

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program  
Regional Water Management Group Meeting  
February 17, 2016  
Location: Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Salinas, CA**

**RWMG Attendees:**

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.  
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Ken Ekelund – Garrapata Creek Watershed Council  
Gabi Estill – Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve (in for Monique Fountain)  
Daisy Gonzales – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water  
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Kevin O’Connor – Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Gary Petersen – City of Salinas  
Michael Ricker – City of Salinas  
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County  
Rachel Saunders – Big Sur Land Trust  
Ed Waggoner – City of Soledad  
Don Wilcox – City of Soledad

**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. Storm Water Resource Plan and Grant Program:** Susan provided background on the planning grant proposal being written to develop a Storm Water Resource Plan (SWRP). She said that the lead applicant is Coastal Conservation and Research, Inc. (CCR), a nonprofit organization, which is the fiscal agent for Central Coast Wetlands Group (CCWG). CCWG will take the lead in developing the plan. The lead public agency on behalf of whom the SWRP will be developed is the Monterey County Resource Management Agency (RMA). The SWRP coverage area will encompass the Greater Monterey County IRWM area, with the exception of the Big Sur watersheds because not much storm water activity occurs there. She said an MOA will be signed by CCR, RMA, and the Regional Water Management Group to develop the SWRP.

Ross then briefly described the proposed scope of work. He explained that the project team will use a set of models and tools already developed to help document environmental benefits for proposed and existing storm water and dry weather runoff capture projects. These models and tools will be expanded and refined as needed to cover the entire planning area. The watershed framework will allow the project team and stakeholders to specify priority areas for different types of projects, and to evaluate the combined benefits of projects in the SWRP. The team will work with the NPDES regulated cities, the County, their engineers, and other stakeholders throughout the region to identify projects, and will conduct quantitative analyses to evaluate each project for expected benefits (per the Guidelines).

Bridget added that the SWRP will incorporate the Functionally Equivalent Plan (FEP) that the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA) and the City of Salinas are developing for the Gabilan and Natividad Creek subwatersheds. Gary explained that Kennedy/Jenks has been hired to develop the FEP. He noted

that the match requirement is very high – 50% non-State match; however, with all the work that has already been done (with Pure Water Monterey, etc.), they think they have enough match to ask for close to the \$10 million maximum grant amount. He noted that Carr Lake is starting to emerge as a viable project, for the first time ever; and that would be put into the mix. The Regional Water Board would like them to focus on Blanco Drain, so the FEP may be extended to cover that geographic area.

Getting back to the SWRP planning grant proposal, Susan asked, who should sign the MOA on behalf of the RWMG? After some discussion, it was decided that Ken would sign (as a representative of Garrapata Creek Watershed Council). Elizabeth motioned, Bridget seconded, and all voted in favor (none opposed, none abstained). During that discussion it was also decided that Monterey County really should be a member of the RWMG. Susan said the RMA had been invited in the early days to participate, but they had declined. Things have changed, however, and Ken offered to talk with Lew Bauman at the County to invite their participation. Susan asked the group if they thought it was OK for her to sign letters of support (as opposed to MOAs and similar documents) on behalf of the RWMG, and everyone agreed it was.

Susan noted that one requirement of the Round 1 Storm Water Implementation Grant funds is that all proposed projects must be included in an IRWM Plan. She said she would be initiating a project solicitation especially (and exclusively) for storm water and dry weather runoff capture projects in early March, in order to allow entities within the IRWM region to put forward their storm water projects in Round 1.

**3. Central Coast IRWM Funding Strategy:** Susan had sent the latest version of the Central Coast IRWM Regions MOA to the RWMG prior to the meeting. She said the first Prop 1 IRWM grant applications are due in June, so the goal is to have the MOA signed before then. There was discussion about the challenge of running the MOA past attorneys, given so many iterations, and about the “indemnification” clause, which everyone seemed to agree was OK to delete. Ken emphasized the urgency to “get on it with” given the deadline (and asked Susan to urge the other IRWM regions to do so). A decision was made to have the attorneys look over the MOA one more time, and Susan asked everyone to give her a basic “thumbs up or thumbs down” on the MOA so she can get back to the other Central Coast Regions. Susan asked who should sign the MOA on behalf of the RWMG. No concrete decision was made, but it was suggested that it didn’t really matter who signed, as long as everyone agreed that person could represent the group for purposes of the agreement.

Ken mentioned recent legislative activity, AB 1585, that would earmark \$25 million for the Interlake Tunnel. There is no source earmarked for this money, however, and Ken brought up the possibility of the State taking the \$25 million out of the scant \$31.4 million set aside for Central Coast IRWM Implementation (and Planning) Grant funds. He asked everyone to keep an eye on the legislation, and to be ready to take action to prevent that from occurring.

