserve our natural resources, promotes transparency of government, leverages our investments in data and avoids wasteful duplication of effort.

You may recall that there were specific recommendations in the report issued by the California Performance Review (www.cpr.ca.gov) about the need to improve data sharing between and within Resources and CalEPA. The truth of the matter is that we already have a number of programs and systems that address this need.

It is Resources Agency policy that Agency departments, boards and commissions catalog environmental data and information they produce or contract for in the California Environmental Information Catalog (CEIC) operated by the CERES program (www.ceres.ca.gov). For information on CEIC and the data standards supported by the Resources Agency please contact John Ellison, agency technology officer at (916) 653-2238 or john.ellison@resources.ca.gov. It is also expected that all Agency organizations will work diligently to make their information resources accessible as appropriate via their web sites. Examples of the types of data and information from Agency organizations that should be cataloged in CERES include but are not limited to the following:

- Commercial landings and other estimates of harvest, take or kill
- Conservation plans – area (e.g., HCPs, NCCPs)
- Conservation plans – species or populations
- Cultural and historical studies and reports
- Databases – Biological (e.g., rare/sensitive species, natural communities, etc.)
- Databases – Environmental (e.g., water quality, animal tissue, stream flow, etc.)
- Environmental and biological samples or field surveys
- Field collection, sampling and laboratory protocols
- Internet data services
- Species life history studies
- Photo collections (but not individual photos)
- Reports on best conservation management practices

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Baldwin Hills Conservancy · California Bay-Delta Authority · California Coastal Commission · California Coastal Conservancy · California Conservation Corps
California Tahoe Conservancy · Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy · Colorado River Board of California · Delta Protection Commission · Department of Boating & Waterways
Department of Conservation · Department of Fish & Game · Department of Forestry & Fire Protection · Department of Parks & Recreation
Department of Water Resources · Energy Resources, Conservation & Development Commission · Native American Heritage Commission · San Diego River Conservancy
San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission · San Gabriel & Lower Los Angeles Rivers & Mountains Conservancy · San Joaquin River Conservancy
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy · Sierra Nevada Conservancy · State Lands Commission · Wildlife Conservation Board

- Site specific ecological characterizations or descriptions of condition
- Wildlife population studies or estimates
- GIS – Barriers to fish passage
- GIS – Cultural and historic resources
- GIS – Demographics
- GIS – Elevation and bathymetry
- GIS – Hazardous Material Spills/Events (e.g., marine oil spills, etc.)
- GIS – Hydrography
- GIS – Imagery (aerial photography and satellite imagery)
- GIS – Infrastructure (e.g., levees, canals, hatcheries, piers, facilities, etc.)
- GIS – Land ownership (e.g., parks, preserves, reserves, easements, etc.)
- GIS – Land use
- GIS – Marine vegetation (e.g., kelp)
- GIS – Natural hazards (e.g., flood zone, seismic, landslides, etc.)
- GIS – Riparian
- GIS – Roads
- GIS – Species occurrences and distribution
- GIS – Terrestrial vegetation
- GIS – Wetlands
- GIS – Wildland fires
- GIS – Wildlife habitat
- GIS – Wildlife ranges

In addition to the CEIC, please be aware that there are other systems operated by Agency organizations that provide for data collaboration and sharing. These are:

- The Department of Fish and Game's Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch operates the Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS). BIOS (http://bios.dfg.ca.gov/) is a web based GIS application that facilitates collaborative management and sharing of observational data about California's vegetation, fish and wildlife. CERES and Fish and Game staff are working together to upload BIOS metadata records to the CEIC. Please contact Mr. Tom Lupo, Branch Chief at (916) 324-6906 or tlupo@dfg.ca.gov for information about this innovative program.

- The Department of Water Resources' Bay Delta and Tributaries Project (http://baydelta.ca.gov/) operates an Internet accessible warehouse of environmental monitoring data (e.g., water quality and animal tissue data). This warehouse and associated database technologies form the heart of the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) collaborative. A growing number of organizations already contribute data to this warehouse. CERES is working with DWR to develop CEDEN metadata in CEIC. Please contact Mr. Karl Jacobs, BDAT Senior Project Manager at (916) 227-0435 or kjacobs@water.ca.gov for information about this important effort.

- The University of California, Davis, Information Center for the Environment maintains the Natural Resources Project Inventory (NRPI) located at www.ice.ucdavis.edu/nrpi/. NRPI, a collaboration initiated by the California Biodiversity Council and funded by CalEPA and the Resources Agency, contains information on thousands of conservation, mitigation and restoration projects throughout California. Some agencies like Fish and Game maintain their own project databases and provide regular updates to NRPI. Your vigorous support of NRPI would provide a means to track the effectiveness of our project investments (about a billon dollars to date!). CERES and NRPI are already integrated through CERES' new GeoFinder tool. You may contact Mr. Kevin Ward, NRPI Database Administrator at (530) 752-2378 or kcward@ucdavis.edu about this application. NRPI should not be confused with our Proposition 40/50 Projects Awards web site (www.4050bonds.resources.ca.gov) that tracks bond act money awards but has no information on project status and effectiveness.

- Finally, there is the California Watershed Funding Database (CWFD) funded by Resources Agency and developed and operated by California State University, Chico Research Foundation (http://www.calwatershedfunds.org/). The CWFD provides a convenient single source for all environmental funding opportunities in California. It consists of state, federal and private foundation funding information. Agency organizations that administer grants are expected to maintain information on this site for their programs. Please contact Ms. Kristen Cooper-Carter at (530) 893-5751 or KCooper-Carter@csuchico.edu with any questions you may have about this database.

I strongly encourage your programs to actively participate in the above data collaborations where appropriate. Together these applications support cost effective distributed data development, maintenance, access and use via the Internet in support of our mission. If you are aware of similar databases or systems that provide multi-agency data collaboration and sharing that should be promoted by Agency, please contact John Ellison, agency technology officer with this information.

Thank you.