



## **Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #52**

October 1, 2014

9:00 am – 11:00 am

San Diego County Water Authority Board Room  
4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

### **NOTES**

#### **Attendance**

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##### **RAC Members**

Troy Bankston, County of San Diego (chair)  
Arne Sandvik for Albert Lau, Padre Dam  
Anne Bamford, Industrial Environmental Association  
Bill Hunter, Santa Fe Irrigation District  
Brian Olney for Mark Umphres, Helix Water District  
Chris Trees for Mike Thornton, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority  
Crystal Najera, City of Encinitas (and Alternate Ligeia Heagy)  
Dave Harvey, Rural Community Assistance Corporation (and Alternate Joni Johnson)  
Dennis Bowling, Floodplain Management Association  
Eric Larson, San Diego County Farm Bureau  
Goldy Herbon for Marsi Steirer, City of San Diego  
Jack Simes, United States Bureau of Reclamation  
Jennifer Hazard, Alter Terra  
Joe Kuhn, City of La Mesa  
Joey Randall for Kimberly Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District  
John Simpson, USMC Camp Pendleton  
Kimberly O'Connell, University of California – San Diego Clean Water  
Leigh Johnson, University of California Cooperative Extension (and Alternate Loretta Bates)  
Mo Lahsaie for Cari Dale, City of Oceanside  
Patrick Crais, California Landscape Contractors Association  
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation  
Robyn Badger, San Diego Zoological Society  
Ron Mosher for Jennifer Sabine, Sweetwater Authority  
Ronald Wootton, Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation  
Stephen Beppler for Bob Kennedy, Otay Water District  
Toby Roy for Ken Weinberg, San Diego County Water Authority

##### **RWVG Staff**

Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority  
Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority  
Mark Stephens, City of San Diego

Maria Mariscal, San Diego County Water Authority  
Peter Martin, City of San Diego

**Interested Parties to the RAC**

Bill Luksic, RMC Water and Environment  
Bryn Evans, Dudek  
Cary Sharp, San Diego Zoo Safari Park  
Catherine Rom, City of San Diego  
Crystal Mohr, RMC Water and Environment  
David Ahles, City of Carlsbad  
Enrique Lopezcalva, RMC Water and Environment  
George Adrian, City of San Diego  
Jim Bennet, County of San Diego  
Jimmy Knott, City of Oceanside  
John Foster, Stoney Miller  
Julia Escamilla, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District  
Kirk Ammerman, Kimley-Horn and Associates  
Kyle Darton, County of San Diego  
Laura Carpenter, Brown and Caldwell  
Mehdi Khalili, City of San Diego  
Pam Meisner, Water Conservation Garden  
Sally Johnson, RMC Water and Environment  
Stephani Shigematsu, San Diego Zoo Safari Park  
Terrell Breaux, City of San Diego  
Whitnie Wiley, Association of California Water Agencies

**Welcome and Introductions**

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Mr. Troy Bankston, County of San Diego, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room.

**IRWM Grant Program**

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**Grant Administration**

Ms. Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA), updated the group on grant administration activities for the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program. To-date, the Region has received four grants totaling over \$44 million. Three of the grants are implementation grants, and one was a planning grant. The Region has been tentatively awarded \$15.1 million under the draft awards for the Proposition 84 Drought Relief Grant. If this award is finalized, the Region will have received \$59.5 million to fund 45 projects.

Ms. Burton updated the group on progress under the Proposition 50 Implementation Grant. This award expires in June 2016, and funded 19 projects. Nine of the projects are completed or in final stages. DWR recently conducted walk-throughs of two projects that were completed. The first was Project 50-7, the San Vicente Reservoir Source Water Protection through Watershed Acquisition and Restoration Program (Project 50-7), the second was the South San Diego Water Supply Strategy (Project 50-13). Project 50-7 protected source waters for the San Vicente Reservoir as a buffer

against contamination, and Project 50-13 included groundwater sampling and modeling of the San Diego Formation. Project 50-13 helps to support one of the projects that was included in the Proposition 84 Drought Relief application. Project Sponsors for these two projects will make project presentations at a future RAC meeting. DWR is processing invoices relatively quickly, around 60-90 days, for Proposition 50. To-date, the Region has expended approximately 60% of its total grant award.

