

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
February 15, 2012
1:30 - 3:30 PM
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Monterey, CA**

RWMG Attendees:

Bridget Hoover
Paul Robins
Sierra Ryan
Ross Clark
Tamara Doan
Dana Jacobson
Ken Ekelund
Horacio Amezcuita
Rob Johnson
Michele Lanctot
Karen McBride
Brian True
Donna Meyers

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Susan Robinson – IRWMP Coordinator
Monica Reis – DWR

Meeting Minutes:

1. Ranked Project List: Susan had sent two different project lists to the RWMG prior to the meeting: the "Final Ranked Project List" and the "Final Ranked Project List by Goal Category." Susan explained that the latter list is for internal RWMG use only; it shows how the projects rank within the various IRWMP goal categories, and is useful for seeing which projects might best be suited for different types of funding opportunities.

The public comment period for the Ranked Project List ended January 27th, and the RWMG received no comments. Ross made a motion to vote to approve the Ranked Project List for the IRWMP; Bridget seconded the motion. All voted in favor, with one abstention (Tamara, California Coastal Commission), and none opposed. Susan reminded everyone that the Ranked Project List will be considered "final" only until the next project solicitation, which will probably occur one more time before the Round 2 IRWM Implementation Grant solicitation (anticipated to occur Summer 2013).

Someone asked about the concept proposals. Susan explained that concept proposals are not ranked and therefore are not included on the Ranked Project List. However, the concept proposals will be vetted before being included in the IRWMP; they will be reviewed: 1) to ensure they meet "minimum standards" (e.g., are located within the region, they address IRWMP objectives, etc.); 2) to ensure there are no potential impacts to DACs or environmental justice impacts (Karen and Horacio have already conducted this review, and found no impacts); and finally, to identify any potential opportunities for integration with other projects.

2. Timeframes: Completion of IRWM Plan and Round 2 Implementation Grants: Susan reviewed DWR's timeframe for the Round 2 and Round 3 Implementation Grants as well as our own timeframe for completing the IRWM Plan (which is being driven by the Round 2 Implementation Grant schedule).

Highlights of the DWR timeframe are as follows. Round 2 IRWM Implementation Grant Program will occur in two steps:

- Step 1: Plan Evaluation: Susan had previously understood that the IRWM Plan needed to be completed by this date, but that is incorrect; we just need to show that the Plan is “on a trajectory to meet standards.” This step will occur in Fall 2012.
- Step 2: Project Evaluation. This is the project solicitation, and will occur in Summer 2013.

Round 3 Implementation Grants will commence shortly after Round 2 concludes. Step 1 is anticipated to occur mid-late 2014 (the Plan must be completed and must meet Proposition 84/1E IRWM Program standards by this point). Step 2, the project solicitation, is anticipated to occur early-mid 2015. There will be \$27,888,043 remaining for Rounds 2 and 3 together for the entire Central Coast Funding Area (54% of our Area’s allocation).

Susan then reviewed our own internal timeframe for completing the IRWM Plan. April 18th is the deadline for RWMG members to review the Draft IRWMP. Susan will then incorporate RWMG comments, for discussion at the May 16, 2012 RWMG meeting. If all goes perfectly smoothly, the public comment period will then commence May 17, 2012 for about 60 days. Our goal is to have a signed, approved IRWM Plan by October 2012.

3. Planning Grant Round 2: Susan reminded everyone that the Planning Grant Round 2 proposal is due March 9th, and that we can request up to \$244,736. This is the last Planning Grant round, and it will be competitive. Susan reviewed the latest draft budget and task list, emphasizing that the costs could still change for particular tasks. A few of the tasks were discussed: Michele said that if we want the oversight of a CSUMB professor for the Environmental Water Needs Assessment task, we will need to increase that budget (to about \$10,000). The RWMG members expressed support for that.

Susan noted that we added a new task: Interregional Planning. Brian asked how this task relates to the Interregional Coordination task from the first Planning Grant. Susan explained that both our region and the Monterey Peninsula region requested funds to collaborate on that task, but DWR said only one of our regions could do it; so we “gave” the task to the Monterey Peninsula region. With this new task, we would propose to focus on projects in the other adjacent and nearby IRWM regions (San Luis Obispo, Pajaro, and Santa Cruz).

No one seemed opposed to anything in the budget/task list. Susan said the RWMG will have a chance to review and comment on the final Planning Grant proposal before it is submitted (though they will likely have just a few days, as timing will be tight). We aim to have the proposal finalized by end of the month. Susan also reminded everyone to please send their match hours for the time they have spent on RWMG-related work, beginning from October 2010 through today’s RWMG meeting.

4. Project Tracker: Bridget gave an overview of the Project Tracker, a database tool that is being developed by the Central Coast Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS), and several others to track the implementation of and results of projects being implemented throughout the Monterey County region. Bridget explained that “Phase I” of the Project Tracker was led by the Agriculture Water Quality Alliance (AWQA), and consisted of determining which information, specifically, should be tracked. “Phase II” is being funded by Round 1 Planning Grant funds, and essentially consists of building the Project Tracker tool. While Phase I focused on RCD projects, Phase II will expand the initial focus to include IRWMP projects as well. For IRWMP project proponents, there will be an online data entry tool on the Project Tracker website that is linked to the Greater Monterey County IRWM webpage.

