



Regulatory Workgroup

Meeting No. 4

July 24, 2012 ○ 9:30 am-12:00 pm

San Diego County Water Authority

4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

Draft Notes

Action items in italics

Attendees:

Livia Borak, Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation	Leslie Dobalian, San Diego County Water Authority
Todd Snyder, County of San Diego	Arne Sandvik, Padre Dam Municipal Water District
Goldy Thach, City of San Diego	Toby Roy, San Diego County Water Authority
Ruth Kolb, City of San Diego	Jeremy Haas, San Diego Regional Water Board
Mo Lahsaie, City of Oceanside	Iovanka Todt, Floodplain Management Association
Lewis Michaelson, Katz & Associates	Mark Umphres, Helix Water District
Cathy Pieroni, City of San Diego	Michael Welch, Consultant w/RMC
Travis Pritchard, San Diego Coastkeeper	

1. Welcome and Introductions

Workgroup Chair I. Todt summarized the agenda and goals of Meeting No. 4:

- Reviewing results from the June 7, 2012 Workgroup prioritization exercise,
- Discussing and prioritizing implementation strategies,
- Providing the technical team with direction on actions plans for implementing recommended collaborative strategies, and
- Reviewing and providing initial direction on the distributed annotated draft Workgroup report.

The Workgroup also reviewed handouts that had been distributed in advance of the meeting, which included:

- Summary of the June 7, 2012 Workgroup Meeting No. 3,
- Summary of results of the June 7, 2012 prioritization exercise,
- Suggested implementation strategies for addressing priority issues of interest,
- An example action plan presentation format, and
- An annotated draft version of the Workgroup report.

2. Prioritization Exercise Review

M. Welch noted that the Workgroup in prior workshops had identified a total of 30 potential issues of interest for IRWM/Regional Board collaboration. The issues were classified into the following five categories:

- I. Communication
- II. Basin Planning
- III. 303(d) Lists
- IV. Data Management
- V. Restoration and Mitigation

M. Welch presented the technical team's interpretation of the June 7, 2012 prioritization exercise of the 30 potential issues of interest. He reviewed summary tables of the priority exercise voting, and noted that three issues had received "strong and broad" Workgroup support, as shown through: (1) a large number of "high priority" votes, (2) a large number of total votes, and (3) a large diversity of support (large number of different stakeholders who ranked the issue as highly important). He identified the following three issues as receiving such strong and broad support:

Issue II.B/F Promote outcome-based and science-based water quality objectives (including seasonal or flow-based objectives, if applicable).

Issue IV.D Ensure that water quality data are useful and effectively analyzed.

Issue V.B Regional prioritization of restoration needs and opportunities.

M. Welch asked for Workgroup confirmation that the above issues represented the Workgroup's priorities for addressing collaborative opportunities.

While agreeing that the above three issues received strong and broad support, several Workgroup members questioned the interpretation of results of the June 7 priority exercise and suggested the addition of supplemental "priority" issues for inclusion in the Workgroup Report.

Significant discussion focused on Issue V.A (streamlining permitting for vegetation removal). Environmental concerns were raised that this issue incorrectly assumes that vegetation removal is an appropriate response when other options may be available to mutually achieve flood control and environmental needs. Regional Board staff noted numerous constraints to such a streamlining proposal, including existing (and potentially conflicting) regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Because there is no clear solution to channel clearing permit streamlining, Regional Board staff suggested that this issue should be omitted from the Workgroup priorities. Instead, Regional Board staff recommended that the Workgroup focus on issues that result in improved water quality and enhanced protection of beneficial uses.

Several Workgroup members noted that Issue II.F (salt and nutrient management planning) was directed toward science-based water quality objectives and should be included as part of outcome-based and science-based water quality objectives issue. Other Workgroup members noted that Issue II.G (promote indirect potable reuse) may require science-based water quality objectives, and could also be wrapped within the science-based water quality objectives issue. Several additional Workgroup members noted that Issue III.C (303(d) listings based on science

and robust data) should also be folded into the science-based Basin Plan water quality objectives theme.

Several Workgroup members also noted that Issue I.B/C (enhance understanding between IRWM Program and Regional Board) was important and should be considered.

After considerable discussion and exchange of ideas, the Workgroup agreed that a new approach was required to reorganize the issues of interest.

The Workgroup agreed that communication and data management represented tools or processes to achieve desired outcomes, and that IRWM/Regional Board collaborative effort should focus on "outcome areas" where the IRWM Program can play a role to support both (1) the Regional Board's stated priority themes and (2) the IRWM Program mission and goals: The Workgroup agreed to reorganize the "priority issues" identified in prior workshops to focus on the following priority outcomes for IRWM and Regional Board collaboration:

- Support the development of science-based Basin Plan objectives to support sustainable water supplies and protect beneficial uses,
- Support science-based 303(d) impaired water listings to support sustainable water supplies and protect beneficial uses, and
- Prioritize restoration and mitigation opportunities.

3. Potential Collaborative Strategies

M. Welch summarized handouts that had been distributed to the Workgroup that identified a range of potential implementation strategies for the Workgroup to consider. Implementation strategies were presented to address the above-noted "outcome areas", including potential implementation strategies to (1) support development of science-based Basin Plan objectives, (2) support science-based 303(d) listings, and (3) prioritize restoration and mitigation opportunities. The potential implementation strategies ranged from simple and easy to implement (e.g. informal communication and coordination) to strategies that involved IRWM Program funding.

