

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program
Regional Water Management Group Meeting
and
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting for the Storm Water Resource Plan
for the Greater Monterey County IRWM Planning Region (TAC Meeting #2)**

February 21, 2018

Location: Moss Landing Marine Labs, Moss Landing, CA

RWMG Entity Attendees:

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group
Lisa Emanuelson – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Pablo Figueroa – Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Brian Frus – City of Salinas
Sarah Hardgrave – Big Sur Land Trust
Tom Harty – Monterey County Resource Management Agency
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Pamela Krone – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Karen McBride – Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Mike McCullough – Monterey One Water
Moises Moreno-Rivera – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
Heidi Niggemeyer – City of Salinas
Kimberly Null – Central Coast Wetlands Group
Kevin O’Connor – Central Coast Wetlands Group
John Olson – California State University Monterey Bay
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County
Rachel Saunders – Big Sur Land Trust

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Rachel Ballanti – Department of Water Resources
Mladen Bandov – County of San Luis Obispo Public Works
Carmel Brown – Department of Water Resources
Tim Carson – Santa Cruz Regional Water Management Foundation
Brendan Clark – County of San Luis Obispo Public Works
Jeff Condit – Monterey Regional Storm Water Management Program
Fray Crease – County of Santa Barbara Public Works
Ray Dienzo – County of San Luis Obispo Public Works
Maureen Hamilton – Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
John Hunt – UC Davis
Natalie LaVan – Santa Cruz Regional Water Management Foundation
Heather Lukacs – Member of the Public
Karen Nilsen – Nilsen and Associates
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Director
Cory Saltsman – Department of Water Resources

Meeting Minutes

1. Brief Introductions.

2. Greater Monterey County Storm Water Resource Plan (SWRP) Presentation: John Hunt, on behalf of the SWRP planning team, delivered a presentation on Approaches for Quantitative Analysis and Project

Prioritization for the Greater Monterey County SWRP. Since the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) serves as the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the SWRP, this meeting officially served as a TAC meeting (#2). The intention was not only to provide an update on work but to obtain feedback and input from the TAC.

John noted that a storm water project must be listed in an approved SWRP in order to be eligible for Prop 1 Storm Water Implementation Grant funds. He began by discussing the project solicitation for the SWRP. A project solicitation “short form” was distributed to individuals in the Greater Monterey County IRWM region in August 2017. Project proposals have been submitted thus far for (only) two projects. John commented that some project proponents may be waiting for the State Water Resources Control Board to announce its Implementation Grant project solicitation before submitting projects to the SWRP, and asked those with projects to please submit them soon. Ross Clark added that, as part of the SWRP planning project, the team is also trying to identify opportunity areas for storm water projects, where the RWMG as a group can develop new projects that would address regional needs. Bridget Hoover asked whether the Greater Monterey County SWRP will subsume the projects included in the Greater Salinas SWRP. John responded that those projects were all taken from the IRWMP; and noted that for the purposes of Implementation Grant eligibility, it won’t matter whether a project is listed in one plan or another, just as long as it is listed in an approved SWRP.

John then described the proposed approach for the evaluation of storm water projects in the plan. He said the team has adopted the scoring matrix from the Greater Salinas SWRP, and briefly described it. There are three scoring categories: 1) availability of permanent funding, match, and whether the project utilizes public lands; 2) how well the project addresses multiple benefits; and 3) the quantitative analysis of benefits. John asked whether the TAC had any thoughts on modifying the prioritization system. Bridget asked about specifying whether a project led to the achievement of water quality criteria in category 2, and suggested rather than just NPS control it should seek to meet criteria. There was some discussion about the criteria, and John noted that a project should be scored positively if it reduced pollution even if the water quality criteria in the receiving waters were not completely met. John explained that this is a two-part process, with the project scoring matrix being the first part and the second part consisting of comparing the projects against results of the modeling, and determining how well each project fits with the opportunities and needs identified in the region.

