



## **Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #45**

October 2, 2013

9:00 am – 11:30 am

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

### **NOTES**

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#### **Attendance**

##### **RAC Members**

Cathy Pieroni for Marsi Steirer, City of San Diego  
Bill Hunter, Santa Fe Irrigation District  
Bob Kennedy, Otay Water District/Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority  
Cari Dale, City of Oceanside (and alternate Mo Lahsaie)  
Crystal Najera, City of Vista  
Eric Larson, San Diego County Farm Bureau  
Iovanka Todt for Dennis Bowling, Floodplain Management Association  
Jennifer Hazard, Alter Terra  
Jennifer Sabine, Sweetwater Authority  
Joey Randall for Kimberly Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District  
Joe Kuhn, City of La Mesa  
Katie Levy, SANDAG  
Ken Weinberg, San Diego County Water Authority  
Kimberly O'Connell, UCSD Clean Water Utility  
Lawrence O'Leary for Patrick Crais, California Landscape Contractors Association-San Diego  
Leigh Johnson, University of California Cooperative Extension  
Linda Flournoy, Planning and Engineering for Sustainability  
Mark Umphres, Helix Water District  
Mike Thornton, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority  
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation  
Robyn Badger, San Diego Zoological Society (and alternate Kelly Craig)  
Ronald Wootton, Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation  
Travis Pritchard, San Diego Coastkeeper (and alternate Kristin Kuhn)  
Troy Bankston, County of San Diego

##### **RWMG Staff**

Jeff Pasek, City of San Diego  
Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority  
Mark Stephens, City of San Diego  
Sheri McPherson, County of San Diego

### Interested Parties to the RAC

Bryant Alvarado, Larry Walker Associates  
Crystal Mohr, RMC Water and Environment  
Ed Othmer, URS/IEA  
Jack Monger, IEA  
Kirk Ammerman, Kimley-Horn and Associates  
Laura Carpenter, Brown and Caldwell  
Michele Shumate, San Diego County Water Authority  
Rich Thesing, Tierrasanta Community Council  
Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment  
Roshan Christoph, AMEC  
Sally Johnson, RMC Water and Environment  
Sara Agahi, County of San Diego  
Sharon Hudnall, Jacobs Center  
Stan Williams, Poseidon Water  
Terrell Breaux, City of San Diego

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. Ken Weinberg welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room. Mr. Travis Pritchard explained the RAC Membership Workgroup process for selecting new members, and introduced the two new RAC members, Joe Kuhn, Stormwater Program Manager at the City of La Mesa and Jennifer Hazard, Co-Director of Alter Terra, who are replacing Kirk Ammerman and Leslie Reynolds, respectively.

### **DWR Update**

There was no DWR representative present, so no DWR update was presented to the RAC. A revised schedule for IRWM Grant Solicitations was available, with presumed dates updated as indicated:

Activities	Target Date	
<b>Local Groundwater Assistance Grants</b>		
Announce Final Awards	June 2013	
<b>Round 2 Stormwater Flood Management Grant</b>		
Announce Draft Recommendations for Public Review & Comment	June 2013	
Announce Final Awards	August 2013	
<b>Round 2 Implementation Grant</b>		
Announce Draft Recommendations for Public Review & Comment	August 2013	Announced September 2013
Announce Final Awards	October 2013	
<b>IRWM Plan Review Process</b>		
Draft Process for Public Review & Comment	August 2013	
<b>Round 3 Implementation Grant (Pending Appropriation; no earlier than FY 14-15)</b>		
Release Draft Program Guidelines & PSP	Summer 2014	July 2014
Release Final Program Guidelines & PSP	Fall 2014	Aug/Sept 2014
Applications Due	Winter 2014/2015	Jan/Feb 2015
Announce Draft Recommendations for Public Review & Comment	Spring 2015	June 2015
Announce Final Awards	Summer 2015	Fall 2015

## **IRWM Housekeeping**

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### **IRWM Grant Program – Round 2 Awards**

