

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program  
Regional Water Management Group Meeting  
March 16, 2016  
Location: Conference Call**

**RWMG Attendees:**

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.  
Colin Bailey – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water  
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Ken Ekelund – Garrapata Creek Watershed Council  
Monique Fountain – Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve  
Daisy Gonzalez – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water  
Tom Harty – Monterey County Resource Management Agency  
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Vicente Lara – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water  
Heather Lukacs – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water  
Gary Petersen – City of Salinas  
Michael Ricker – City of Salinas  
Ed Waggoner – City of Soledad

**Non-RWMG Attendees:**

Karen Nilsen – Nilsen & Associates  
John Hunt – UC Davis  
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Coordinator

**Meeting Minutes:**

**1. Brief Introductions.**

**2. IRWM Coordination and Governance Structure:** Bridget initiated the discussion and Gary Petersen added his perspective about funding the Program Coordinator position. Bridget explained that the sub-committee met on March 1<sup>st</sup> to follow up on the discussion at last month's RWMG meeting in which the group decided to form a sub-committee to explore options for funding the position. The notes from that meeting were distributed to the RWMG by email from Bridget on March 15<sup>th</sup>. The sub-committee agreed that with everything going on related to IRWM and potential for future funding, the group needs more money for the position and with that, the RWMG needs a stronger governance structure and increased accountability. All agreed that Susan has done a fantastic job getting us where we are, but the RWMG has not properly compensated her for her time. The group still agreed that it was not mandatory for every organization to contribute, but in order to keep IRWM alive in this region, the RWMG must have a paid Program Coordinator.

As described in the sub-committee meeting minutes, the sub-committee also discussed creating an Executive Committee to provide direction and a vision for moving forward. On several occasions, the RWMG has had the need for a representative to sign letters/documents on behalf of the RWMG and this would solve that issue as well. There was mention that some of this additional work would be best conducted at a local level (advocacy for funding). Ken agreed that with additional funding for this position, it should be more formalized. Gary agreed to reach out to the agencies on the RWMG regarding increasing their contribution, and budgeting it in their next fiscal budget cycle. Monique agreed with the decision of the sub-committee regarding funding and governance discussion. Colin indicated that EJCW (and reference to RCAC), that they do not have the resources to contribute to the position and wanted to be considered in the Tier 3 category. He also was in agreement for local involvement. He supported the idea of an Executive Committee to help guide the RWMG forward.

Bridget suggested a short-term and long-term plan. For the short-term, in order to compensate Susan for her time now, she would send invoices on behalf of the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation to the Tier 2 organizations, which will pay \$2000 each for the 2016 calendar year. She also agreed to schedule a meeting of the sub-committee to continue working on the funding issue as well as creating an Executive Committee. The long-term plan will include funding from the Tier 1 agencies and establishment of an Executive Committee, which will involve updating the RWMG MOU and bylaws.

**3. Vote on Inviting the Monterey County Resource Management Agency to become a RWMG Member:**

Susan joined the meeting. She provided some background: Monterey County had been invited to join the RWMG when the Greater Monterey County RWMG was first forming back in 2008, but they had declined. Numerous times over the years, different RWMG members have expressed the desire to have the County “at the table.” During the February 17, 2016 RWMG meeting, Ken offered to extend an invitation to the County once again to join the RWMG. All agreed that was a good idea. Ken extended the offer, and Monterey County Resource Management Agency (RMA) accepted. To make it official, a formal vote of the RWMG to approve the RMA joining the RWMG was required. Susan asked if anyone had comments before commencing the vote.

Colin voiced concern about the overall governance of the RWMG. He noted that the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW) and California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) had asked the RWMG to invite Louise Ramirez of the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation to join the RWMG back in 2014, but the RWMG had not invited her to join. He pointed to the principles of egalitarianism and balance in the RWMG’s bylaws and, noting the number of public agencies on the RWMG, commented on an “agency takeover” of the IRWM group. He felt the RWMG had a “double standard” in regards to who was invited to join the group, and for that reason, said he couldn’t support inviting the RMA to join the RWMG.

