

# **Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program Regional Water Management Group Meeting**

**January 16, 2019**

**Location: Moss Landing Marine Labs, Moss Landing, CA**

## **RWMG Entity Attendees:**

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.  
Dan Bertoldi – Monterey County Resource Management Agency  
Nancy Blecha – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water  
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Alison Imamura – Monterey One Water  
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Mike McCullough – Monterey One Water  
Victoria Nava-McClellan – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW)  
May Nguyen – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW)  
Heidi Niggemeyer – City of Salinas  
Kevin O'Connor – Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Shaun Richards – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County  
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County  
Brian True – Marina Coast Water District

## **Non-RWMG Attendees:**

Sara Galindo – Watershed Stewardship Intern with Central Coast Wetlands Group  
John Hunt – UC Davis  
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Director

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **1. Brief Introductions.**

**2. Selection Process for Round 1 Implementation Grant:** Susan began by asking the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) whether they would approve allowing a project that was originally submitted as a concept proposal by EJCW to be considered now as an implementation project for Round 1. She explained that in order to meet the requirements of AB 1249, our region's application either needs to include projects that address nitrate, arsenic, chrom 6, and/or perchlorate contamination, or it needs to justify why such projects are not included. Noting the numerous small disadvantaged communities in the Greater Monterey County region with severe nitrate and arsenic contamination in their drinking water supply (i.e., a dire need to address this problem), and the lack of projects on the table that *did* address the problem, Susan had suggested that the concept proposal be turned into an implementation project and put on the table for Round 1. Susan pointed out that the Castroville project serves a "severely DAC" area, and though the project focuses primarily on the problem of seawater intrusion, it does address the problem of arsenic in drinking water, because of arsenic present in the deep aquifer.

The EJCW project requests about \$310K and would provide funds to repair/replace drinking water infrastructure or to provide treatment (e.g., wellhead treatment) for small water systems in disadvantaged communities with fewer than 15 connections (i.e., local and state small systems). The project focuses on local and state small systems because they are ineligible for most of the grants/loans that public water systems (15+ connections) have access to, and therefore have particular need of assistance.

Ross Clark remarked that it would be an embarrassment if we *didn't* put forward a project to address these drinking water needs. Paul Robins asked whether the project would be ready for implementation, and Susan responded yes, a list of infrastructure needs will be generated from a Needs Assessment that will be sent to small water systems within the next couple of months. The EJCW representatives in the room answered some additional questions. Kevin O'Connor agreed with Ross that the project should be on the table for Round 1. Susan asked if anyone objected, and no one did.

Susan then referred to the table that she had sent the RWMG prior to the meeting, summarizing the projects and budgets that are on the table for Round 1. She noted that thus far, Coastal Conservation and Research (fiscal agent for Central Coast Wetlands Group) and Monterey County Water Resources Agency are both willing to act as Lead Applicant. Monterey One Water *might* be willing. She noted that the requested grant funds, from all 11 projects combined, totaled over \$12M, where available IRWM grant funds equaled only about \$3.4M.

Susan also briefly reviewed her suggested process for selecting projects (which she had sent to the RWMG prior to the meeting). The process involves 1) checking that projects meet certain eligibility criteria (go/no go), 2) considering certain important factors regarding the mix of projects for the application as a whole (including the project budgets, who is willing to act as Lead Applicant, and whether the application would address AB 1249 requirements, climate change, and would produce *multiple* benefits), and finally, 3) scoring each project with a numeric score. This third category she based on DWR's scoring matrix plus factors that proved to be important to the RWMG in previous rounds (including, for example, "urgent need" and "how well a project addresses the region's goals and objectives). After some discussion, it was decided that the RWMG members would take some time to consider Susan's suggested process for considering and scoring projects, and get back to her via email.

Someone asked how the process itself would go. Susan suggested that everyone have blank scorecards at hand for the March meeting, and as each project proponent presents his or her project, every RWMG member will take notes and roughly score the project. Then the RWMG will compare scores and begin discussing which projects to put forward at the April RWMG meeting.

Someone wondered whether the number of project proponents in the final application should be limited to no more than five, or no more than three, to reduce the administrative burden (based on past experience). Elizabeth Krafft pointed out that if the Castroville project is selected, it would be the only project in the application (its budget currently exceeds the amount of funding available). She added, it's possible that Castroville's need is urgent enough to warrant being put forward as a single project – that is for the RWMG to determine. Or, maybe Castroville's project can be broken down into components and its budget scaled back to allow room for other projects in the application. Elizabeth suggested maybe it would be fair to limit the application to one project per entity. She (MCWRA) and Paul (RCD) agreed they would each remove a project from the table. Heidi Niggemeyer said the City of Salinas would remove its Lincoln Street project from consideration.

After further discussion, it was decided that the project proponents would get together sometime prior to the March 20<sup>th</sup> RWMG meeting and try to whittle down the overall budget – by potentially combining project elements, eliminating redundancies, scaling back individual budgets, and possibly removing some projects that, after internal discussion, do not seem as urgent or that do not promise as great benefits. Susan offered to set up a Doodle. The project proponents will report back to the RWMG well before the March 20<sup>th</sup> RWMG meeting, with a revised project/budget list.

**3. Other Business.** John Hunt announced that an "Administrative Draft" of the Storm Water Resource Plan was submitted to the State Water Board on Monday. He will be sending the RWMG – which is also

the TAC for the Storm Water Resource Plan – a link to the draft plan tomorrow. The entire February 20<sup>th</sup> RWMG will be devoted to discussing the RWMG’s comments on the plan. John encouraged the RWMG members to send him written comments, if possible. He said he is particularly looking for input on Chapter 9, the Implementation Strategy – how we get the projects built, how we share resources, how we obtain funding not only for the SWRP projects, but for projects in the IRWM Plan and other plans in the region (e.g., Salinas River Long Term Management Plan). After the February 20<sup>th</sup> RWMG/TAC meeting, the SWRP Project Team will have a short turnaround time to post the Public Draft (February 28<sup>th</sup>). There will then be a comment period of about a month, during which time the RWMG can also provide comments.

*The next RWMG meeting will be held on February 20, 2019, 1:30PM – 3:30PM, at Moss Landing Marine Labs.*