Ms. Rosalyn Prickett reminded the RAC that Draft Grant Awards had been announced on September 25, for the Proposition 84 – Round 2 Implementation Grant. The San Diego IRWM Region was preliminarily recommended to receive 50% of the requested grant amount (\$5.25 million of \$10.5 million applied for). The recommended grant award package (by project) was:

Project Title	Project Sponsor	Recommended Grant Award
Failsafe Potable Reuse at the Advanced Water Purification Demonstration Facility	WateReuse Research Foundation	2,113,000
Rural Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Partnership Project - Phase II	Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)	1,887,000
North San Diego County Regional Recycled Water Project (NSDCRRWP) - Phase II	Olivenhain Municipal Water District	3,452,000
Sustaining Healthy Tributaries to the Upper San Diego River and Protecting Local Water Supplies	San Diego River Park Foundation	521,000
Turf Replacement and Agricultural Irrigation Efficiency Program	San Diego County Water Authority	538,000
Implementing Nutrient Management in the Santa Margarita River Watershed - Phase II	County of San Diego	980,000
Chollas Creek Integration Project - Phase II	Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation	500,000

Ms. Prickett stated that the RWMG is preparing a detailed comment letter explaining flaws with DWR's grant application review process and why the Region should receive 100% funding. The public comment period for the draft grant awards is short – only until October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Ms. Prickett announced that DWR will be holding a Public Workshop on the draft awards on October 7<sup>th</sup> in Sacramento. Members of the RWMG will attend in-person (represented by Rosalyn Prickett). Ms. Prickett encouraged other RAC members to attend, and/or write a letter in support of full funding for the San Diego IRWM Region's Proposition 84 – Round 2 Implementation Grant application.

RAC members who wish to submit comments should contact DWR's IRWM Program's Project Manager Keith Wallace, via email ([Keith.Wallace@water.ca.gov](mailto:Keith.Wallace@water.ca.gov)) or U.S. Mail, addressed as follows:

CA Department of Water Resources  
Division of IRWM  
Financial Assistance Branch  
Post Office Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236  
Attn: Keith Wallace

Questions/Comments:

- Can the RWMG provide talking points to use in letters of support to provide for consistency?
  - *Rosalyn Prickett will send out talking points to all RAC members.*
- What was the logic for awarding only 50% funding to the San Diego IRWM Region? Did the grant proposal not meet the intent of IRWM planning?
  - RWMG is not sure why the proposal was only funded 50%. Based on the Proposal Evaluation from DWR, it appears as though DWR did not completely understand the projects. For example, they commented that our economic analysis did not consider costs to upgrade water treatment plants to tertiary treatment, but the application clearly states that the water treatment plants in question are already capable of producing tertiary-treated water.
- In reviewing the draft awards it looks like some funding areas received more than the values in the PSP while others received less. For example, the San Diego Funding Area received less than the allocation presented in the PSP, while the Los Angeles Funding Area received more than their allocation as presented in the PSP.
- What is the timeline/strategy to deal with this issue and commenting to DWR?
  - The timing is tight, given the short public comment period (which closes on October 10th). There is a need to elevate the discussion higher than the level of DWR staff likely to be present at the Public Workshop on October 7th. The San Diego County Water Authority has already contacted their lobbyist in Sacramento to discuss possible strategies to address the issues with the IRWM program as it is currently managed.
- The San Diego IRWM Region is not the only IRWM region in this situation (receiving less funding than indicated in the PSP). There are concerns across California about the bureaucratic process associated with the IRWM Program and apparent mismanagement by DWR. For example, Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) is looking at a formalized regional structure to replace DWR and manage funds at a local level. Those involved want to mobilize quickly to put together a proposal, and at the very least educate legislators and managers that the current statewide IRWM Program is not going well.
- In the event that DWR does not adjust the grant award in the final grant announcement, what will happen?
  - At this point, we are focusing only on an appeal of our score and final grant award of 100% funding.
- There is a need to understand why DWR did not award the full funding amount indicated in the PSP for Round 2. This is particularly concerning considering the overwhelming process our region goes through to select projects to include in the grant application. The Project Selection Workgroup already reduced grant awards for each project to a minimum level in order to fund as many projects as possible.

