

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
March 21, 2012
1:30 - 3:30 PM
Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Salinas, CA**

RWMG Attendees:

Rob Johnson
Kathy Thomasberg
Bridget Hoover
Sierra Ryan
Ross Clark
Ken Ekelund
Horacio Amezcuita
Dawn Mathes
Monique Fountain
Carol Corpus (new representative from City of Soledad)

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Susan Robinson – IRWMP Coordinator
Karen Nilsen – Nilsen & Associates
Kevin Bollin – Nilsen & Associates
Monica Reis – DWR
Hector Hernandez – Central Coast RWQCB

Meeting Minutes:

As RWMG members were waiting for more people to arrive, Carol Corpus introduced herself to the group. She has just begun working with the City of Soledad, and is acting as lead on behalf of the Greater Monterey County region for the Round 1 Implementation Grant contract. She has just uploaded the State Mark-Ups for the Work Plan onto the SharePoint system for project proponents, and is in the beginning stages of the contract process (refining the budget, developing sub-agreements, etc.). Carol asked Monica (DWR) questions regarding details of the contract process.

1. IRWM Plan Development Timeframe: Susan reminded everyone that the deadline for reviewing the draft IRWM Plan is April 30th. She says, “Please begin reviewing if you haven’t already!” Bridget suggested that Susan re-invite everyone on the RWMG to DropBox (she will do so).

Susan also commented that she had participated in the Roundtable of Regions meeting the previous day, and that DWR has changed their timetable for Round 2 Implementation Grants: Instead of a two-step process (i.e., DWR reviews the IRWM Plan for eligibility in Fall 2012, with project applications for Round 2 Implementation Grants due in Summer 2013), it will now be a one-step process. The draft Guidelines and PSPs for both Round 2 Implementation Grants and Stormwater/Flood Management Grants will be released in July 2012, with final Guidelines and PSPs out in October 2012, and project applications for Round 2 Implementation Grants due in March 2013. We must show that our IRWM Plan is at least on a path to completion; and at the very latest, the Plan must be completed by the time grants are awarded (in September 2013). Susan noted that we should have no problem with that requirement; we expect our Plan to be completed by November 2012.

Bridget asked, if we complete our Plan in November and get it approved and finalized, does this mean we won’t know until the following Fall (2013) whether it’s approved by the State? In other words, when will our IRWM Plan actually get reviewed by the State for eligibility? Monica said she would check into that and let Susan know. Susan noted that an added complication is that DWR will be coming out with 2012 IRWM Guidelines; how will

this affect the eligibility of our Plan, which will be completed and approved based on the existing 2010 Guidelines?

Susan noted that other topics of interest were raised during the Roundtable of Regions meeting, including the economic analysis requirement for Implementation Grant applications (DWR will be considering monetary and non-monetary benefits on an equal basis) and the identification of DACs throughout the State (DWR uses the 5-year ACS data, which is what we have been using). Susan said she would send DWR's PowerPoint presentation to the RWMG when it becomes available. (Monica said this presentation will be available on DWR's website soon.)

2. IRWM Website Development: Sierra asked the RWMG members their opinions about several possible logo designs for the Greater Monterey County IRWM Program. There was some discussion (most favored "style 5" in green, with avocet instead of salamander). Then Sierra asked for input on the new website design (which she had emailed to the RWMG previously, and which was being projected on a screen during the meeting). There was general discussion, with everyone generally enthusiastic about the new layout. The new website includes a dedicated Spanish page. The RWMG will try to get as much material translated as our limited resources will allow (possibly with the help of volunteers).

3. Outreach Plan for Disadvantaged Communities: Karen Nilsen, a consultant with Nilsen & Associates, provided an overview of the initial draft of the outreach plan for disadvantaged communities (DACs) that will be conducted as part of the Round 1 Planning Grant. Karen has been hired by the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW), who is leading this effort for our Round 1 Planning Grant. Karen has worked closely with EJCW in the past (with Dipti) and with Horacio on the San Jerardo Cooperative wastewater treatment project proposal, which is now being funded through the Round 1 Implementation Grant.

Karen noted that the first step is to identify the DACs in the region, which she is doing with the help of Sierra's DAC mapping information. She noted that there may be smaller or "hidden" DACs, and she has been talking with local water agencies to get help in locating such communities. There are numerous "very small connections" in the region that are not monitored for water quality by the Department of Environmental Health; these communities fall under the radar, and some may be in need of assistance. (Carol suggested she speak with a certain person at the Monterey County Health Department.) Karen has been contacting public agencies and community organizations as part of this initial DAC outreach effort. She has found that many of the smaller communities are not familiar with the IRWM planning process at all, or do not understand how they can benefit by it (i.e., more outreach is needed here).

The next step: EJCW will either contract out, or more likely, hire an EJCW Outreach Coordinator to conduct the full outreach effort in the Greater Monterey County IRWM region. Karen suggests that the RWMG develop a database of DACs, DAC leaders, and contact information. A later goal of the outreach effort is to provide technical assistance to the DACs, and to help them develop and submit projects for the IRWM Plan.

Karen will also be investigating a plan for outreach to Native Americans in the Greater Monterey County IRWM planning region. She is getting ideas from an EJCW board member, who has conducted outreach to Native Americans in the state. Bridget mentioned a member of the Esselen tribe who has worked on the FireScape Monterey effort, who may be able to help. Ken mentioned a Native American couple that worked on the Nacitone Watersheds plan, as well.

Ross remarked that DAC outreach in Castroville is a priority for the Tembladero project (which is being funded through the Round 1 Implementation Grant). Could the Planning Grant effort help with this (or must it be strictly water-related)? Karen answered yes, the Planning Grant effort could definitely contribute to the DAC aspect of the Tembladero project, since Castroville is within the planning region.

4. Climate Change: Ross gave a brief overview of the Climate Change chapter that he has just finished drafting

for the IRWM Plan. The chapter will meet Proposition 84 IRWM standards for conducting a vulnerability analysis and developing an adaptation strategy for climate change impacts, but the chapter represents only preliminary efforts on the part of the Greater Monterey County RWMG. Ross would like to convene a subcommittee consisting of both RWMG members and other stakeholders to provide input on the draft chapter. Eventually the RWMG should convene a Climate TAC that will help the RWMG members better define climate change impacts in the region and develop more specific response strategies. Susan noted that, given adequate resources, the RWMG should be considering the specific water management systems in the region and their adaptability to climate change impacts. Ross noted that that is actually step 2, with step 1 being a cost-effectiveness assessment to determine what areas to even begin focusing on (i.e., assessing the adaptability of the region's water management systems is a complicated process and will be quite costly).

Bridget suggested that the subcommittee be a Central Coast regional subcommittee. Susan voiced strong support for that idea. But in the short term, Ross emphasized that we need an internal subcommittee to provide input on the draft chapter for the IRWM Plan. Some recommendations for possible subcommittee members were offered. Susan asked people to provide her with names and email addresses, and she will invite them to review the draft chapter on the shared DropBox website.

5. Other Business. Bridget brought posters and mentioned that the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary will be holding its Annual Symposium on April 14th at CSUMB. She encouraged everyone to go. The presentations are typically wonderful, and they're free!

Next month's RWMG meeting is scheduled for April 18th from 1:30 – 3:30 PM, location TBD.