Susan responded that the RWMG was formed very carefully with “balance” in mind, and briefly reviewed the composition of the RWMG (four public water resource agencies, one water utility, two watershed/land conservation nonprofits, two municipalities, two academic research institutions, two natural resource federal agencies, two entities representing agricultural interests, and three organizations representing DAC/environmental justice interests). Ken added that one DWR staff had once commented on the Greater Monterey County RWMG being the most inclusive and balanced group in the State. In terms of there being an “agency takeover” of IRWM, Susan quoted the California Water Code definition of a “Regional Water Management Group,” namely, “a group in which three or more local agencies, at least two of which have statutory authority over water supply or water management, as well as those other persons who may be necessary for the development and implementation of a plan...,” noting the centrality of public agencies in the State’s definition. A longer discussion ensued about the reasons why the RWMG had not invited the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation to join the RWMG.

Regarding RMA’s joining the RWMG, Ken claimed that having the County at the table was important, particularly given the State’s new emphasis on storm water management as being key to IRWM. Ed added that the State is looking for *public agencies* as partners in grants. Colin said he would like to see a more specific plan about how the RWMG “grows the group,” and noted that the next two rounds of IRWM funding are dedicated entirely for DACs. The conversation turned to a more general discussion of governance. Ross commented that having an Executive Committee will make the RWMG more effective.

After the discussion, Ken motioned to approve the RMA joining the RWMG, Ross seconded. The motion carried, with the final vote as follows:

<b>RWMG Member</b>	<b>Yes Vote</b>	<b>No Vote</b>
Garrapata Creek Watershed Council (Ken Ekelund)	x	
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (Bridget Hoover)	x	
Central Coast Wetlands Group (Ross Clark)	x	
Elkhorn Slough NERR/Elkhorn Slough Foundation (Monique Fountain)	x	

City of Soledad (Ed Waggoner)	x	
City of Salinas (Michael Ricker)	x	
Monterey County Resource Conservation District (Paul Robins – electronic vote)	x	
Big Sur Land Trust (Rachel Saunders – electronic vote)	x	
Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (Colin Bailey)		x
San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc. (Horacio Amezcuita)		x
Rural Community Assistance Corporation (Karen McBride – electronic vote)		x
<b>Tally</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>

Colin emphasized that his reasons for voting against were about process, not about the RMA.

**4. Central Coast IRWM Funding Area Memorandum of Agreement:** Susan had emailed the RWMG the final MOA prior to the meeting. She asked the group what procedure should be used for signing the MOA: Should each RWMG entity take the MOA to their governing boards for approval? Monique contended that a simple vote of the RWMG was all that was needed; Ken and Colin agreed, and the others generally voiced agreement. The group designated Susan to sign the MOA on behalf of the RWMG.

Colin expressed dissatisfaction with the MOA as written, noting his specific concerns (which had been discussed at previous RWMG meetings) about the funding allocation for DAC funds: namely, that DAC Implementation Funding is not allocated according to a needs assessment. There was discussion about that topic and more generally about DACs. Pointing out that the next two IRWM funding rounds are “DAC only,” Ken asked, “What’s going on? Why are DAC groups feeling out of sorts?” Colin said that EJCW has a vision of implementation for DAC funding that is not necessarily in line with that of the State agencies. He talked a bit about the Technical Assistance funds for DACs (this is a separate pot of Prop 1 State funding for DACs, apart from the IRWM DAC funding), and said that EJCW is seeking a level of coordination (centralized database, standardized methods for assessments, etc.). Monique asked, how can we help you? Colin noted that he has been championing the idea of “baseline funding” at the State level. He said that EJCW has been asked by the San Francisco Bay Funding Area to be the lead applicant for the DAC IRWM funding, and is hoping perhaps to act as lead applicant for the Central Coast Funding Area as well.

When it came time to vote, there was no longer a quorum on the conference line. Susan said she would hold an electronic vote following the RWMG meeting.

**5. Prop 1 IRWM Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Involvement Funds:** Having just discussed DAC Involvement Funding, Susan gave just a brief overview. The DAC Involvement Funding is non-competitive. The six Central Coast IRWM regions must come up with a single proposal for spending the funds. Susan will be working with the DAC Plan project team (which consists of: five members of the EJCW staff, Karen McBride for RCAC, Horacio for San Jerardo, Karen Nilsen, and Susan) to come up with a draft scope of work and budget for the Greater Monterey County IRWM region’s apportionment of DAC Involvement funds, based on the work that has been done to date on the DAC Plan.

**Other business.** Regarding the Alejo bill to obtain funds for the Interlake Tunnel project, Ken noted that the phrase “Do not use IRWM funding” was explicitly written into the resolution – so no worries!

**The next RWMG meeting is TBD.**