Bridget walked everyone through handouts, showing a summary of the work that’s been done to date, including the fields currently included. The RCDs and MBNMS are asking for input from the RWMG: what additional information would we like to capture through Project Tracker for IRWMP purposes?

Ross asked, what do we want to report as the metrics of success for the IRWMP? Bridget responded that she had given Gary Conley, a consultant who has been working on Project Tracker, the “measurability matrix” for the IRWMP objectives to help answer that question. Ross suggested we focus on the specific questions we need (as opposed to the entire massive database) to determine how successful the projects are in meeting the objectives of

the IRWMP. He added that he would like to get the RWMG talking about this: What are the key fields? How do we quantify success? How do we roll that into a story of success for our region? Bridget said we could include summary information on the IRWM website that encapsulates how well the projects are implementing the IRWMP.

Ross asked Monica (DWR) about reporting requirements for implementation projects. Monica described the requirements (including, for example, quarterly reports, final design plans, permits and CEQA documents, site photos, etc.), and Ross noted that we could include that information on the Project Tracker. Bridget questioned that idea, pointing out that reporting requirements are about “project management” while the Project Tracker is more about “project tracking and effectiveness.” The question of whether to include this sort of information in Project Tracker was considered by the RCD in the Phase I stage, but that is not where they want to go with this. Paul (RCD) added that the purpose of the Project Tracker is to track what has been done, what has been accomplished, and what the regional benefits are.

Sierra explained that there are two websites: a tracking website with a link to a database, and the IRWMP website. The “story” for how well our projects are implementing the IRWMP will be included on both websites. Sierra said that one page on the IRWM website could be a portal to regional resources. Horacio added that this would be good, but we also need to include a short paragraph for each link describing the purpose of that link.

Someone asked whether the Project Tracker effort is region-wide, inclusive of the entire Central Coast region. Bridget responded that that was the original intention, but Santa Barbara is a lot farther ahead in this effort than we are; if we can standardize the language, we may be able to bring these efforts together. The goal is to create a Project Tracker that includes all types of implementation projects—not just the RCD and IRWMP projects, but urban stormwater data, etc. Ross said the ultimate goal is to have an online display interface: a mapping tool where a stakeholder can bring up different information about resources, beginning with water resources. The data won’t be managed there, but there will be links to the places where that information is managed.

Bridget added that we are working on the assumption of using State databases. All water quality data from IRWMP projects will go to the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN). For habitat we’ll use the California Rapid Assessment Methods (CRAM), and ground water data will be measured using the Groundwater Ambient Monitoring Assessment (GAMA). We need to work with the folks who manage these State databases to make sure that the data will come back to us. There are three data centers in the State; the one we’ll use is located at Moss Landing Marine Labs.

Bridget said that the RCD is trying to populate the framework now. They will be using Prop 50 projects as a test, and see how well those projects meet our IRWMP’s objectives.

Monica mentioned that the IRWM Implementation Grants Program requires that the Grantee submit an Annual Report for 10 years following the completion of the projects, to report on how the projects are faring. This seemed to come as a surprise to most of the RWMG members at the meeting.

4. Water Resource Project Coordination Process: The kick-off stakeholder meeting for the Water Resource Project Coordination process was held on January 30th. Paul provided an overview of the meeting. Approximately 20 people attended, and Paul considered it good, diverse attendance. He said the purpose of the meeting was to let people have control and as a result, there were some moments of confusion in terms of how to proceed; but somehow – that worked! Some important questions were raised:

- What did they want in a facilitator? They decided they needed to know better what they wanted in a facilitator before developing the Scope of Work. They did determine that they want a “facilitator” as opposed to a “mediator.”
- Were they putting just the IRWMP projects “on the table,” or including the bigger issues? Paul thinks the conclusion was “both,” i.e., that they would try to tackle the bigger issues to the extent possible, but focus on the projects.

- If this process is going to take 18 months, and the IRWMP is expected to be completed in 9 months, how does this process fit in? (For the next project solicitation, there will be more integration *before* the projects get submitted into the Plan, so conflicts will be nipped in the bud.)

Paul said the WRPC Committee was initially concerned about people's willingness to commit to 18 months, but they got very positive feedback after the meeting. Paul and Sierra said they feel very positive about this. Sierra informed everyone that she added a page to the website that is dedicated to the WRPC process.

Conclusion: First meeting was a success, and they are now ready to hire a facilitator. The next meeting will be held in April. Ross commended Paul on how great a job he did at facilitating the first meeting; he said there were some very challenging moments but Paul kept things moving forward in a positive direction. Several other RWMG members, who were at the stakeholder meeting, heartily agreed.

5. Other Business. There was no other business.

Next month's RWMG meeting is scheduled for March 21st from 1:30 – 3:30 PM, at the Monterey County Water Resources Agency office in Salinas.