Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
February 19, 2014
1:30 - 3:30 PM
Moss Landing Marine Labs, Moss Landing, CA

RWMG Attendees:
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Lisa Emanuelson – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Pam Krone-Davis – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Julianne Rhodes – Watershed Institute, CSUMB
Sierra Ryan – Central Coast Wetlands Group, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Monique Fountain – Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
Horacio Amezquita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
Rachel Saunders – Big Sur Land Trust
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County
Christina McGinnes – Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's Office
Daniel Gomez – City of Salinas

Non-RWMG Attendees:
Susan Robinson – IRWM Plan Coordinator
Tim Carson – Regional Water Management Foundation
John Hunt – UC Davis
Rusty Fairey – Marine Pollution Studies Lab – Moss Landing Marine Labs
Mark Pranger – Marine Pollution Studies Lab – Moss Landing Marine Labs
Marco Sigala – Marine Pollution Studies Lab – Moss Landing Marine Labs
Karen Nilsen – Nilsen & Associates
Jeanette Pantoja – California Rural Legal Assistance
Monica Reis – California Department of Water Resources

Meeting Minutes:

1. Brief Introductions.

2. Update on Project Solicitation Process and IRWM Plan Review: Susan provided a brief update on the IRWMP project solicitation process, which will begin on March 3rd. She asked everyone to take a look at the draft project application form and draft project evaluation worksheet, which she had emailed previously, and to let her know by Friday if they have any suggested changes. She announced that Paul Robins has generously volunteered to lead a public workshop for the project solicitation. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, March 4th at the Monterey County Water Resources Agency in Salinas, from 3:00 – 4:00 PM. She asked if anyone – particularly anyone who can offer Spanish translation services – would be willing to attend to help Paul field questions. Bridget volunteered and Julianne tentatively volunteered.

Susan also informed everyone that the Department of Water Resources' IRWM Plan Review process is now underway. We can submit our IRWM Plan anytime; however, Susan said she would like to hold off submitting our Plan until we are able to add the full description of the preliminary economic analysis tool in the Project Review chapter of the Plan. The preliminary economic analysis tool should be completed by March 1st, at which time Susan said she will amend the Project Review chapter to reflect the new economic screening tool along with the latest changes to the project ranking system. The RWMG will (hopefully) vote to accept those amendments at the March 19th RWMG meeting, and then Susan will formally submit the IRWM Plan to DWR. She noted that we must have our IRWM Plan approved by DWR in order to be eligible for Round 3 Implementation Grant funds.

3. The Regional Water Management Foundation: Tim Carson is the Program Director for the Regional Water Management Foundation, which acts as the fiscal and administering agent for IRWMP projects receiving grant funds in the Santa Cruz IRWM Region. Susan had invited Tim to talk with the RWMG as the Group has expressed some interest in potentially setting up a similar entity for the Greater Monterey County IRWM region.

Tim began by explaining that the Regional Water Management Foundation is a subsidiary of the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, and serves as both a fiscal agent and as a coordinating body for the IRWM effort. The idea for the Foundation was conceived in 2005, when the Santa Cruz County IRWM region's initial IRWM Plan was completed. The region received $12.5M from Proposition 50 Implementation Grant funds to implement high priority projects in their 2005 IRWM Plan, including funds to set up the Foundation. In 2007, the Foundation was created and work got underway. In 2009, the Santa Cruz County IRWM region underwent DWR's Region Acceptance Process (RAP) and became formally approved as a region. In 2011, the region received $1M in IRWM Planning Grant funds to update the 2005 IRWM Plan in order to bring it in line with current plan standards. Last year the region was awarded a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Outreach Engagement Pilot Project grant for $100K, one of seven regions throughout State to be awarded those funds. The original Implementation Grant (from Prop 50) wound down last year.

Tim then described who's involved in the Foundation, explaining that there are three tiers: Partner Agencies, Implementation Affiliates, and Stakeholders. There are nine Partner Agencies; to be a Partner Agency they must have boards that are elected or publicly appointed, have a public tax base, and have a long-term obligation to water resource management. Implementation Affiliates and Stakeholders include a long list of entities, including federal and state agencies, local municipalities, water and port districts, and nonprofit organizations. The Regional Water Management Foundation is included on that list.

