



Regional Advisory Committee

Meeting #22 Notes

June 17, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

San Diego County Water Authority

4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

Attendance – RAC Members

Kathleen Flannery, County of San Diego (chair)
Craig Adams, San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
Crystal Najera for Kathy Weldon, City of Encinitas
Doug Gibson, San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy
Dr. Richard Wright, San Diego State University
Eric Larson, Farm Bureau of San Diego County
Jeff Pasek for Marsi Steirer, City of San Diego
Judy Mitchell, Mission Resources Conservation District
Karen Franz, San Diego CoastKeeper
Kathy Viatella, The Nature Conservancy
Keith Greer, San Diego Association of Governments
Kirk Ammerman, City of Chula Vista
Linda Flournoy, Planning and Engineering for Sustainability
Mark Weston, Helix Water District
Megan Johnson for Shirley Innecken, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project
Mike Thornton, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority
Neal Brown, Padre Dam Municipal Water District
Rick Alexander, Sweetwater Authority
Shea Thornbury for Richard Pyle, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
Susan Varty, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Toby Roy for Ken Weinberg, San Diego County Water Authority

Attendance – RWMG Staff

Cathy Pieroni, City of San Diego
John Van Rhyn, County of San Diego
Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority
Sheri McPherson, County of San Diego

Attendance – Interested Parties to the RAC

Alyson Watson, GHD
Anna Aljabiry, California Department of Water Resources
Dana Frieauf, San Diego County Water Authority
Heather Parkison, RMC Water and Environment
Jane Davies, Sweetwater Authority
Kelly Craig, Zoological Society of San Diego
Kris McFadden, City of San Diego

Rosalyn Stewart, RMC Water and Environment
Tom West, RMC Water and Environment
Wally Grabbe, Valley Center Municipal Water District

Introductions

Ms. Kathleen Flannery (chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room.

Report from Sacramento

Mr. Jeff Volberg, SDCWA lobbyist, gave an update on the dire State budget situation. Mr. Volberg discussed the possibility of reorganization of the State government, including elimination of the Natural Resources Agency or the Department of Water Resources. While such reorganization of the State government is not an active part of the budget negotiations at this time, it is an idea on the table. He also noted that eliminating umbrella organizations/departments complicates the receipt and distribution of federal funds.

Mr. Volberg reported that the State of California will run out of cash by the end of July should the budget remain unbalanced beyond July 1, 2009. New taxes have been proposed to mitigate this issue, but will not likely pass through the legislature. If the budget remains unbalanced after July 1, any available funds will be rerouted to top priorities such as education and debt.

RAC Comments and Questions

- Did S&P put the State of California on credit watch?
 - *Yes and it may downgrade the State's credit rating.*
- Is there a possibility of Proposition 50 funds being "taken" by the State? Or could the State defer payment to regions/project proponents?
 - *The State is contractually obligated to distribute the Proposition 50 funds, but they can and probably will defer any and all payments that are lower priorities. This may pose problems for near-term payment of Proposition 50 grant contracts.*
- How will the State financial situation affect the SRF loan program?
 - *The SRF loan program should not be affected because it is federal money distributed through the Stimulus Program.*
- Is the State still operating private placement bonds?
 - *Since January the State has issued \$13 billion in bonds. After February when they adopted the one and a half year budget, a \$24 billion deficit has been added to the amount the State had previously.*
 - *Since State revenues generally come in at the end of the year, States borrow from themselves to compensate. If the State's budget is not balanced by July 1 they won't be able to borrow... If, on the other hand, they are able to they will be looking at private placement bonds with high interest rates.*
- Is the State contemplating borrowing local government funds (i.e., property tax revenues)?
 - *The Budget Conference Committee decided not to borrow local government revenues or funds yet, but that doesn't mean they won't change their minds. The State might*

ask local government agencies to vest reserves in State securities rather than borrowing/confiscating local government revenues or cash. However, this concept has not been vetted yet.

- Ms. Anna Aljabiry, Department of Water Resources, noted that the State has an emergency fund to cover funds that are excluded from deferral and Proposition 50 funds are currently exempt from any funding freezes. That exempt status may change on July 1, 2009.