**4. Prop 1 IRWM Planning Grant:** Susan noted that the RWMG will have to go after Planning Grant funds in order to be compliant with AB 1429 (plan for nitrates, arsenic, perchlorate, and chromium VI), as well as to modify the IRWM Plan to meet some new standards in Prop 1. Susan said she had summarized the required changes from Prop 84 to Prop 1, and promised to send that summary to the group. She noted that the maximum planning grant amount is \$250,000; however, the planning effort shouldn’t require that much. Also, she noted that – if the Central Coast IRWM Regions MOA is signed in time – whatever money the RWMG receives in Planning Grant funds will come directly out of the region’s proposed allocation of Implementation Grant funds (\$6,478,875).

**5. Prop 1 IRWM Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Involvement Funds:** Susan explained that there will be \$4.3 million available for the entire Central Coast Funding Area in “DAC Involvement” funds. These are non-competitive funds intended for DAC engagement in the IRWM process, including DAC project identification and planning (initial studies, etc.). The Department of Water Resources expects each Funding Area to come up with one joint proposal on how they will spend the funds. DWR has scheduled to meet with each Funding Area in April (so we need to have a joint plan in place by then). Susan said she has identified DACs in the Greater

Monterey County region based on the new 2014 ACS 5-year estimates; she said she would send the spreadsheet to the group.

**6. Integrated Drinking Water and Wastewater Plan for Disadvantaged Communities in the Salinas Valley:**

Susan briefly provided background on the DAC Plan. The RWMG project team is now more than halfway through this two-year planning effort. The project has involved: identifying DACs and “hidden DACs” in the region, identifying their drinking water and wastewater issues, and now, identifying potential solutions. Daisy, with EJCW, said the project team had concluded the outreach phase of the project last summer. They found acute drinking water and/or wastewater problems in 13 communities. Of those communities, eight are interested in continuing with the project; the others are either in the process of addressing their problems or are not interested for other reasons. The project team is collaborating with Community Engineering Corps (CEC). CEC is working with each of the eight communities to develop potential engineering solutions, and will be reporting their recommendations back to the project team by mid-April. The project team will then work with the TAC to refine the solutions. In the end, the planning process will produce recommended solutions for each community, developed proposals for a handful of the communities (as many as the project can afford), and the plan itself.

Bridget asked whether any other regions on the Central Coast have developed a plan like this. Karen said that EJCW had done a similar plan for the Santa Cruz IRWM region, but it was much more limited in scope. Bridget commented that these two efforts will be helpful for contributing to the DAC Involvement piece.

Don asked for advice regarding a situation that the City of Soledad currently has with a small DAC located nearby. The State and Regional Boards have requested that the City “hook them up” (i.e., consolidate, or run pipes outside of the City boundaries). The City has responded that they are willing to do so, but they don’t want to have to manage the project or put up the funds (they can’t spend rate payers money outside City limits). A bit of an impasse has been reached. Karen noted that the project team will be conducting a funding analysis to determine potential sources of funding for this sort of situation; however, that phase of the project is still several months away. Susan added that IRWM DAC Implementation grant funds would be a perfect source of funds, but the timing isn’t good. DAC Implementation funds won’t become available for at least another two years.

Elizabeth said that she is on the DAC Plan TAC. She noted that the TAC should consider the needs of facility owners (purveyors), like the City of Soledad. How do we help the City get what *they* need to help the DAC?

**Other business.** Bridget led a discussion about ongoing funding for the IRWM process. She had sent an email to the RWMG contacts regarding funding the Program Coordinator position. All agreed that it is an important position and we would not be where we are today without that position, and especially without Susan Robinson’s skill set and involvement. Several voiced the concern that 30 hours per month for that position is not enough. Some felt that we should identify a scope of work for all activities that the Program Coordinator should be responsible for, not just the “bare bones” list of bullets that were in Bridget’s email. This scope of work should also estimate the real number of hours per month necessary to get the work completed. It was agreed that a sub-committee would meet and try to come up with a realistic budget for the position and a way to fund it. RWMG members that volunteered to be on the sub-committee were Bridget Hoover, Gary Peterson/Michael Ricker, Paul Robins, Ken Ekelund, Don Wilcox, and Rachel Saunders. Bridget will send out a doodle poll for a meeting in early March. In the meantime, she will hold off sending out \$2000 invoices to all of the RWMG organizations.

**The next RWMG is TBD.**