The group was updated on the status of the Proposition 50 audit that the California Department of Finance (DOF) conducted. During the draft audit report, DOF made two observations: 1) unsupported and unallowable expenditures claimed, and 2) oversight of grant deliverables needs improvement. SDCWA disagreed with DOF's findings, and wrote a 46 page response. Unfortunately, DOF did not modify their observations in the final audit report per information provided by SDCWA. In response to the final audit report, SDCWA staff met with California Department of Water Resources (DWR) representatives on September 30, 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the audit and encourage DWR to consider the additional information provided by SDCWA, which would help to modify the recommendations made by DOF. DOF's findings are a recommendation, and DWR will issue final findings once they consult with their staff and DOF representatives.

Projects funded under Proposition 84 – Round 1 Implementation Grant are progressing as planned, with two projects complete or nearly complete. The Bannock Avenue Neighborhood Streetscape Improvements (Project 84-1-7) has been completed, and is now in the monitoring phase of the project. CoastKeepers' Regional Water Quality Assessment and Outreach Project (Project 84-1-9) is also complete. To date, the Region has spent approximately 40% of its Proposition 84 – Round 1 award.

The Proposition 84 Planning Grant is completed and the final report is being processed. The Proposition 84 – Round 2 Implementation Grant agreement has been finalized with DWR, and SDCWA is currently processing Local Project Sponsor agreements.

### **Drought Solicitation Grant Funding**

Mr. Mark Stadler, SDCWA, presented on the Drought Solicitation Grant Funding opportunity. DWR released draft awards September 23, 2014, and recommended 23 of 39 applications for funding. A total of \$339 million was requested by the 39 applications, and DWR recommended awarding \$200 million per the drought legislation. The San Diego Region was recommended for the full \$15 million that was requested to fund 7 projects that will collectively provide 12,400 acre-feet per year (AFY) of local water to the region. All three applications within the Tri-County Funding Area Coordinating Committee (Tri-County FACC) – San Diego, Upper Santa Margarita, and South Orange County – were recommended for full funding. In total, the San Diego Funding Area was recommended for approximately \$17.6 million.

The public comment period on the draft awards is now open until October 8. Mr. Stadler and Ms. Crystal Mohr, RMC Water and Environment, attended the public comment meeting hosted by DWR in Sacramento on September 30, 2014, and will submit a written comment letter. The Regional Water Management Group has some comments regarding the scoring of the region's application, but wants to thank DWR for supporting the region's priority projects and commend DWR on streamlining the application process. If RAC members would like to submit a comment letter in support of proposal,

they should be sent to Zaffar Eusuff at DWR. Ms. Mohr can provide a copy of the draft letter the RWMG is preparing if anyone wants to see a template.

It is anticipated that DWR will release final recommendations on the Drought Solicitation Grant Funding at the end of October or early November. If the draft award remains, the San Diego IRWM Region would have approximately \$31 million remaining for the final round of Proposition 84 Implementation Grants. Note that the schedule for the next round of Proposition 84 Implementation Grants has changed – the draft Guidelines and Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) are now expected in Fall 2015, with grants awarded in 2016. Ms. Mohr reminded the group that the Region’s internal project selection process will begin once the draft PSP is released, with a Project Integration Workshop followed by the Call for Projects. The group was told to expect emails regarding the local project selection process in late Summer or early Fall 2015.

### **Proposition 1**

Mr. Stadler then informed the group about the IRWM funding that would be available if Proposition 1 is passed by voters in November. Proposition 1 is a \$7.545 billion water bond. Of the water bond funding, \$510 million would be set aside for IRWM funding. \$52.5 million would be allocated to the San Diego Funding Area. The RWMG will convene with the other RWMGs in the Tri-County FACC to discuss a funding split similar to what was implemented for Proposition 84. As with Proposition 84, the new water bond would set aside 10% of the total IRWM funding for disadvantaged community (DAC) projects. One big change between Proposition 84 and Proposition 1 is an increase in the required funding match from 25% under Proposition 84 to 50% in Proposition 1. If the bond passes, and once the guidelines are released, changes from Proposition 84 to Proposition 1 will be highlighted and presented to the group.

