

New Opportunities and Initiatives to Strengthen California's Laboratory Accreditation Program

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Chief of CA ELAP



Overview

- Origin & Transition of ELAP
- New Leadership
- Responsibilities & Goals
- Comprehensive Program Evaluation
- Size and Scope
- Status of Interim Recommendations
- Future Plans



Origin of CA ELAP

Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Act, 1988

- Department of Public Health
- Fund - fully fee funded
- Consolidated multiple accreditation programs
- Necessary for primacy



Comments about ELAP

Inconsistency

ELAP lack standard of practice

Ignored & neglected

A Troubled Program

Assessors lack adequate knowledge of standards & methods

Assessments are uncontrolled highly variable system

poor customer service

**LACK OF
APPROPRIATE
MANAGEMENT &
OVERSIGHT**



Transition

- July 1, 2014 moved to the State Water Board
- Division of Drinking Water & CA ELAP
- Origin of Program Evaluation



State Water Resources Control Board

- Protect critical water resource for present and future generations
 - 1.6 million acres of lakes
 - 1.3 million acres of bays and estuaries
 - 211,000 miles of rivers and streams
 - 1,100 miles of coastline
 - 7,500 public water systems
- Implement and enforce the Federal and State Clean Water Acts and Safe Drinking Water Acts
- Set statewide policy and regulations
- Distribute millions of dollars for water quality protection
- Allocate water rights



ELAP Responsibilities

- Ensure quality of analytical data used by CA regulatory programs
- Program Elements
 - Certify
 - Inspect
 - Monitor
 - Enforce