Tim next discussed the link between the Regional Water Management Foundation and the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County. There are 750 Community Foundations throughout the United States, with the purpose of philanthropy and charitable giving within their respective regions. The purpose of the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County is to "promote charitable giving to make Santa Cruz County a better place to live now and in the future." The Community Foundation was started back in 1982, had a long record of serving Santa Cruz County, was seen as having few institutional hurdles, comparatively lower administrative costs, less red tape, and was considered a neutral party for IRWM (i.e., would not advocate for any particular projects). With its broad mission of support for Santa Cruz County and all of its potential benefits, the Partner Agencies approached the Community Foundation to see if they might be interested in serving as fiscal agent for the IRWM program. The Community Foundation agreed; however, once they gained a better understanding of what was involved and the complexity of the program, they thought a supporting organization would make more sense. Thus, the Regional Water Management Foundation was set up as a subsidiary of the Community Foundation.

The broad purpose of the Regional Water Management Foundation is to: (1) protect communities in Santa Cruz County from water shortages and floods; (2) protect and improve water quality and the natural environment; and, (3) improve water supply reliability. While its initial role was simply to administer grant funds, its functions have expanded considerably. The Foundation's current role is to provide administration, coordination, and financial oversight of IRWM grants and related efforts; serve as a central hub for reporting, invoicing, and inter-agency coordination; and assist the County and Partners in the update of the region's IRWM Plan and preparation for future funding. The Regional Water Management Foundation administers IRWM projects, helps write proposals for funding, is finishing the IRWM Plan update and is preparing for future rounds of funding.

Regarding the organizational structure: the Regional Water Management Foundation is a subsidiary of the Community Foundation – a separate 501(c)(3), with its own board of directors (including four Community Foundation appointees and three IRWM representatives). Tim said that he works for the Regional Water Management Foundation but he is an employee of the Community Foundation, explaining that it was easier to set up an Employee Leasing Agreement and to work through the existing structure of the Community Foundation. Someone asked why they decided to set up separate 501(c)(3) and not just work through the Community Foundation? Tim responded that the Community Foundation felt the purpose of the IRWM effort was distinct from their primary mission, plus they didn't have anyone on staff with the background; so rather than recruit, it

made more sense to create a standalone rather than a pass-through entity. Someone else asked if Tim had a sense for how well that has worked. He said it has worked well for them, but if our Group were considering doing something similar it would depend on what organization we're working through, what their mission is, and what their capabilities are. The costs to become a nonprofit, he said, were $25K back then; that cost was shared by the Partner Agencies. Someone asked: Is it beneficial to have a separate entity making decisions on types of funds/grants? Tim responded, "Yes, definitely."

The funding sources that support the Regional Water Management Foundation are from three general categories. The Foundation is a grantee of IRWM Implementation Grant funds (Prop 50); is a contractor on other grants (e.g., P50 California Department of Public Health Interties grant); and receives direct contributions ($5K - $10K) from the IRWM Partner Agencies. The contributions from Partner Agencies is a recent addition to funding; contributions were initiated in 2013, and are being received for just a nine-month period under the specific intent of increasing outreach and completing the IRWM Plan in time for Round 3. This is a trial run, Tim said; if it goes well, the Partner Agencies may be interested in contributing again.

In explaining the relationship between the Regional Water Management Foundation and grantees: Each grant has a sub-agreement with the grantees, which clearly establishes roles and responsibilities and assures the implementing agencies and their boards are really taking responsibility. The sub-agreement includes contingency funds for the unexpected (e.g., 2008 funding freeze), and sub-grantee schedule extensions (Tim noted that as lead agency, the Foundation has little control over grantees getting their work done on time).

Some funding considerations and challenges to establishing an entity like the Regional Water Management Foundation include: start-up costs (e.g., bylaws, articles of incorporation, supporting organization agreement); operating expenses and organizational costs that are not grant related or that are not eligible under grants, and how those are handled; funding to look for future grant opportunities; a frustrating lack of consistency in eligible costs between grant programs; long durations between the grant cycles; and long durations/uncertainty between grant applications and award and execution. However, Tim noted that the benefits can definitely outweigh all of those challenges. In general it has worked well for the Santa Cruz County IRWM region.

Looking ahead for the Regional Water Management Foundation, Tim said that organizational flexibility is key in terms of how it is funded. He noted that this is a challenging model if you are operating at the "5% administrative cost" level (as stipulated in IRWM grants). What services can the entity provide beyond administration? What are the partner needs? The key is to create a flexible entity that can respond beyond administration, such as providing outreach, serving in a role to support collaboration (meeting, planning), keeping the larger RWMG on top of what's going on, updating the website, keeping an eye out for other funding opportunities, looking at the IRWM Plan project list and identifying other grant sources, IRWM Plan updates, etc.

Tim provided an overview of the 2008 Prop 50 Implementation Grant, in which the region received $12.5M in IRWM grant funds with $17M contributed in local matching funds. The grant funded 15 high priority projects in the IRWM Plan plus administration (totaling 65 projects), included eight local partner agencies, with a project period from 2008 – 2013. The grant addressed the region's four functional areas (water supply, water quality, flood and stormwater, and watersheds/aquatic ecosystems). Tim showed a map with distribution of projects across the county.