- Local project sponsors (LPS) are concerned about lengthy delays for amendments to projects and worried that the reduced grant award will result in contracting delays with DWR. Past amendments have taken over a year to process, delaying projects and presenting cash flow issues to LPS. There will be many amendments to the projects if the proposal is not fully funded, and will likely require projects to drop out or be substantially delayed in implementation.
- There has been bad expectation management on DWR's behalf, and the requirements of the application do not make sense for reality of funding delivery (i.e., projects must prove they are ready to proceed in order to receive funding, but funding is delayed so long that projects are no longer able to proceed by the time funding arrives).
- Small non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as San Diego Coastkeeper, are unable to deal with the demands and stress of IRWM grants. Because of the requirements of the IRWM grants, they do not anticipate applying for any more funding through the IRWM Program.
  - It is discouraging to the RWMG that NGOs feel this way; we have heard similar comments from other non-profits in the state. Coastkeeper is encouraged to express their participation concerns with DWR in a comment letter.
- Letters can be submitted all together, or a group letter can be written and signed by many. NGOs may want to submit a single letter expressing the concerns that non-profits and small organizations have with the IRWM program, grant requirements, funding delays, and other issues they face. Letters are a good way to get the attention of legislators.
- The way DWR has distributed funding (e.g., over-funding some areas and under-funding others) encourages applicants to apply for funding well beyond what they actually need in order to secure enough funding to proceed with projects. This puts the entire grant process into question.
- Should letters be sent to DWR or to Legislators?
  - Comment letters sent to DWR, but folks are encouraged to CC Legislators.
- Letters should also touch on the problem of funding delays, because costs and projects change over time, so grant funds awarded at a certain date may no longer be sufficient if distributed significantly (e.g., a year or more) later.
- Grant applications are costly to write. San Diego has built an IRWM program that has lots of potential, and funding decisions like this one frustrate the program. The RWMG will fight for 100% funding.
  - Cost of applications is a common issue for Regions and for project sponsors.
  - The return on investment for San Diego has been astounding. For the cost of the applications, the Region has received a lot of money. This return on investment is important to those who pay for grant applications – without some sort of certainty or security in receiving a grant award, the value in applying for grants begins to diminish.

- Rules of the game need to be clearer – the PSP indicates that grants will be award in one way, but the actual awards are different. The scoring process and assessment process is unclear, making it difficult to respond to results, or to adjust approach to improve success in applications.
- It is also concerning that DWR does not contact applicants if they have questions or are unsure about projects – the entire process lacks transparency.
- The way the statewide IRWM Program is structured, small organizations get pushed out. There is no way these small organizations can take advantage of the program. For example, the San Diego County Farm Bureau cannot work within the timeframe of IRWM Grants, due to delays with funding.
  - This is something that would be good to put in a comment letter for DWR.
  - RAC members and organizations are again encouraged to attend the Public Workshop in Sacramento.
  - The next water bond is another opportunity for funding. Non-profits should work together to make sure NGO's can access those funds.
- Losing NGOs is not the intent of the IRWM Program. Local stewardship should manage IRWM funds in order to help protect small organizations. San Diego has created enough trust amongst stakeholder to move funding management from state to local control.
- Can we get details on public workshop? The City of Oceanside would like to go.
  - *Details will be provided via email by Rosalyn Prickett.*
- We will regroup at the December RAC meeting to debrief the results of these efforts.