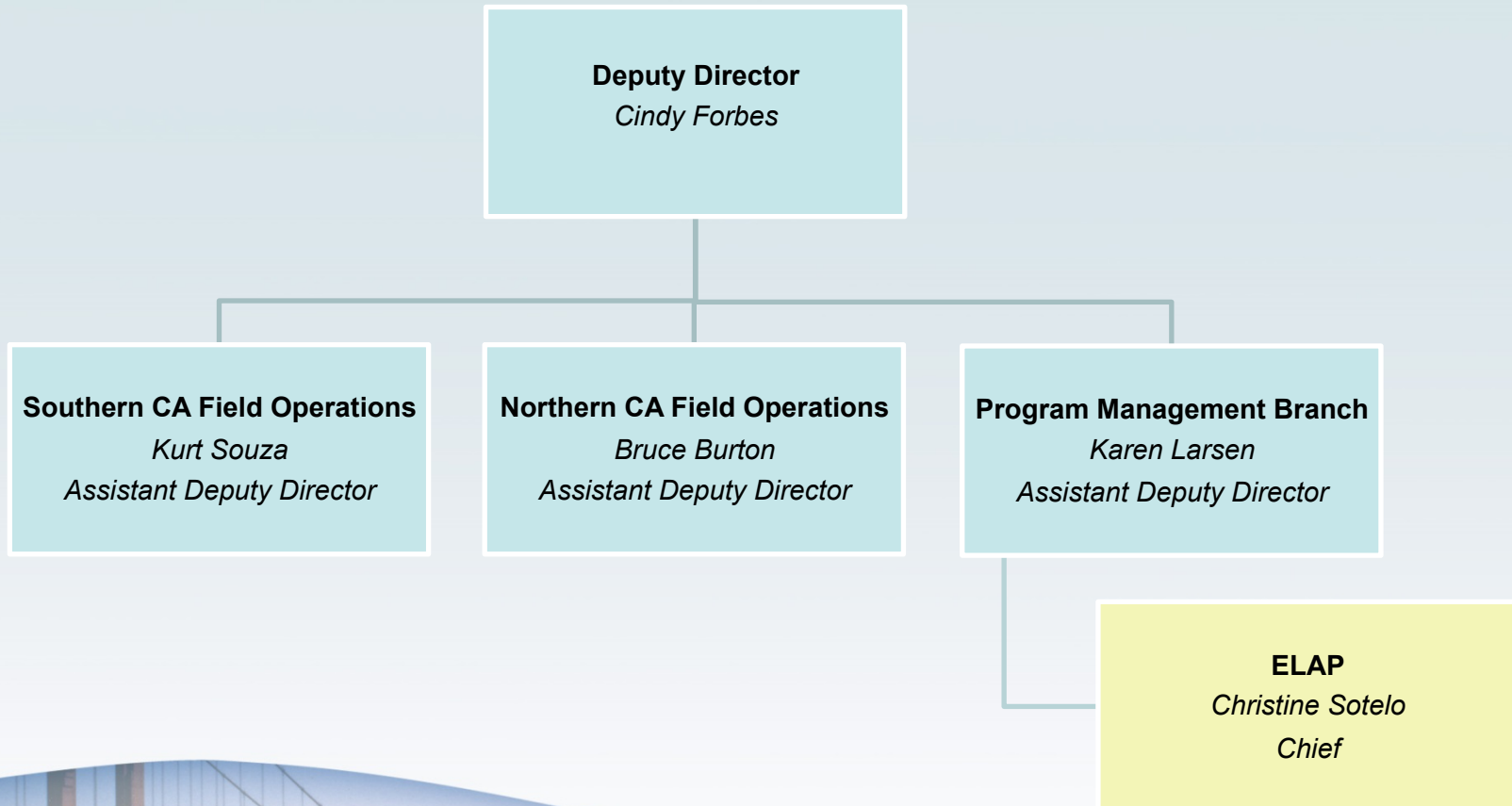


ELAP Goals

- Meet primary responsibility to CA regulatory agencies
 - Integrate more fully with agency quality systems
 - Close the loop on data quality
- Implement/Review Expert Review Panel Recommendations
 - Standards of practice
 - Training and experience
 - Recognition of 3rd party assessments



Division of Drinking Water



California ELAP

27 Staff

- Environmental Program Manager – 1
- Administrative Assistant - 5
- Scientific Aide - 1
- Sr. Environmental Scientist Supervisor – 1
- Sr. Environmental Scientist Specialist – 3
- Environmental Scientist - 3
- Supervising Chemists - 2
- Staff Chemists – 3
- Chemists - 8