SDCWA's Drought Allocation

Ms. Dana Frieauf, SDCWA, discussed San Diego's water supply situation. Ms. Frieauf detailed the three main types of challenges to water supply in the area, including the regulatory setting, drought, and low storage levels. She explained that the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which supplies State Water Project water to SDCWA, has reduced supplies due to these three factors. SDCWA has responded by utilizing the 2009 dry-year transfer supplies, allocating supplies to member agencies, and declaring a "Drought Alert". A 13% cutback from Metropolitan will result in an 8% cutback to SDCWA member agencies, due to transfer supplies from Imperial Irrigation District. Agriculture will suffer cutbacks ranging from 13% to 30%.

Local water agencies are choosing to reduce water use by implementing mandatory restrictions, escalating water rates, setting water budgets, and ramping up public outreach efforts. Ms. Frieauf concluded by stressing that coordination is necessary in order to respond to the shortage with water saving and restricting measures. Moreover, long-term teamwork is crucial to instill a permanent water efficient ethic in the region, support local water supply reliability, and to encourage state leaders to fix the Bay-Delta.

RAC Comments and Questions

- Water use restrictions (per the "Drought Alert") have water quality benefits as well. How can we also promote these ideas?
 - *Great point – Dana will recognize water quality benefits in future presentations.*
 - *The County's Watershed Protection/Stormwater Division is also working on some cross-branding materials for water conservation/water quality.*

DWR Updates

Ms. Anna Aljabiry, Department of Water Resources, reported that her staff is currently interviewing IRWM planning regions throughout the State for the Region Acceptance Process (RAP). After review of numerous other planning regions, DWR has come to realize the many benefits of the San Diego and Tri-County FACC structures. Draft RAP recommendations should be available by mid-August, followed by a 15-30day public review period.

San Diego IRWM Updates

Proposition 50 Contract Administration

Mr. Mark Stadler, SDCWA, announced that the Proposition 50 grant contract between SDCWA and DWR was signed on April 7, 2009. He reported that the RWMG governing bodies and local project sponsors are developing subcontracts. A kick-off workshop with the local project sponsors will be held shortly. He reminded the group that the 10% cost share (per project) must be met before invoices are submitted.

Tri-County FACC Updates

Mr. Mark Stadler, SDCWA, announced that San Diego's RAP interview is scheduled for June 18, 2009. One representative from each of the RWMG agencies and the consultant will attend. The Tri-County FACC members collaborated on talking points, common interview questions, and presentation boards.

RAC Membership Workgroup

Ms. Cathy Pieroni, City of San Diego, reviewed the RAC membership policy agreed upon last meeting. While attendance levels are reasonably high, members are expected to call or email Chair Kathy Flannery or Ms. Rosalyn Stewart (consultant) in the case they will be absent, and this will be considered an excused absence. Should a member fail to send an alternative or notify Ms Flannery or Ms. Stewart, that member's absence will be considered unexcused. After 3 unexcused absences within a 12-month period, that member's seat may be reassigned. The RAC Membership Workgroup has further proposed an affirmation statement be signed by all RAC members recognizing that their attendance is important and allowing members to identify an alternate.

The Workgroup also proposed adding two new seats to the RAC (bringing the total to 31) in order to ensure broad representation and address all water resources topics within Proposition 84 – one seat representing rural interests/disadvantaged communities and one seat representing flood control/management. The Workgroup also proposed expanding the At Large academia representative to also address coastal water resources issues (if possible). Ms Pieroni presented the Workgroup's recommendations for RAC consideration and noted that they would return with proposed names at the August meeting, if approved.

RAC Recommendations

- **RAC moved to confirm the membership policy, including excusal via email to Ms. Flannery (Kathleen.Flannery@sdcounty.ca.gov) or Ms. Stewart (rstewart@rmcwater.com), and distribute the affirmation statement to members.**
- **RAC moved to invite two new RAC members (rural/DACs and flood control) as proposed by the Workgroup.**

Watershed Planning and Outreach Workgroup

Ms. Sheri McPherson, County of San Diego, explained that the Watershed Workgroup has been focused on developing a policy proposal on the role of watershed groups in IRWM planning. The Workgroup is also reviewing and contributing to the proposed online project database, and is developing a project guidance memo for the Proposition 84 Call to Action.

Online Project Database

Ms. Rosalyn Stewart, RMC Water and Environment, explained that the IRWM Online Project Database for Proposition 84 should be up and running within the next six months. She discussed several features and capabilities that the database will possess, including a mapping function, contribution to IRWM Plan metrics, and relation to 303(d) listed water bodies (where appropriate). Although the Proposition 84 funding guidelines will not be released until August, work must begin to develop the online forms and fields. Changes will be made as necessary after the draft guidelines are released. Ms. Stewart reviewed two project information forms from past funding opportunities to help the RAC brainstorm fields for the online project database.