## **Grant Administration**

Ms. Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority, provided an update on the status of the Proposition 50 Grant Amendments. She noted that Amendment 6 (redistribution of Project 14 funds) was approved, as was a minor amendment to the South San Diego Water Supply Strategy (Project 13). Amendment 7 (Integrated Landscape and Agricultural Efficiency, and Carlsbad Desalination) is in review with DWR; the Water Authority hopes that these amendments will be approved soon. There are two upcoming amendments (Landscape Renovation, Conservation & Pollutant Load Reduction, and San Diego Intertie Feasibility Concept Design) in LPS review, but will be sent to DWR soon. 42% of the Proposition 50 Grant (\$10.4 million) has been billed, with \$8.1 million reimbursed to-date. The Proposition 50 Grant is scheduled to be complete in June 2016. 62% of the Proposition 84 Planning Grant has been billed, with 28% reimbursed to date, though DWR has recently approved Invoice #5 reimbursement (\$167,148). Proposition 84 – Round 1 Implementation Grant has one amendment that is being processed (Rural Disadvantaged Community Partnership Project). Reports, deliverables/grant agreement requirements, and projects are moving forward as planning. The first invoice for the Proposition 84 – Round 1 Implementation Grant will be submitted to DWR soon. This invoice will request \$1.6 million in reimbursement.

### **North San Diego County Cooperative Demineralization Project:**

Mr. Mike Thornton, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, presented the North San Diego County Cooperative Demineralization Project (Proposition 84 – Round 1 Implementation Grant, Project 3). The project held a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 9, 2013. The project has three components:

1. Water Quality and Water Quantity analysis
2. Brackish potability feasibility analysis of lagoon without impact to environment
3. Build Advanced Water Treatment Plant to maintain water quality in recycled water and expand recycled water capacity.

The Advanced Water Treatment Plant treats water through a 1 million gallon per day (MGD) microfiltration and 0.5 MGD reverse osmosis treatment system. The advanced treatment was designed to run in parallel with the existing system, just microfiltration, or just reverse osmosis.

#### **Question/Comments:**

- Can the facility treat stormwater? Can it be combined with the sewer system?
  - SEJPA uses a connection between storm drains and the plant to direct polluted water from the environment, such as diverting polluted water from the San Elijo Lagoon.
  - In Solana Beach, there is constant trickle of urban runoff, amounting to 10 gallons per minute of highly polluted urban runoff discharging at the beach.
- This project has leveraged \$1 million in state funds to \$6 million of local investments.
- What were the results of the Brackish Potability Feasibility study?
  - More studies are needed to gain clear results. The study showed that there were substantial knowledge gaps regarding water quality and water levels.
  - Olivenhain Municipal Water District worked with USGS to install a monitoring well for this part of the project. The well was 1,200 feet deep, and the project included substantial community involvement. The well is equipped with monitors for water quality and depth data. Results from the well showed that the deep water was higher quality than expected, but more information is needed about water quantity to determine feasibility of full production. For a 1-1.5 MGD treatment plant, about 2 MGD of water is required.
  - The project has an extension to do more work and expand the area of study to resolve some of the water quality and water quantity issues.
- What was the TDS (total dissolved solids) of the brackish water?
  - We expected 2,000-3,000 parts per million (ppm), but testing found only 1,300 ppm at certain depths. There were no unexpected water quality constituents either, which is good. The lower TDS levels provide more opportunities, because water may be easier or better to use than previously anticipated. The project team is now considering looking at the San Dieguito groundwater basin for a similar assessment.

- What is timeframe for extraction before such extraction begins drawing in more contaminated water to the groundwater basin?
  - More research is needed to answer this question. With only one study well, it appears as though recharge seems to be quicker than expected. More geographical work needs to be completed to determine groundwater basin characteristics and underflows, and more monitoring wells are needed to get a larger picture view of the groundwater conditions.