ELAP

Christine Sotelo
Chief

Sacramento

Maryam Khosravifard

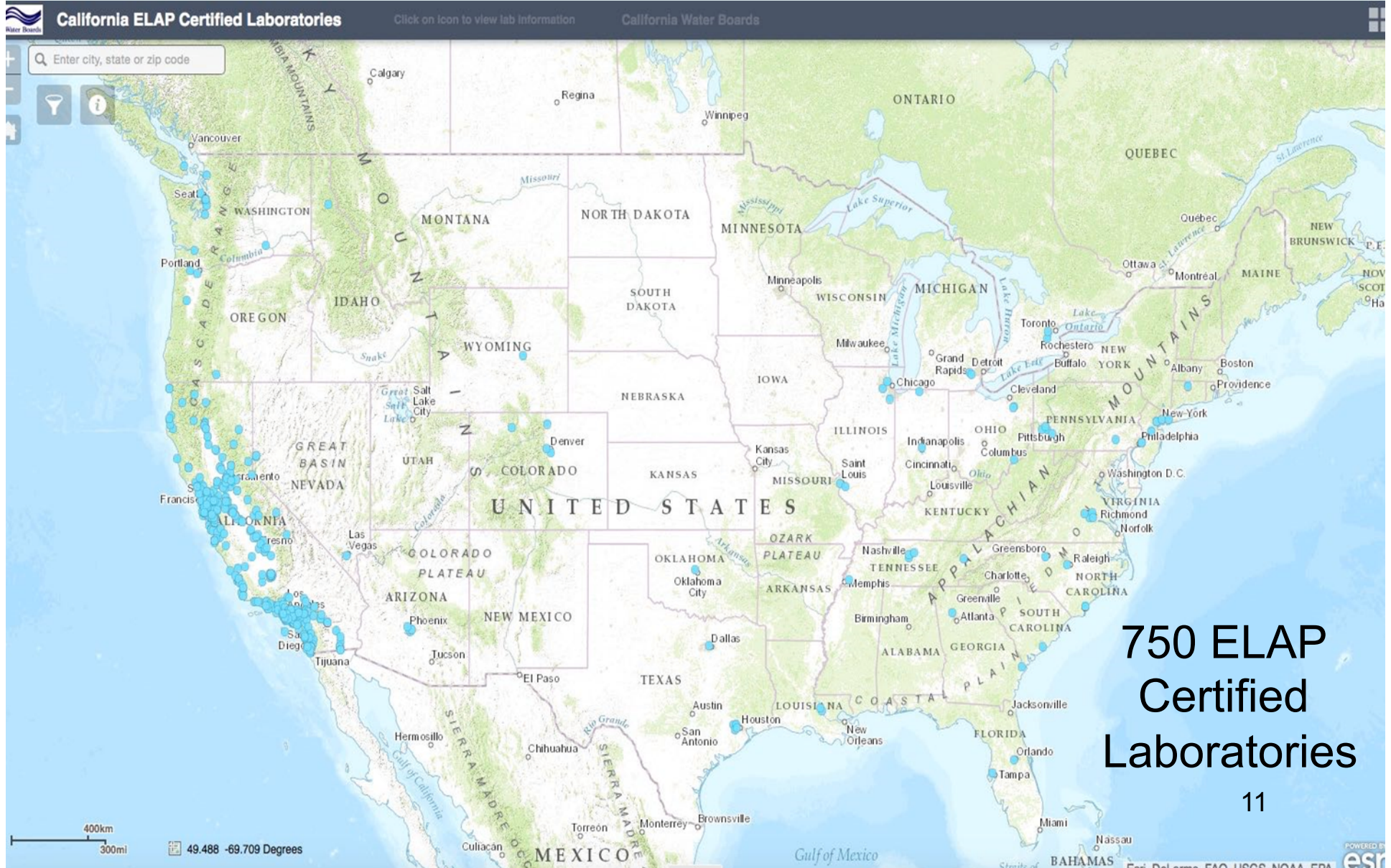
Richmond

Fred Choske

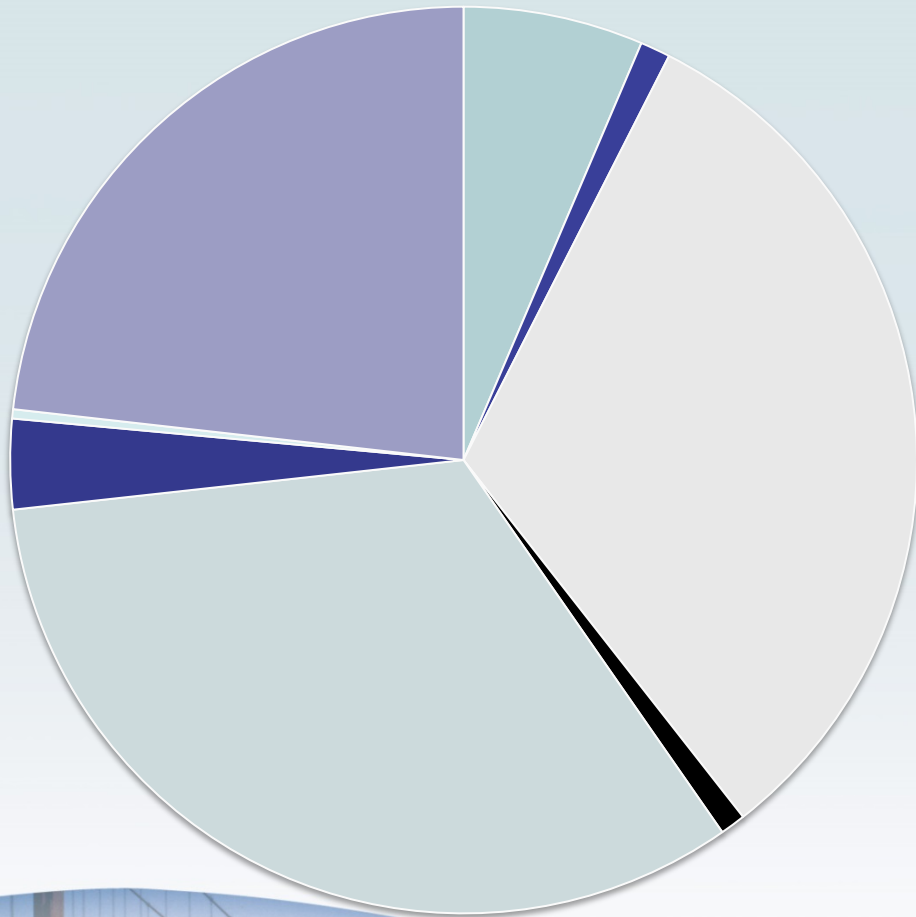
Los Angeles

Angela Anand

ELAP Size & Scope



Fields of Testing



- Aquatic Toxicity - 78
- Asbestos - 13
- Drinking Water - 388
- Food Pesticide - 11
- Hazardous Waste - 400
- Radiochemistry - 39
- Shellfish Sanitation - 4
- Waste Water - 282



Comprehensive Program Evaluation

- Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
 - Dr. Stephen Weisberg
- Expert Review Panel
 - Dr. Jordan Adelson
 - Stephen Arms
 - Mitzi Miller
 - Lara Phelps
 - David Speis
- Recognize the program has problems
- Charge Questions



Comprehensive Program Evaluation

- Seeking external, independent advice
- Committing to holding ourselves accountable and transparency
- Draft Report – Fall 2015
- Final Report – Fall 2016