#### **Questions/Comments:**

- Does Proposition 1 define DACs? Has any progress been made on adapting the definition of DACs to meet local understanding of DACs?
  - DACs are anticipated to be defined in the Guidelines – no definition was included in the bond language itself.
  - There is opportunity for people to advocate on this issue before the draft Guidelines are issued. Make DWR aware of the need to adapt the definition of DACs now before the draft guidelines are out, because it’ll be easier to incorporate now.

### **Groundwater Panel**

Ms. Toby Roy, SDCWA, introduced the Groundwater Management and Regulations Panel. Speakers included: Mr. John Simpson, USMC Camp Pendleton; Mr. George Adrian, City of San Diego – Public Utilities Department; Ms. Whitnie Wiley, Association of California Water Agencies; and Ms. Maria Mariscal, SDCWA. Each speaker made a 5-10 minute presentation on groundwater projects and new groundwater legislation in California (the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014, also referred to as SGMA).

Questions/Comments:

- Given that many of the basins in San Diego have substantial surface water-groundwater interactions, how will the SGMA impact basin management? This is especially important in dry years where recharge is substantially reduced.
  - The law provides information that helps local entities establish baselines for groundwater plans. Entities should ensure that their baseline conditions account for surface water interactions.
- The Santa Margarita basin is adjudicated. How does the SGMA apply to this basin?
  - The law does not cover adjudicated basins.
- There is a connection between imported water, wastewater, and agriculture/irrigation return flows and the water quantity and quality of many groundwater basins. The San Diego region is unusual in that there are noticeable impacts from imported water on flows. Has anyone quantified imported water in systems?
  - Camp Pendleton's Cooperative Water Resource Management Agreement addresses this issue by requiring the purchase of imported water to maintain appropriate flows to Camp Pendleton, so water in the groundwater basin eventually becomes imported Colorado River water. Camp Pendleton is not aware of any legal or regulatory document that addresses this issue.
- Imported water is purchased for flows to Camp Pendleton because of groundwater extraction in the upper basin. What is the basis for the amount of imported water that is purchased?
  - The amount of water is determined by calculations based on natural flows – the amount purchased in any given year is dependent upon how much natural flows are present from precipitation.
  - Moving forward, agencies should be working with stakeholders on the impacts of various inputs on water quality in the basin and to find solutions to improve water quality in the basin.
- As agencies implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs), those that do not receive grant funding to cover all costs would need to find additional resources to cover the unfunded mandated. Many agencies are restricted by Proposition 218 and cannot easily raise money to fund unfunded mandates. Are there ideas about where additional funding could come from to fund implementation of the GSPs?
  - The legislation has two routes for allowing implementation of fees. One of these routes bypasses Proposition 218, while the other goes through Proposition 218. Everything that agencies should need to do, they should be able to do using the route that bypasses Proposition 218.
  - There are still some clean up provisions that probably need to be made to help with implementation of the SGMA. Need to make sure that agencies actually have the ability to implement the requirements of the legislation. One such clean up provision would be to have a polling provision if an agency does not get funding to implement a GSP.

