

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
September 15, 2010
1:00-3:00 pm
at Moss Landing Marine Labs**

Attendees:

Ken Ekelund

Dipti Bhatnagar

Paul Robins

Bill Phillips

Rob Johnson

Bryan Largay

Horacio Amezcuita

Gary Rogers

Kevin O'Connor

Dawn Mathes

Donna Meyers

Non-RWMG member: Susan Robinson — IRWMP Coordinator

Meeting Minutes:

1. Update on Project Review Process: Integration

Susan gave a brief update on the project review process. The Integration Committee (which consists of all the RWMG members that participated on Project Committees) met for half a day on August 26th to review the projects that were submitted for inclusion in the IRWMP. Each project was presented by a member of the Project Committee that reviewed that project, and possible opportunities for integration with other projects or with components of other projects (including concept proposals) were discussed. This process took the entire four hours allotted for the meeting, and a decision was made to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

Dipti commented: What about the problem of “integrating” projects to the point that they become too expensive to fund? Susan noted that this question, along with other issues yet to be resolved, will be addressed at the next Integration Committee meeting. Susan will set up a Doodle for that meeting. Also at the next Integration Committee meeting, next steps will be determined, including contacting project proponents to see how amenable they are to the suggested opportunities for integration.

2. Update on Central Coast IRWM Funding Strategy

At the last RWMG meeting, the RWMG was asked to consider some possible options for a Central Coast IRWM region funding strategy. On the table was consideration of a two-step process: 1) determine how to allocate the Prop 84 Central Coast funding area IRWM funds amongst the six regions (split it evenly? some regions get more?); and then 2) determine the timing (i.e., which regions would apply in earlier rounds, which regions would apply later, and for how much in each round). At last month's meeting, the RWMG was asked if they would be amenable to *evenly dividing* the entire \$52 million pot of IRWM grant funds that have been allocated to the Central Coast funding area, and most members of the group said they would, with the caveat that an MOU be signed by each region and included in each region's IRWMP, and updated with each IRWM funding round. This information was passed along to the other Central

Coast IRWM regions at the September 3rd Central Coast Funding Area meeting.

Prior to the September 3rd meeting, Larry Hampson of the Monterey Peninsula region emailed an alternative funding strategy option to the Central Coast region representatives, which consisted of the Monterey Peninsula and San Luis Obispo regions getting a higher allotment (\$10 million each) and the other four regions splitting the remaining funds (\$8 million each); plus, Monterey Peninsula and SLO would apply in Round 1, the other four would apply in Round 2 (if they wanted to), and we would figure out subsequent rounds later. The Greater Monterey County RWMG was asked, at today's RWMG meeting, what they thought of that option.

A long discussion ensued, with no clear conclusion. Several members opposed the Monterey Peninsula suggestion, pointing out that the Greater Monterey County IRWM region is truly a new region, with many more RWMG members and stakeholders than the former Salinas Valley IRWM region, and it wouldn't be fair to the new RWMG members and project proponents to agree to a lower amount for implementation projects. Several members seemed amenable to stepping back in the upcoming Prop 84 Round 1 for implementation grants (one pointing out that we're really not ready to apply yet, since our IRWMP will not be completed before January 2011), but generally the Group did not favor accepting a lower allotment of funds as suggested by the Monterey Peninsula region.

Others noted that we do have strong projects that would be eligible for Round 1 through the former FEP and that are ready to go; and that it would be a disservice to those projects (and unfair to the project proponents) *not* to go forward in Round 1. Also, applying in Round 1 would "get things rolling" with this new Greater Monterey County IRWM planning effort. Some suggested, then, that we do go forward in Round 1, but that we keep our funding request "reasonable" (noting that Santa Barbara will be requesting about \$3 million, San Luis Obispo will be asking for the entire Central Coast funding area allotment for Round 1 of \$5.7 million, and Monterey Peninsula will definitely be requesting implementation funds but for an unknown amount at this time). In addition, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara have noted that they are not exactly open to negotiation regarding their requests for Round 1. Rob pointed out that if those regions are unmovable regarding how much they will request in Round 1, then there *will be* no funding strategy, i.e., the point is moot – at least for Round 1. Donna suggested perhaps our starting point for a Central Coast funding strategy should simply be Round 2.