John turned next to the GIS analyses that the team is conducting to identify storm water management opportunity areas. He showed slides of potential recharge areas and historic wetland areas (based on historic data from Elkhorn Slough Foundation), indicating opportunities for storm water projects including, for example, areas for storing storm water, recharging the groundwater basin, or for treating storm water (treatment wetlands). They are currently working with about 90 GIS layers; they have done some analysis but have quite a bit more to do.

John then discussed a water balance model that the consulting firm ESA has built to estimate flow and storage. The model will help answer questions such as: Is the project located in the right place? Does the project operate at the right time? How does project implementation affect other projects or opportunities in the region? What are the overall regionally integrated benefits in quantitative terms (volumes, rates, acres, habitats, etc.)? John briefly described the water balance model and model calibration (noting that the model is calibrating out pretty well). He demonstrated modeling scenarios based on fieldwork and GIS layers, illustrating on a Google Earth map potential areas for water retention and treatment projects.

Next, John briefly described the team’s flood peak reduction model. The model will help answer the question of how to reduce peak flow. They are still working on this model; they still need to: finish calibration, continue analysis of scenarios, build a Gabilan Creek flood model, acquire the lower Salinas model from the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, build quality control, and test the flood scenarios.

John said that they will be loading a SWAT model (soil and water assessment tool), which will look at how pollutant loads are affected by storm water projects. He discussed some issues they have had with SWAT model calibration, which they are currently trying to address. They may be loading TELR as well (storm water tool to estimate load reduction, developed by 2ND Nature), though they haven’t gotten to it yet. There was some

discussion about the use of SWAT and TELR. John noted that the team intends to integrate these models for the specific purpose for evaluating projects for the SWRP, but they are not yet certain how to integrate them or what the results will be.

John then briefly described the team's approach to evaluating a project's contribution to community benefits (including employment and education, economic benefits, and creation of local park land). Finally, John reviewed next steps:

- Determine RFP timing for the Storm Water Implementation Round 2
- Increase outreach for implementation projects
- Reconnect with proponents to verify and gather all necessary quantitative information
- Finalize GIS analyses to specify and evaluate opportunities
- Finalize water balance and flood models and analyze opportunities and projects
- Select and evaluate tools to estimate loads
- Score and prioritize all available implementation projects

John noted that the State Water Board has pushed back the Storm Water Implementation Grant RFP, but was unsure of the timing (website says "late 2018/early 2019"). He noted that according to the SWRP planning grant schedule, the team is supposed to be prioritizing projects now, with a draft plan ready by June. He expressed concern that by finishing the plan too early (with regard to the Prop 1 Implementation Grant solicitation), some projects may get left out. There was some discussion about the definition of "storm water" and "waters of the State." John asked participants to please contact him and the team with any input, or to submit projects for the plan.

3. DWR Visit – A Conversation with Carmel Brown: Susan Robinson welcomed Carmel Brown, Rachel Ballanti, and Cory Saltsman from the Department of Water Resources and thanked them for driving down to participate in the RWMG meeting. She also welcomed representatives from the other Central Coast IRWM regions who came to participate in today's discussion. The discussion began with Carmel, Rachel, and Cory introducing themselves. Carmel is the Chief of the IRWM Financial Assistance Branch; Rachel is one of the Program Managers in the Financial Assistance Branch and will be one of two main leads on the IRWM Implementation Grant program; and Cory is one of the Grant Managers.

Susan asked about the anticipated timing of the next IRWM Implementation Grant round. Carmel said DWR hopes to get the draft PSP (Project Solicitation Proposal) published by April 2018, with the final PSP released in June 2018. DWR will be encouraging regional collaboration, and will also be prioritizing project readiness in this next round (noting how lack of readiness has held up numerous grant contracts). After the final PSP is released, DWR will be scheduling 1-2 day workshops with each Funding Area. At the workshops, DWR will review potential projects, assess short-term and longer-term projects; applications will be due on a rolling basis for each Funding Area based on date of the workshop (sometime prior to the end of December 2018). They intend to invite other State agencies to the workshops; for example, DWR has been partnering closely with the State Water Board. Carmel noted that the State Water Board is intending to follow the Prop 1 Storm Water Implementation solicitation closely on the heels of the IRWM solicitation. California Department of Fish and Wildlife might also participate. The idea is to leverage funding as much as possible.