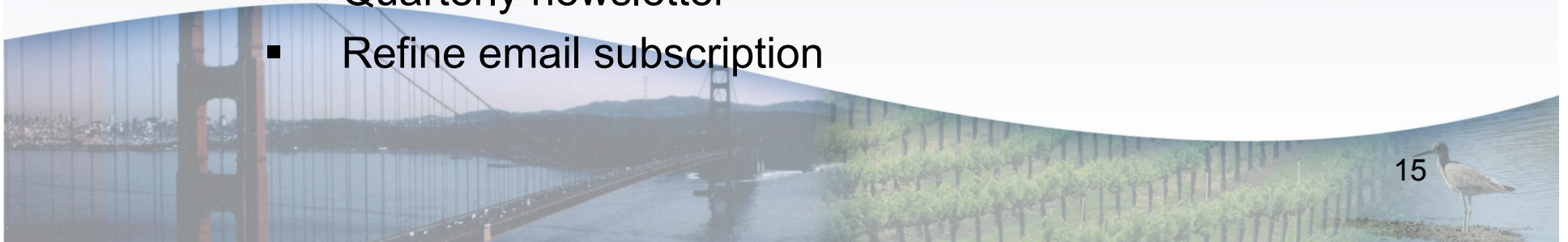


ERP Interim Recommendations



Communications Strategy

- Identified audience
- Key Messages
- Vehicles for communication
- Performance Measures
- Matrix for internal & external communications
- Redesigned webpage
- Geographic Information Systems Laboratory Certification Map
- Regular announcements
- Quarterly newsletter
- Refine email subscription



ERP Interim Recommendations



Build relationships with ELAP clients

- Meet & Greet Events
 - Two events Spring 2015
 - Two pending Summer/Fall 2015
- Meetings with State Agency Partners
 - Air Resources Board
 - Fish and Wildlife
 - Food and Agriculture
 - Pesticide Regulation
 - Public Health
 - Toxic Substances Control
 - CA Water Board



ERP Interim Recommendations



Reenergize the Environmental Laboratory Technical Advisory Committee (ELTAC)

- Draft By-Laws Released for Public Comment
 - Transparent process
 - Defined tasks & scope of work
 - Accountability / respond to all recommendations
 - Membership represents laboratory Stakeholders
- New Members – January 2016



ERP Interim Recommendations



Methods Checklist Review

- Reviewed all ELAP checklists against current methods
 - Serves as a training tool for staff
 - Established a system for conducting audits
 - Reformatted for clarity and consistency

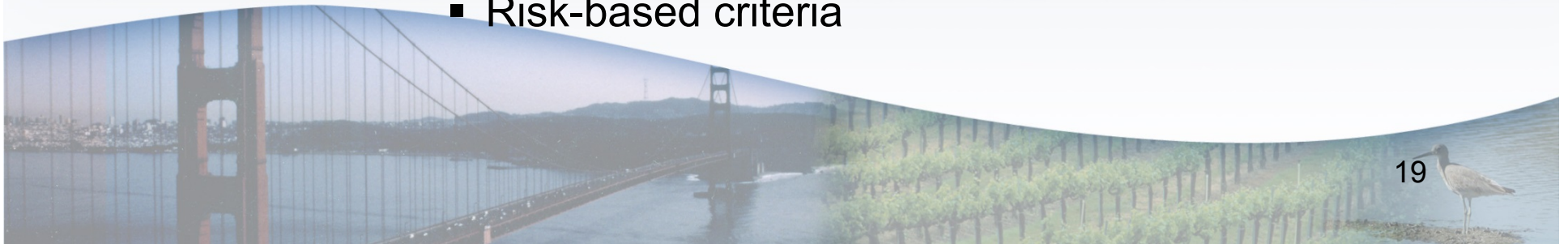


ERP Interim Recommendations



Accept Accreditation from TNI
Accreditation Bodies and/or Utilize Onsite
Evaluations Conducted through an
Internationally Recognized Program

- Programmatic course corrections
- Reduced backlog – 200 to 40
 - Disconnected re-certifications to inspections
 - Prioritized inspections in consultation with USEPA
 - New applications
 - Risk-based criteria



ERP Interim Recommendations



Performance measures

- Application to Certification – 2 months
- Last 3 Months
 - Processed 93 applications – on target
 - 40 laboratories required audits
 - 10 new laboratory applications



Future Plans

- ERP Implementation Plan
- Revise regulations
- Fees
- Training
 - Drinking Water Certification Officers
 - Succession training
- ELTAC
 - Review and implement recommendations
- Leader in the Nation



A faded, light blue-tinted photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, spanning the water with hills in the background.

Questions?