- One objective of stormwater programs is protection of stormwater quality. Stormwater runoff eventually recharges to basins. If a strong stormwater protection program is in place, we can use our shallow groundwater basins. SB 985 was recently passed regarding capture and use of stormwater. Suggest that the Region consider stormwater capture and reuse as a priority for the next round of IRWM grants.
  - Stormwater capture and reuse is being looked at in the Region, and is something the public has been asking for.
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) program is ending, and the state is sending letters to close LUST monitoring sites. Stakeholders should advocate against closing these sites, which is inappropriate considering potential impacts on groundwater resources.
- Agencies protecting groundwater are writing LUST sites off and closing them. Do water purveyors need to address this?
  - Local agencies have asked the state not to close sites, because they may contain useful monitoring wells. Want the state to take into consideration future potential uses when deciding to close sites.
- We have to look at stormwater as part of a larger system. It may be used by other people, so capturing it in one part of the system could be depriving people downstream of their water supply.
- Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) will manage groundwater quantity, but the Regional Board only manages groundwater quality.
  - The legislation does not call for GSAs to address quality issues, but it is likely that both quality and quantity will be addressed in the GSPs. There is a link between quality and quantity, but whether and how this will be addressed remains to be seen.
- In the legislation, groundwater basins are defined by Bulletin 118. Per Bulletin 118, the San Luis Rey Basin is the entire San Luis Rey River. Local agencies, however, recognize six to seven individual basins within the larger basin area. Which definition of groundwater basins is the true definition?
  - We hope that there will be flexibility with regards to defining basin boundaries and managing groundwater basins and sub-basins. Hopefully there is consideration if an agency cannot realistically monitor or manage the whole basin as defined in Bulletin 118.
  - There is provision in the legislation to adjust basin boundaries via a petition to DWR. On a statewide basis it is acknowledged that the Bulletin 118 definitions are not perfect; however, these definitions were the best tool available when writing the legislation.
- The San Luis Rey Basin is the most affected by this legislation in the San Diego Region. All of the stakeholders in the San Luis Rey Basin need to be talking. The legislation includes how to include tribes that allows for both their water management role and their sovereignty.
- If the drought grant award is finalized, there will be an additional \$5 million to support Sweetwater Authority's and the City of San Diego's groundwater desalination plant (Reynolds Facility).



- Want to reinforce the importance of CASGEM in receiving funding from the state. Three entire applications for the Drought Grant were disqualified statewide due to non-compliance with CASGEM, while six individual projects were disqualified and removed from their applications due to non-compliance with CASGEM.
- What would the burden be on small homeowners who use groundwater wells?
  - There is a *de minimis* exemption in the bill. The regulations do not apply to homeowners pumping less than a certain amount of groundwater.
- Would agencies still try to collect data on small homeowners' groundwater use?
  - If small homeowners, in the aggregate, are causing an issue with groundwater levels, then the agencies will probably try, but it is not included in the legislation.
- Who pays for continued monitoring of wells at closed LUST sites? Funding for continued monitoring can be an issue.
  - For the wells that the City of San Diego took over, the city volunteered to fund the ongoing monitoring.
  - The LUST closures are based on current land use, so if the land use changes, the sites may be reopened.

### **RAC Member Selection**

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Mr. Stadler discussed the RAC member selection process with the group. He reminded the group that there are 12 open seats: three in the Water Supply caucus, three in Water Quality, one in Natural Resources & Watersheds, one in DAC/Environmental Justice, and four in Other. A RAC Membership Workgroup will be formed to select new members. Each Caucus should nominate a workgroup member to join the three RWMG representatives, for a total of 8 workgroup members. RAC membership applications are being accepted through November 26, 2014. The Workgroup will be finalized at the next RAC meeting on December 3, 2014. The Workgroup will convene that afternoon, and new memberships will be in effect January 2015 for the first RAC meeting of the year, February 2015.

Applications are available on the SDIRWM website (<http://sdirwmp.org/regional-advisory-committee>) and are due November 26 to either Mark Stadler ([mstadler@sdcwa.org](mailto:mstadler@sdcwa.org)) or Crystal Mohr ([cmohr@rmcwater.com](mailto:cmohr@rmcwater.com)).

### **Summary and Next Steps**

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Mr. Stadler reminded the group of the dates for the next RAC meeting.

#### Next RAC Meeting:

- December 3, 2014 – 9-11:30am

#### 2015 Meeting Schedule:

- February 4, 2015
- April 1, 2015
- June 3, 2015
- August 5, 2015
- October 7, 2015
- December 2, 2015

Mr. Bankston closed the meeting, and caucuses were encouraged to meet to discuss who would serve on the RAC Member Selection Workgroup.