## **2013 San Diego IRWM Plan**

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Ms. Prickett presented the final 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan. She reviewed the timeline of the Plan update process and explained that anyone interested in reading the Final Plan (with all public comments incorporated) can download it from the IRWM Program website ([www.sdirwmp.org](http://www.sdirwmp.org)). She also noted that Appendix 6-D is new, and contains all formal comment letters as well as a list of all received stakeholder comments and how the comments were addressed. Ms. Prickett then reviewed the chapters with major changes that were incorporated since the August 7, 2013 RAC meeting. These major changes were made in response to the discussion held during that meeting. Three chapters were heavily edited as a result of the August RAC meeting and public comments: Introduction, Region Description, and Project Evaluation.

The Introduction chapter has a stronger focus on the unique features of the 2013 IRWM Plan, such as the five planning studies. This chapter highlights the regional issues that IRWM planning can help resolve and increases the discussion of system complexity.

The Region Description chapter now includes a Water Management Systems section to help balance water conservation and water quality improvements, stormwater and flood management, and describe how the different systems relate to one another. The revisions help to better lay the framework for the rest of the chapter. Maps were updated (land use, wastewater and recycled water infrastructure, and watershed maps) in response to comments, the DAC section was refined and clarified, and water quality impairments were updated.

A new Resource Management Strategy was added on wastewater management in response to public comments and as approved by the RAC. Throughout the Plan more examples were provided and regional efforts highlighted to connect information in the Plan with actual on-the-ground work in the Region.

Ms. Prickett also presented the Highlights Document produced for the 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan. The Highlights Document provides an overview of the Plan, highlights accomplishments of the IRWM Program, and explains collaboration opportunities of integrated planning. The Highlights document is available online at [www.sdirwmp.org](http://www.sdirwmp.org). Print copies were distributed to RAC members.

The 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan was adopted by the San Diego County Water Authority Board of Directors on September 26, 2013, and is scheduled to be adopted by the City of San Diego City Council and County of San Diego Board of Supervisors on October 8 and 9, respectively.

## **Stormwater Regulations and Impacts on Industry**

Mr. Ed Othmer, URS Corporation/Industrial Environmental Association (IEA) presented on the new stormwater regulations and their impacts on industry under the new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit for the Region. Mr. Othmer explained that while receiving water limitations are included in all National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) are now also included in discharge permits. Costs of TMDL compliance is now part of the MS4 permit.

Industrial permits use Numeric Action Levels (NAL), which are based on water quality standards but are far below drinking water standards (i.e. Numeric Action Levels require a higher quality water than drinking water). Under the NALs, 30% of industry is non-compliant with constituents of concern, but when monitoring for metals 60% will be non-compliant. Compliance with the NALs will require more infrastructure, and agencies that have transportation infrastructure (such as roads) will also need to comply. Technology not great at treating metals, and though Low Impact Design/Development (LID) is where the industry is headed, there are still feasibility issues.

Mr. Othmer presented IEA's recommended changes to the MS4 permit. Key changes include:

- Use more science to monitor and develop compliance data
- Reduce monitoring requirements for areas in compliance and put funding into areas where there are compliance issues
- Reduce need to monitor constituents that do not apply or are found only at very low levels (well below the limit)
- Change effective date of the permit requirements from January 2015 to July 2015

## **Water Quality Improvement Plans (WQIPs):**

WQIPs are a new requirement of the permit with four steps:

1. Priority water quality conditions
2. Water quality improvement goals, strategies, and schedules,
3. Water quality improvement monitoring and assessment program
4. Iterative approach and adaptive management process

IEA wants to be involved with the WQIP process. IEA is experienced in industry and wants to participate in strategy development and the opportunity to create alternative compliance.

Under the new permit, there is an obligation to retain the 85th percentile storm event (or first flush) through interception and storage or infiltration. Alternatively you can detain and treat and let the first flush flows runoff slowly, but this will still require off-site mitigation for flows that are not detained.

## **Questions/Comments**

- Is anything grandfathered in?
  - Changes to existing development/projects or new development/projects are subject to the new MS4 permit. For partially-completed project plans, whether the new or the old permit will apply is likely to be at discretion of regulators, and likely dependent on the degree of progress of the plan.