There was much discussion at this point regarding which projects might be eligible and ready to apply for Round 1. Three projects were discussed—Elkhorn Slough restoration, San Jerardo Cooperative wastewater project, and Castroville water well treatment—but there may be several others. It was agreed that the fair thing to do would be to review all of the projects submitted for inclusion in the new IRWMP, determine which projects would be eligible for Round 1, and then ask those project proponents whether they would want to apply in Round 1. If the RWMG decides to go forward in Round 1, and if several project proponents say they would like to apply, then those projects would need to go through the new project ranking system. Then only the top-ranked projects would be put forward for Round 1 funding.

So basically, the RWMG did not come to a decision regarding the Monterey Peninsula region's suggested funding strategy. Susan noted that the RWMG needs to make a decision prior to the next Central Coast Regions meeting, which is scheduled for October 8th. It was agreed that first we should decide how many projects are eligible for Round 1, how many project proponents would want to apply, and if many say they would, whether it's worth applying for such a small pot of funds in Round 1 (keeping in mind that we would need to go through the project ranking process, and then the top-ranked projects would need to reduce their funding requests

considerably in order to come to a “reasonable” request on the part of the region – and that the application process overall is quite expensive). Susan will take the first step of determining which projects might be eligible for Round 1.

Donna reminded everyone not to forget about IRWM Stormwater Flood Management grants, which will be due in April (though it requires a 50% match).

3. Planning Grant Committee: Update

The Planning Grant Committee has made great progress on the grant application, which is due September 28th. Several details were discussed:

Project Period: Susan suggested rather than a one-year project period, we extend the project period to two years to allow for more DAC outreach work. This would also provide some “wiggle room” for other components of the grant, such as the Water Process Reconciliation process, which could easily extend beyond one year. The RWMG concurred.

Workshops: Susan noted that we will be requesting funds to conduct two public workshops as part of the IRWMP development process. Donna reminded everyone that there are funds set aside still (from the private grant) for one more public workshop. The question was raised whether we should request IRWM Planning Grant funds for two workshops or just for one. The Group generally agreed we should request funds for two workshops (so there will be three more public workshops before the end of the IRWMP development process).

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis Tool and Tracking: Bill suggested that we include more emphasis on the regional analysis of GHG emissions, as opposed to just the project-level analysis. Also, not only should we provide regional tracking of GHG emissions (both outputs and sequestration) over time on the regional level, but we should include an analysis with recommended mechanisms for reducing GHG emissions. Donna pointed out that we do include something like that in the climate change task, but we will make this clear in the proposal.

Interregional Coordination: Bill suggested we talk with Michelle Dooley to make sure including this task within both our and the Monterey Peninsula Planning Grant proposals is the best approach. Susan said she would contact both Larry Hampson and Michelle. Ken asked, what about the other regions that we share borders with? Bill suggested that we re-word this task to clarify that this process can be used as a model for all three regions.

Several RWMG members were not happy with the “coordinated prioritization process” that was included as a subtask, noting that creating a separate project ranking process for the Ord Community would make the overall project prioritization process very confusing – particularly if we need to set up separate prioritization processes for joint projects in all three neighboring regions. A few people recommended that we omit that subtask altogether.

Bill suggested why don’t we simply talk with our neighboring regions regarding joint projects and decide, cooperatively, which components of which projects would be best suited for which region’s IRWMP (or for which region’s Implementation Grant application). In that case, both regions would agree, for example, that a particular project belongs in one region’s grant application, and the other region would write a letter to DWR supporting that decision. Bill said that two different project ranking systems would be confusing, noting, “I would rather rely on our ability to talk with each other and decide, and then present it to the State...”

Someone else suggested that perhaps we ought to give “inter-regionalism” more weight in the project ranking. Ken suggested that we not omit that subtask altogether, but perhaps not call it “ranking” per se.

In the end it was agreed that Gary, Bill, and Donna (who are also members of the Monterey Peninsula RWMG) would discuss this issue at the Monterey Peninsula region meeting the following day.

Water Project Reconciliation: Ken suggested we might want to consider involving a facilitator from the very start of this process. Bryan, Ken, and Rob agreed to work together on this task, and will get back to Susan with revised language by Monday.

Data Management: Kevin said he would have final text for this task by Friday or Monday. Bryan recommended he include language stating that no data will be collected on private property without the permission of the landowner.

Economic Feasibility Analysis: Bill asked the Group whether they felt this task would be worthwhile (based on a scope of work provided by an economic consulting firm). The RWMG agreed (strongly) this would be valuable work for the region. Bill promised to have text prepared for the Planning Grant proposal by Monday.

Next month’s meeting is scheduled for October 20th from 1:00 – 3:00 PM, location TBD.