RAC Comments and Questions

- The database should have a guidance document with hyperlinks from each question so that project proponents understand the purpose and desired responses for each.
- There should be character limits as well, so users have an idea of how much information should be used to fill in the fields.
- The database should prompt the user to input the relevance of the proposed project to watershed management plans, as well as other water resources/supply/quality plans.
 - Watershed management plans were identified in the IRWMP and should be used as a filter for project ranking.
 - Project proponents should be asked if a project applies to any water resources/supply/quality plan because it will help decision-makers identify the reasoning behind the project.
 - Many watershed plans are outdated and do not cover all areas. Users should be able to explain their project's relevance to regional/local goals.
- More detailed budget information should be required.
- There should be a requirement about post-project reporting.
- In the field asking whether the project is ready for grant funding, the database should allow space for comments (other than yes/no).
- The database should ask what multiple problems the project is addressing.
- The State recognizes methods of reaching out to DACs other than website and newsletter blurbs. The database should ask project proponents to elaborate on DAC outreach methods at the project level.
- The database should inquire whether climate change is factored into a proposed project and if so, how? Mitigation? Adaptation?
- "Affected" watersheds or groundwater basins should be defined.

Regional Stormwater Program and Role of WURMP in Watershed Planning

Mr. Kris McFadden, City of San Diego, gave a brief overview of the history and organization of the City's Storm Water Department. He explained how urbanization has resulted in impacts to water quality from multiple sources, and discussed how storm water regulation has been ramped up in recent years to include new Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), no dry weather discharges, and stricter regulations on wet weather discharge. Mr. McFadden went on to discuss the 20-Year Strategic Plan for Clean Beaches and Bays Program and how the program is tiered to avoid impacts to communities and ensure compliance. He concluded by giving a quick overview of high profile storm water issues and various pieces storm water management, monitoring, and planning.

Mr. John VanRhyn, County of San Diego, discussed the regional storm water program. He listed the 21 Copermittees of the Regional Municipal Stormwater Permit and explained the 3 different types of regional activities: programs, coordination, and standards. Regional activities include: monitoring programs, residential education, mobile businesses, and permit deliverables. Regional coordination includes: Regional MOU and management structure, individual Copermittee coordination, annual work plans and budgets, and external coordination. Regional

standards include: program implementation, reporting and assessment, fiscal reporting, model SUSMP and hydromodification management plan.

Mr. Todd Snyder, County of San Diego, gave an overview of Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plans (WURMPs) and explained they supplement the Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plans (JURMPs) which only apply within jurisdictional boundaries. Mr Snyder stressed the focus on water quality problems partially or fully attributable to MS4 discharges. He reviewed the WURMP lead agencies and major components, including watershed water quality assessment and pollutant source identification. Mr. Snyder concluded by discussing TMDLs and opportunities for collaboration, such as dual benefit projects like stormwater capture and reuse.

RAC Comments and Questions

- Has the City of San Diego considered creek daylighting to increase public awareness of the creek and water quality implications of their actions?
 - *Chollas Creek daylighting was a success as it increased public awareness of the creek. Continuing work on other creeks in the area.*
 - *David Wells at City of San Diego is responsible for storm water/restoration projects.*
- Recommendation to invite WURMP leads for each watershed to help address/rank water quality projects in the IRWM program.
 - *WURMP leads have their hands full trying to address regulatory requirements. That said, they may participate in limited meetings/workshops.*
- Land managers need to start viewing storm water as a resource rather than a nuisance.
- RWQCB is more concerned with recycled water than storm water issues.
- There are conflicting regulations! For example, channel maintenance activities are confused by RWQCB/USACE/CDFG/DPH regulations. RAC serves as a very diverse group that can advocate for legislative reform.
- Stormwater reuse requires capture (in reservoirs and groundwater basins) and treatment. Coordination with water supply agencies is necessary.
- A keystone of recycled water policy is salt/nutrient management plans.
- Announcement: Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team meeting, June 26

Next RAC Meeting

The next RAC meeting will be held on Wednesday August 19, 2009 from 9:00am to 11:30am at SDCWA's Board room.

Public Comments

- Alyson Watson thanked the RAC members for their collaboration and progress during her tenure as the program consultant through the present.