Carmel generally discussed DWR's new website and new approach. She mentioned Funding Area Characterizations are underway, as well as a Regional Water Atlas. She stressed the importance of the Roundtable of Regions meetings, and of the IRWM regions communicating with DWR (and with others, including State legislators) with one voice.

Sarah Hardgrave asked whether DWR would honor the Memorandum of Agreement that was signed by the six Central Coast IRWM regions. Carmel said yes, DWR is encouraging regional collaboration – but with the caveat that they are looking for the "best" projects. There is discussion on the State level, she said, about what constitutes "competitive process," and she stressed the need for the regional vetting process to be considered "competitive." Bridget asked whether there would be any planning grant funds available in the next rounds.

Carmel responded that the next rounds will be Implementation rounds, but some planning may be allowed (as long as there is a nexus with implementation).

Sarah asked about the long-term outlook for IRWM. Carmel confirmed a strong commitment and support on the part of DWR and the State Water Board for IRWM, but said the future is uncertain for IRWM at this point in time. She pointed to SGMA (the Sustainability Groundwater Management Act) being somewhat of a competing focus, and noted that there is absolutely no funding for IRWM in SB 5. Carmel said she still saw IRWM as being a strong vehicle moving forward in the future, and stressed the importance of educating legislators as to the real benefits of IRWM. She also noted the importance of doing the right kind of planning upfront in order to get the best implementation projects. She advocated for creating one-page fact sheets to illustrate the story of IRWM's success, contacting local officials, taking them on tours, and as much as possible, delivering this message with a "single voice" (e.g., Roundtable of Regions).

John brought up the difficulty that local organizations have getting sufficient staff time and resources for planning, as well as the difficulty in finding funds to support O&M. He has been working with others to create some form of entity (e.g., JPA) to help fill those gaps. John also asked, who would be the best person to talk to at the State regarding "the work around the work," i.e., the massive amount of work that is involved in administering grant contracts. Carmel suggested talking with the Natural Resources Agency (her counterpart there is Julie Alvis). She admitted that DWR has had some issues with their contract administrative process (including staff shortages); she and her team are trying to address that.

Tim Carson asked Carmel about a recommendation in the IRWM Stakeholder Perspectives document regarding baseline funding. Carmel replied that the California Water Plan is the vehicle for implementing those kind of high-level recommendations. She said that some of the recommendations included in the IRWM Stakeholder Perspectives document will be included in the California Water Plan Update, which is due out this month. Tim also asked whether there would be a set-aside in Round 1 Implementation of 10 percent to go to disadvantaged communities. Carmel responded that how those funds are spent is up to the Funding Area, as specified in the Funding Area agreement (i.e., the MOA) but overall a minimum of 10% must go to DAC projects required by Prop 1.

Getting back to the Funding Area workshops, participants suggested some other agencies to invite: State Coastal Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Board, and Ocean Protection Council – all of which have invested heavily in Central Coast projects.

Horacio Amezcuita raised a question about faster turnaround for payment to disadvantaged communities. Carmel pointed out that advanced payment is an option with the Disadvantaged Community Involvement grant. (Tim confirmed that the Central Coast Funding Area will be requesting advanced payment.) She suggested looking into two new bills that were recently proposed, both focused on expanding advanced payment.

Moy Moreno-Rivera brought up the problem of finding grant sponsorship for small communities (particularly for small disadvantaged communities), as well as the difficulty of finding funding to support the cost of lateral connections (i.e., from meter to the house). These issues have repeatedly proven to be impediments to moving projects forward. Carmel suggested that impediments such as this, as well as other key challenges and hardships, be enumerated and put on the table at the Funding Area workshops. Heather Lukacs informed Carmel, Rachel, and Cory about the Disadvantaged Community Plan. Susan promised to send them the plan.

Susan thanked everyone for participating, especially the DWR team, and thanked John for his superb presentation on the SWRP.

The next RWMG meeting will be held on March 21, 2018, 1:30PM – 3:30PM, location TBD.