

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
April 15, 2015
Location: Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, Watsonville, CA**

RWMG Attendees:

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
Monique Fountain – Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
Daisy Gonzalez – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
Rich Guillen – City of Soledad
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Vicente Lara – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
Jordan Maeding – CSUMB Watershed Institute
Mike McCullough – Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency
Kevin O’Connor – Central Coast Wetlands Group, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Michael Ricker – City of Salinas
Eric Tynan – Castroville Community Services District

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Katie McNeill – Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Karen Nilsen – Nilsen & Associates
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Coordinator

Meeting Minutes:

1. Brief Introductions.

2. Announcements and Updates. Susan announced that the Regional Water Management Group is now officially a member of the Water Bond Coalition (a decision that was approved by the RWMG via electronic vote following the March RWMG meeting). Susan also gave a brief update regarding progress on the Water and Drinking Water Plan for Disadvantaged Communities in the Salinas Valley. She said there had been a delay with the data maps, but that the project team would be initiating outreach to communities soon (Vicente confirmed, within the next two weeks).

3. 2015 IRWM Implementation Grant Round: Susan gave a brief overview of the projects that had recently been submitted for inclusion in the IRWM Plan. The new projects are:

1. Castroville CSD – Water Supply Well #6
2. Central Coast Wetlands Group – Blanco Watershed Cooperative Project
3. City of Soledad – Recycling/Reclamation Distribution System (next phase)
4. Elkhorn Slough Foundation – Ridgeline to Tideline: This is an existing project in the IRWM Plan, submitted for re-review with added educational elements.

The project proponents who were at the meeting briefly described their projects. Susan then asked the group for volunteers to help her review the projects; Elizabeth and Eric volunteered.

Susan asked if the RWMG was intending to apply for the entire grant allocation of about \$4.9 million. There had been some discussion at the previous RWMG meeting of approaching the other Central Coast IRWM Regions about possibly divvying up the remaining Prop 84 grant funds evenly, but Susan said the Central Coast IRWM Regions meeting had not yet occurred (it would be occurring the following week). In that case, and based on the fact that the other IRWM Regions have never previously agreed to split funds, the group decided they would most likely go for the entire \$4.9 million.

Susan asked the group to consider the process by which projects should be selected, in a fair and objective manner. Monique suggested that one person representing each project should be on the Project Selection Committee. Susan recommended that several “disinterested” individuals also serve on the Project Selection Committee (or even that the committee be comprised of *only* “disinterested” parties), reminding everyone about Round 2, which resulted in all nine projects that were on the table for consideration going forward. The group agreed with Monique, and asked Susan to also serve on the committee, plus any other “disinterested” individuals who would volunteer. Susan asked for volunteers, but no one stepped forward; she said she would send out an email to the larger RWMG.

The timing for project review and project selection for the upcoming grant round was then discussed and decided as follows:

The Project Review Committee will begin reviewing projects immediately.

April 24 (Friday): The Project Review Committee will send the draft ranked project list to RWMG.

April 29 (Wednesday): RWMG will vote to approve the Ranked Project List.

Beginning April 29th: Project Selection Committee will begin process of selecting projects to put forward. Susan and Monique agreed to come up with a type of “project evaluation” form for each project, in order to enable projects to be compared side by side, and to give the Project Selection Committee a clear sense of how each project would be scored by the Department of Water Resources. Criteria for selecting projects for the upcoming IRWM grant round, then, will be:

- How well each project scores on the summary "project evaluation" form (comparing projects side by side)
- Project’s ranking in ranked project list
- Economic screening tool
- Budget considerations

May 15 (Friday): Project Selection Committee will send the RWMG the recommended list of projects to put forward in the 2015 IRWM Implementation Grant round.

May 20 (Wednesday): At the RWMG meeting, the RWMG will vote to approve a list of projects to put forward. This should give the project proponents enough time to write the grant application, leaving three weeks or so before the final deadline for a pre-review of the application by all of the project proponents (and/or an Application Review committee) – allowing time to make any final changes.

Monique commented on how the economic values included in the economic screening tool do not necessarily reflect “real world” values. She noted that if anyone disagrees with the values in the tool, they should use the “real world” values – but only if they are able to justify those values with technical documentation. Susan said she would send an email to the project proponents not present at the meeting to let them know.

Someone asked Susan if she was intending to send out another email to existing project proponents (i.e., those with projects currently in the IRWM Plan), asking them if they want to submit their project for this round. Susan said she wasn’t intending to (she had already sent two emails), but she agreed to send one more notice. Susan asked Horacio and Karen whether San Jerardo Cooperative would be submitting the Disadvantaged Community Program proposal again; she encouraged them to submit it, noting that the overall application would be stronger with the DAC Program. They said they would look into it.

In order for the Project Selection Committee to have everything they need to select projects by May 15th, Susan suggested that project proponents who want their project considered for IRWM Implementation Grant should submit all of the following by April 29th:

- Actual budget and project description for the upcoming grant round
- Economic screening tool, using “real world” values and based on the actual project/budget for the upcoming grant round

- Completed summary "project evaluation" form (which Susan said she would develop and send to all project proponents ASAP)

The next RWMG meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2015, location TBD.