- In the United States there is a trend to retrofit driveways. It is not in current permit, but quite possible in future that driveway retrofits will be required.
  - There are some easy things you can do to divert runoff from driveways
- A future RAC meeting will have more presenters to discuss the new permit –we will have jurisdictional perspective and explore opportunities for stormwater capture/reuse.
- Stormwater is moving from being considered a waste product to a being a resource.
- In response to the discharges from firefighting being subject to the permit, emergency firefighting BMPs are encouraged but not required.
  - Firefighting BMPs still need to be developed
- LID requires off-site mitigation if there is no room for mitigation features on-site. There can be runoff, but it needs to be contained on-site.
  - Mitigation is a huge challenge to locate if it is off-site. How do you determine costs? Developers are required to provide maintenance into perpetuity, how does that get monitored? Who monitors it? Cities have the greatest opportunity to incorporate LID into facilities (e.g., green streets). This could possibly be funded as off-site mitigation from development.
  - In industry, a 3-5 year return on investment is the standard for continuing/implementing a practice.
- Would like to hear from all perspectives in future presentations (agencies, Regional Board, environmental groups, etc.)
- The new MS4 permit has a focus on water quality not on effort. There is room to integrate cooperative strategies. Clean water is an investment and businesses should recognize this. Clean water pays off for the community.
  - Need consensus on what we are getting from our investment, and need community to say what it wants in receiving water so we can make wise investments. Need more voices at the table.
- There is a shift from impermeability, soil can absorb more than we thought, and more education can change thinking about soil permeability.
- New MS4 permit brought engineers and environmentalists together. Moving forward, watershed analysis can bring in alternative compliance. Alternative compliance can be quite valuable but there is a need to bring people together (environmental & developers & engineers). A diverse set of stakeholders can bring in expertise on all sides to maximize the benefits of efforts. Conflicts related to permits generally regard how to achieve objectives rather than the objectives themselves. Would like robust discussions at future meetings.
- The municipalities are ready to get started on WQIPs. There is a San Luis Rey workshop next week, and a San Diego River workshop coming up. The City of San Diego has already begun the process selecting the WQIP committees.

- IEA conference on November 5th and 6th will have a panel on industrial stormwater permits. There will be many perspectives on the panel. RAC members who are interested are encouraged to attend.
- The Region should remember that it has four major universities that can be used as a resource for research-based perspective on WQIPs and the permit requirements.

### **Next RAC Meeting –October 2, 2013**

The next RAC meeting will be held on Wednesday Dec 4, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at San Diego County Water Authority Board Room (4677 Overland Ave., San Diego, CA 92123).

RAC meetings to be held in 2013 are scheduled for the following dates:

- Wednesday, December 4th

### **Summary and Thanks**

An opportunity was provided for final questions and comments prior to the close of the meeting.

#### Questions/Comments:

- Should the letters to support the San Diego IRWM grant application be written as a RAC member or should they be from individual organizations' perspectives?
  - Ms. Prickett and the RWMG will provide general points, but individuals can add organizational perspectives. Want organizations to make their voices heard and use this as an opportunity to voice important concerns.
- Letters should support full funding for proposal, not just funding for parts of it – not supporting full funding will undermine the other letters and arguments for full funding.
  - Want to provide a consistent message across all letters
  - Project Selection Workgroup vetted all projects thoroughly, so all projects should receive full support from RAC members
- There was a suggestion of writing a group letter NGOs could sign on to, will Ms. Prickett coordinate this?
  - Ms. Prickett can circulate/coordinate such a letter, but asks an NGO representative to draft the letter. She will discuss the letter with interested NGO representatives after the meeting and via email. Ms. Prickett wrote down the names of NGOs who expressed interest in the joint NGO letter.
- Ms. Prickett will provide more details regarding DWR's Public Workshop and circulate talking points for a consistent message in letters of support. She will also organize the letter in the next five days in order to submit it before the October 10 deadline. Contact Ms. Prickett for more details or any questions.