

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

**April 20, 2022
Zoom Conference Call**

RWMG Entity Attendees:

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
Beth Febus – Big Sur Land Trust
Emily Gardner – Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Alex Henson – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Heidi Niggemeyer – City of Salinas
John Olson – California State University Monterey Bay
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County
Rachel Saunders – Big Sur Land Trust

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Jennifer Morales – Department of Water Resources
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Director

Meeting Minutes

1. Brief Introductions.

2. IRWM Implementation Grant - Round 2: Susan Robinson noted that DWR still has not released the Final Round 2 Implementation Grant Guidelines and Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP). However, up to now DWR has suggested that the choices for Round 2 applications might be October 2022 or February 2023. Two months ago, Susan held an electronic polling of RWMG members for their preferred application due date: 8 voted for the February 2023 date, 5 said they had no preference. So unless the Final Guidelines and PSP say differently, we will assume an application due date of February 2023. Given that, Susan briefly reviewed the project solicitation schedule for the IRWM Plan – with the solicitation beginning early June and applications due July 15, 2022. (The purpose of this solicitation is to get projects into the IRWM Plan in order to make them eligible for the upcoming Round 2 IRWM Implementation Grant round.)

Susan then reviewed the proposed approach for selecting which projects to include in the Round 2 application (the criteria were slightly revised since the last RWMG meeting, based on RWMG members' comments). One additional suggestion was offered: to consider the extent to which other grant funding sources may be available for a given project. If two projects are otherwise of equal merit, and the RWMG can only choose one, the extent to which one project has other potential funding opportunities available vs. the other could tip the scale in favor of one or the other. Susan will add that criteria to the "proposal level" considerations. She also suggested that she could scan the funding database and provide a "Funding Memo" for each project submitted for Round 2, listing all of the grant opportunities potentially available for each project.

Bridget Hoover motioned to approve the project selection criteria. Paul Robins seconded. All present voted in favor (8 votes), none opposed, none abstaining. However, since a quorum was not present,

Susan suggested that an electronic vote be held to collect additional votes from the RWMG members not present at the meeting. Susan will poll the other RWMG members by email.

Susan asked RWMG members to consider serving on the Project Review Committee, which will be convened during the June RWMG meeting.

3. Change Date of June RWMG Meeting: Due to a scheduling conflict, Susan asked for input on changing the date of the June RWMG meeting. It was decided: **Monday, June 6, 2022 from 2:30PM – 4:30PM.**

4. RWMG Member News:

California State University Monterey Bay: John Olson announced that CSUMB is in the process of hiring a new geomorphologist/hydrologist to replace Doug Smith.

Big Sur Land Trust: Rachel Saunders announced that the Big Sur Land Trust has a number of job openings currently, including Land Steward, Outdoor Programming, Acquisitions Manager, Natural Resources Manager.

Rachel gave a status update on the Carr Lake and Carmel River Free projects. They are at 50% design for the entire Carr Lake project, including the neighborhood park (6 acres) and restoration (67 acres). They are working toward final design, permitting, with anticipation of breaking ground on the park project in August 2023. For the restoration piece, they have funding for final design, have filed all permits with the state and federal governments (permit process could take up to a year), and will be working to obtain funding for construction. Could conceivably begin construction in 2024.

The Carmel River Free project will be breaking ground in the Fall. Phase I (restoration grading at Odello East on the east side of Highway 1) will begin this year, including pilot plantings. Then Phase II construction will begin in 2024, including construction of the causeway on Hwy 1 bridge and westside of Hwy 1. Anticipate construction through 2026.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: Bridget announced that the Sanctuary has two job openings currently, one at the Exploratorium in Santa Cruz and another administrative assistant position supporting the Sanctuary Advisory Council. The Sanctuary just hired an Ag Water Quality Coordinator. The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation also has a Water Quality position open currently.

Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency: Emily Gardner said one GSP has been approved thus far by the State. The GSA has submitted four additional GSPs. They also worked with Marina Coast Water District to submit a GSP. Now implementation begins! The GSA applied in February for Round 1 non-competitive SGMA Implementation grant funds for the 108/400 Basin, and will be applying in the competitive Round 2 for five subbasins (application due end of this year). The implementation grant covers, for instance, compliance costs, filling data gaps, monitoring, feasibility studies, construction.

*The next RWMG meeting will be held on **Monday, June 6, 2022, 2:30PM – 4:30PM.***