Susan asked if the Regional Water Management Foundation made decisions as to which projects to submit in any IRWM round, and Tim responded no, they do not get involved in that level of decision making. She also asked how many other types of grants, besides IRWM, the Regional Water Management Foundation has received on behalf of the Santa Cruz County IRWM region. Tim gave an overview of the Foundation's current projects, including the IRWM Plan update through the $1M IRWM Planning Grant (which is funding the County as lead in updating the plan, plus four technical studies, plus 5% to the Foundation for administration); a $2.3M State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Stormwater Management/LID grant that is being implemented by the County, with four other partners; a $3.9M California Department of Public Health Emergency Interties grant awarded to the Scotts Valley Water District in partnership with the San Lorenzo Valley Water District; and the $100K IRWM DAC Engagement grant described earlier.

Someone remarked on how the Regional Water Management Foundation's work extends well beyond the IRWM grant program, and asked how the partnerships between the RWMG (Partner Agencies) and other local agencies/entities have been developed and have come to extend beyond IRWM grants. Tim responded simply that it has been an outgrowth of the IRWM process – through conversations of projects that agencies/organizations are working on.

Tim said current efforts of the Foundation include IRWM coordination, outreach, and assisting with readiness for the next of IRWM funding. He noted that the IRWM coordination role funded by the Partner Agencies gives them the flexibility to support various IRWM needs. He commented that the Implementation Grants are great but are targeted on getting work done on the ground, and unless written into the grant scope of work do not support broader IRWM coordination efforts or pursuing future funding opportunities. At this point the Prop 50 IRWM Implementation funds are gone, and Prop 84 Planning Grant, the DAC pilot project, and the grants referenced above are partially funding Tim and the Foundation, along with Partner Agency contributions. Tim said he is optimistic about the continuation of the Foundation; up to this point it has worked well, though the future is uncertain.

In addition to office and meeting space, some advantages to working with the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, Tim said, are that it has provided miscellaneous operating costs, plus they have senior staff who serve as a great resource as well as administrative and fiscal staff that provide support. Also, the Community Foundation is well established within the community, which lent some credence off the bat.

In response to a question about the initial Prop 50 grant, Tim explained that all of the projects came out of 2005 IRWM Plan. In most cases, the Partner Agencies were the lead agencies, but a number of those projects had projects *within* them with other entities (e.g., Coastal Watershed Council – first flush, Ecology Action – IPM, Save Our Shores – beach cleanup, Green Business Program, etc.). So while a project may have had a Partner Agency as the lead proponent in multiple instances there were a lot more agencies and NGOs playing a role in the project's implementation.

For more information about the Regional Water Management Foundation, go to: www.RWMF.org.

4. Introduction to CEDEN: The California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN – www.CEDEN.org) is the data management system that all project proponents collecting surface water quality and biological measurements in the Greater Monterey County IRWM planning region will be required to use. Mark Pranger, Project Manager for the Regional Data Center at Marine Pollution Studies Lab (MPSL) - Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML), along with his colleagues Rusty Fairey, Marco Sigala, and John Hunt, came to give an overview of CEDEN and the MPSL-MLML Regional Data Center.

Mark began by commenting that he had seen in our IRWM Plan that we had a plan to move our IRWM project monitoring data into CEDEN as way to aggregate the data and make it standard, a single place where we could actually pull data from. He said – *thank you for believing in us!*

What is CEDEN? CEDEN is a database and query tool, managed by the SWRCB and funded through California's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) and EPA grant funds, to house ambient monitoring data aggregated from other sources. He said CEDEN "has a SWAMP flavor," is tied closely to SWAMP but is not as restrictive as the SWAMP requirements. It is really the biologists and data managers who make the day-to-day decisions with CEDEN; the SWRCB's input is actually quite minor. So with CEDEN it is more of a ground-up rather than a top-down system (he adds: better for the users).

The MPSL-MLML is one of four Regional Data Center (RDC) hubs in California. The others are: San Francisco Estuary Institute serving San Francisco Bay-Delta and surrounding watersheds; Central Valley Regional Data Center, which is managed through Michael L. Johnson, LLC, serving the Central Valley; and the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, serving Southern California. The MPSL-MLML RDC serves all of the Central Coast. The role of the RDCs is to develop tools and standards for the CEDEN system, to provide

assistance to data submitters to transfer their data to CEDEN, and to help maintain comparability across data sets. The RDC staff help people input data and work it through the system, and to work between data sets. The MLML RDC helped develop the basic CEDEN database structure and maintains the current database at all three of the CEDEN databases, reviews and approves all CEDEN-comparable valid values, and develops and maintains the current CEDEN online file checker. The MPSL-MLML RDC also includes the SWAMP Data Management Team; he said they have all the expertise at MLML, all the SWAMP tools and resources, and an immense amount of knowledge and experience that they can pull in for different projects and resources.