Considerable Workgroup discussion addressed means on how to identify and organize potential collaborative opportunities. Discussion focused on restructuring the collaborative opportunities around assets or benefits that the IRWM Program can provide. The Workgroup agreed that the IRWM Program could help support attainment of regional water quality goals through:

- The IRWM vision (including establishing regional goals and promoting integrated solutions),
- IRWM stakeholder coordination,
- Existing IRWM organizational processes (e.g. RWMG, RAC, and RAC committees),
- Expertise of IRWM stakeholders and technical staff, and
- Project funding.

The Workgroup directed that potential IRWM/Regional Board collaborative strategies be identified and organized around the assets or benefits that the IRWM Program can provide, in accordance with the following matrix:

What the IRWM Program can provide:	Potential Strategies for IRWM and Regional Board Collaboration to Achieve Priority Goals		
	Priority Goal: Support Science-Based Basin Plan Objectives	Priority Goal : Support science-based 303(d) Listings	Priority Goal: Prioritize Restoration and Mitigation Opportunities
Vision			
Stakeholder coordination			
Organizational Processes			
Expertise			
Funding			

In identifying potential implementation opportunities within this matrix, the Workgroup directed the technical team to focus on harnessing existing IRWM Program assets (what the IRWM Program currently has or can do) as opposed to focusing on new IRWM processes or direction. The Workgroup noted that communication and data management tools could be foundational in supporting each of the priority goals.

The Workgroup also directed the technical team to ensure that the concept of supporting sustainability of local supplies and protecting beneficial uses be incorporated into the priority goals of science-based water quality objectives and 303(d) listings.

Further, in identifying potential collaborative strategies, the Workgroup directed the technical team to take into account the IRWM Program vision of promoting the integration of multiple goals or priority themes.

4. Workgroup Report

M. Welch reviewed the elements of the annotated draft Workgroup Report that was distributed for review. He noted that the report would consist of (1) a two or three page executive summary directed toward decision makers, and (2) an accompanying report that would summarize IRWM processes and priorities, Regional Board processes and priorities, issues of mutual interest to the IRWM Program and Regional Board, potential collaborative strategies to address the Regional Board and IRWM priorities, and suggested action plans for implementing the potential collaborative strategies.

Workgroup members emphasized the importance of the summary report, noting that a greater level of detail was provided in the draft Workgroup Report than some readers would require. Workgroup members also cautioned that use of the term "priority issue" in the Workgroup Report may suggest a commitment, whereas the Workgroup Report is intended to present potential opportunities for IRWM and Regional Board collaboration for the consideration of both groups.

It was also noted that the Regional Board was working on a "practical vision" document (strategic plan) that would emphasize the Regional Board's priority themes of addressing innovative restoration, the health of ground and surface waters, sustainable local water supplies, effective monitoring and data management, effective communication and stakeholder input. It was emphasized that the Workgroup Report should:

- emphasize the Regional Board priority themes,
- identify how the Regional Board priority themes parallel IRWM Program goals, and
- identify opportunities that exist for the IRWM and Regional Board to collaboratively address these priority themes.

To receive input on the expected level of detail for action plans, M. Welch presented an example action plan for several potential implementation strategies that included detailed action tasks, suggested responsible parties, and implementation schedules. Workgroup members indicated that the example action plans were more detailed than necessary, and that the Workgroup Report should focus on tasks and action items to get the collaborative process underway, recognizing that the collaborative process itself may involve iterations and revision as it proceeds.

5. Summary and Action Items

The Workgroup Chair and L. Michaelson summarized the general areas of discussion during the Workgroup meeting.

The following items were identified that require follow-up action:

- The technical team will reorganize the results of the prioritization exercise to focus on addressing the following priorities for IRWM and Regional Board collaboration (1) science-based Basin Plan objectives to support sustainable water supplies and protect beneficial uses, (2) science-based 303(d) impaired water listings to support sustainable water supplies and protect beneficial uses, and (3) prioritization and enhancement of restoration opportunities.
- The technical team will restructure the implementation strategies portion of the Workgroup Report to focus on areas where the IRWM Program can support the collaboration priorities. Assets that the IRWM Program can bring to bear in supporting these priorities include: (1) a vision for integrated solutions, (2) stakeholder coordination, (3) organizational processes, (4) expertise, and (5) funding.
- The technical team will redraft and reorganize the draft Work Plan Report to identify implementation strategies and action plans for the above priorities, and distribute the draft Work Plan Report to the Workgroup for review.
- In presenting the potential strategies, the technical team will assess the potential value provided by IRWM/Regional Board collaboration, and will evaluate this value against the implementation considerations. The target would be to identify several "low hanging fruit" strategies (e.g. strategies that provide value and are relatively easy to implement).
- A fifth Workgroup meeting will be scheduled for the fall of 2012 to review and comment on the draft Workgroup Report, and provide the technical team with direction on finalizing the report for presentation to the RWMG and RAC. A meeting agenda and revised draft of the Workgroup Report would be distributed to the Workgroup in advance of this fifth meeting.