

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
October 19, 2016
Location: Castroville Community Services District Office, Castroville, CA**

RWMG Attendees:

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group
Monique Fountain – Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
Brenda Granillo – Cal Water
Tom Harty – Monterey County Resource Management Agency
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Heather Lukacs – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
Mike McCullough – Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency
Heidi Niggemeyer – City of Salinas
Gary Petersen – City of Salinas
Rachel Saunders – Big Sur Land Trust
Eric Tynan – Castroville Community Services District

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Austin Fontanilla – AmeriCorps Fellow
Michael Goymerac – Kenndy/Jenks Consultants
John Hunt – UC Davis
Sachi Itagaki – Kennedy/Jenks Consultants
Willy Nowotny – MNS Engineering (for Castroville Community Services District)
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Coordinator
Helek Rutten – AmeriCorps Fellow

Meeting Minutes:

1. Brief Introductions.

2. Salinas Area Storm Water Resource Plan: Sachi Itagaki provided an update on the process of developing a Storm Water Resource Plan (SWRP) for the Greater Salinas Area, with a focus on Section 5, Identification and Prioritization of Projects. She began by explaining the methodology for prioritizing projects. Table 5.1 in her handout includes 18 projects from the IRWM Plan that seem related to storm water resource management and are within the Greater Salinas Area. The qualitative prioritization of projects is based on the extent to which each project addresses the SWRP objectives (the SWRP objectives consist of the IRWM objectives that seem relevant to storm water resource management). The quantitative prioritization of projects is based on whether quantifiable benefits are evident for each project, whether or not there is permanent funding available to achieve benefits, and whether or not the project includes public land ownership.

All of the information used for project prioritization had been obtained from the original IRWM project application forms, some of which, Sachi pointed out, are now a few years old. Since the information on many of the project application forms may be outdated, and may well be incomplete, Sachi said the SWRP project team will give project proponents the opportunity to update their applications and add any missing information (such as quantifiable benefits). All of the project proponents present at the meeting said they would like to update the information for their projects. Kennedy/Jenks will contact project

proponents regarding scheduling calls to discuss updates.

Sachi noted the inherent shortcomings of this type of project prioritization, but also acknowledged that the ranking of projects is of limited importance when it comes to putting projects forward for grant funding (which takes into consideration other factors such as project readiness, whether or not match is available, etc.). Others in the room agreed. Sachi concluded that they will therefore call the prioritization method “done.”

There was discussion about other shortcomings of the Guidelines, which appear to be recognized now by the State Water Resources Control Board staff, specifically in terms of how the Guidelines target urbanized areas (whereas the vast majority of the Greater Salinas planning area is not urbanized). The Guidelines as written are specific to MS4s and don’t reflect more rural undeveloped landscapes, like the Salinas Valley.

John noted that storm water is defined by the State Board as all runoff before it reaches “waters of the State,” but that some of the major agricultural ditches are considered “waters of the State.” This clearly limits a considerable amount of runoff that could otherwise be treated as “storm water” for the purposes of this planning effort. John wondered whether the State might reconsider its definition. John also noted a dearth of infiltration areas in the planning area. Sachi added that with LID, you can get the benefit of treatment in urbanized areas but not necessarily infiltration for water supply as the quantities of water in LID features are quite small. John asked whether there was any consideration of cost-benefit for the projects. Sachi said that each benefit is so different, it is hard to compare them (e.g., how do you compare “acres restored” to “acre-feet/year supplied”?). She said she didn’t think a benefit analysis could be done in a meaningful way. Ross commented that some of these benefits may be more of a priority in one area rather than another, e.g., in an urbanized setting vs. an agricultural setting, and that this will be taken into consideration in the prioritization process for the Greater Monterey County SWRP.

Sachi recommended that the Greater Monterey County SWRP planning team consider whether they want to “bundle” projects together (integrate projects) or have projects essentially compete against each other in the plan. She said that projects in the Greater Salinas Area SWRP will be sorted according to “readiness”: near-term, middle-term, or long-term.

Sachi said that they are still accepting comments on the other sections of the plan, and noted that the extent to which the Greater Monterey County SWRP planning team provides input into the Greater Salinas Area SWRP will help that plan “set up” the Greater Monterey County plan. She asked whether there should be an internal or a public review process of the final SWRP, noting that they do plan on sending an “email blast” to the broader IRWM stakeholder list. Susan suggested that Sachi ask Larry Hampson with the Monterey Peninsula IRWM Region to send an email blast to their stakeholder list as well. Sachi said they aim to get a public draft out by early January.

3. Tour of Castroville’s Arsenic Treatment Facility: Eric Tynan, General Manager of Castroville Community Services District (CCSD), introduced Willy Nowotny with MNS Engineering, who described the process of designing and constructing the arsenic treatment facility for the deep well for CCSD’s domestic water supply. The CCSD was awarded funds through Round 1 IRWM Implementation Grant in 2011. The original cost estimate was \$781,000, and they ended up with a project cost of \$1.25 million; this was due mainly to a long delay between the time of grant application and the eventual disbursement of funds.

One of the challenges in designing the facility was that none of the backwash water could be pumped offsite, so they had to find a way to deal with that. They found a solution by means of installing iron oxide media in the tank.

CCSD decided to go with a design-build process. Willy described the benefits of design-build. This included a collaborative approach, a more efficient process that allowed them to meet time constraints (they were able to “get some parts moving” while other parts were still in design), transferring all of the risks to the contractor, and cost savings (rather than spending a lot of money on pre-project analysis, they were able to perform analyses each step along the way). He said they started talking about the process in February, went to market in April, and were online by the end of December.

Eric and Willy then led the RWMG members on a tour of the facility. Before concluding the meeting, a couple of “Other Business” items were briefly discussed.

4. Other Business: Bridget provided a brief update about the IRWM DAC Involvement funding. She said representatives from the six Central Coast IRWM Regions met with DWR two weeks ago, and that “we’re on track.”

Monique announced that the Elkhorn Slough Foundation is about to embark on a 67-acre restoration project to raise the elevation of a marsh (with 170,000 cubic yards of sediment) so as to achieve a more naturally functioning marsh system. They just released an RFP for final engineering. (They are using a design-bid-build process.)

The next RWMG meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2016, location TBD.