Mark then illustrated the CEDEN website, showing guidance documents and a list of new data templates for CEDEN; he noted that the templates have been updated to make it easier to understand what fields to fill in, and easier for laboratories that use the SWAMP templates, etc. He noted that they now have the ability to sort data by GIS area or polygon. A very nice part of the system, he added, is that it's not a hierarchical system – searches can be started at any level and all other criteria are updated with each selection.

CEDEN, he said, is a combination of technology and people who manage that technology. He added that the SWRCB has recently established a new rule regarding 303d list water quality data – if you want your data considered for 303d purposes, you must submit it to CEDEN. Someone asked, does SWAMP data go into CEDEN? Mark responded yes, but not into the MLML RDC database; the SWAMP database was set up to be very restrictive to only SWAMP-funded projects. SWAMP owns the data; at MPSL-MLML RDC, he said, "we never own the data, and we never edit the data." In SWAMP, the State has more ownership over data and freedom to make updates.

MPSL-MLML data submitters currently include:

- Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP)
- Central Coast Long Term Environmental Assessment Network (CCLEAN)
- Ag Waiver Cooperative Monitoring Program (CCWQP)
- Elkhorn Slough Volunteer Monitoring Program (ESNERR)
- Marc Los Huertos Ambient Monitoring (MaLoHAM)
- The Marine Pollution Studies Laboratory at Granite Canyon (UCD – GC)

Mark said that MPSL-MLML uses an updated version of CalDUCS – the Data Upload and Checking System – from the CCAMP site; it's already up and running. The user registers him/herself, and MPSL-MLML provides templates. There is a new checker that tells you how many errors there are and what the errors are. Updates are happening once/week or once/month. He noted in response to a question that CEDEN does not analyze data but provides raw data for people to make their own analyses with. In another month, he said, MPSL-MLML will have incorporated all the data they have (public data only, not private data) and mixed it with SWAMP. This will give it much more power as a query tool than would be possible at the CEDEN level. Mark added that MPSL-MLML has some query tools that CEDEN doesn't have. They will be able to standardize data for projects that have data in SWAMP, CCAMP, and CEDEN.

Mark went over some of the services that MPSL-MLML RDC can provide, which include specialized queries, and graphing and mapping. He mentioned that they are working with Dave Paradies at the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to get the graphing/mapping tool hooked up to the MLML dataset prior to going into CEDEN, so that users can graph/map their data prior to it being "public," if they want. Some of the other services that MPSL-MLML RDC can provide include training for laboratories and project managers, developing QA Standards and QAPP documentation, data management (data storage, standardization, meta data), data queries within and across programs linking to the MPSL-MLML Data Warehouse, data verification and validation, and report writing. Technically if a user gets their data to MLML, they can use the tools that MPSL-MLML has. And since the MLML team has the same staff as SWAMP, a user can also use the SWAMP tools. He added that if a user's data is in his/her own system, he/she will have to do updates if CEDEN is updated; but if it's in the MPSL-MLML database, the MPSL-MLML team can update it (if the user wants them to).

Someone asked if there is a fee for these services and Mark said yes, all of these services do have a charge; CEDEN funds a little bit of their time to keep the servers running, but the MPSL-MLML team mainly rely on fees

for services. He added, if you plan to submit to CEDEN, it's important that you put some of your budget toward training (there is a charge for that); training project managers and labs has significantly improved the quality of data that they receive.

Bridget asked what Mark would recommend for new organizations getting started. He responded, "Call us! We'll refer you to the right site, set you up with a password and give you a 15-minute run-down for how it works. You upload your data, test your data, hit a button that says SUBMIT, then I load it into the MLML database…" Someone asked, what about continuous monitoring data loggers? Mark responded that that data is in the MLML database, and they are currently working on developing templates for it. The templates will be available within the next few months. Mark encouraged the Group to have project proponents call the MPSL-MLML team as they are developing their projects; he said the MPSL-MLML team can help the project proponents figure out what data will be required, and what the costs will be.

For more information about CEDEN, contact Mark Pranger at pranger@mlml.calstate.edu, or go to http://rdc.mpsl.mlml.calstate.edu/mlml-rdc-contact-us.

5. Other News/Business. There was no other business.

Next month's RWMG meeting is scheduled for March 19th from 1:30 – 3:30 PM, location TBA.