

*Appendix 8*  
*Public Outreach Plan*

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# DRAFT Technical Memorandum



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## San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

**Subject:** Public Outreach and Disadvantaged & Environmental Justice Community Involvement Plan

**Prepared For:** San Diego Regional Water Management Group

**Prepared by:** Emmalynne Hu

**Reviewed by:** Alyson Watson

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## 1 Introduction

The City of San Diego, County of San Diego, and San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA), referred to as the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG), have undertaken development of an Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan consistent with guidelines established by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and Department of Water Resources (DWR). The IRWM planning process is intended to improve long-term water supply reliability and water quality throughout California through the integrated management of water supplies and the promotion of projects with multiple benefits to water supply, water quality, and natural resources. The completed IRWM Plan will provide a mechanism for coordinating, refining, and integrating existing planning efforts within a comprehensive, regional context; identifying specific regional priorities for implementation projects; and providing funding support for the plans, programs, projects, and priorities of existing agencies and stakeholders.

In addition to supporting the integrated management of water resources in the region, completion of an IRWM Plan that meets the minimum guidelines established by the SWRCB and DWR will qualify the region to receive grant funding through Propositions 50, 84, and others.

The IRWM Plan consists of the following 15 sections, as prescribed by the Proposition 50 Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Program Guidelines, released by the SWRCB and DWR in November of 2004:

- A. Regional Group
- B. Region Description
- C. Objectives
- D. Water Management Strategies
- E. Integration
- F. Regional Priorities
- G. Implementation
- H. Impacts and Benefits
- I. Technical Analysis and Plan Performance
- J. Data Management
- K. Financing
- L. Statewide Priorities
- M. Relation to Local Planning

## N. Stakeholder Involvement

### O. Coordination

As reflected by this list, stakeholder involvement is an important element of IRWM Planning. To-date, the RWMG has made significant efforts to identify and engage key stakeholders. A Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) was formed in December 2006 to assist in completion of the IRWM Plan and prioritization of projects both within the Plan and for future funding application(s) as they arise. The RAC, which consists of 25 members with expertise in water supply, wastewater, recycled water, stormwater and urban runoff, natural resources, and environmental stewardship, has played a critical role in shaping key elements of the IRWM Plan. In particular, the RAC has played a lead role in developing the IRWM Plan goals and objectives, long term targets, proposed institutional structure, and process for project prioritization. The RAC meets on a monthly basis to review IRWM Plan progress completed each month and provide comments and guidance on upcoming IRWM Plan and funding application activities.

In addition to continuing to actively engage the RAC through development of the IRWM Plan, the RWMG has implemented measures aimed at engaging other stakeholders not represented on the RAC as well as the general public. The primary mechanism for reaching out to non-RAC stakeholders has been through use of Project Clean Water, an inclusive forum for exploring water quality issues of regional significance. More than 830 people throughout the region have participated in Project Clean Water activities, and the RWMG has effectively leveraged the sizeable Project Clean Water database to announce IRWM Planning activities to members of the public and related organizations.

Building understanding and support for the IRWMP and grant application processes among key stakeholders as well as the general public is critical to the success of the project and ongoing planning resulting from IRWMP development. A proactive approach to implementing public outreach and information dissemination will assist the RWMG in generating broad-based support for the effort. This document identifies a variety of outreach mechanisms that will improve general awareness of the effort and provide means for all interested parties to stay engaged during the planning process and plan implementation.

The Public Outreach and Information Plan is organized into the following components:

- Stakeholder Coordination
- Public Involvement
- Disadvantaged Communities Assistance
- Environmental Justice Identification

## 2 Stakeholder Coordination

**Purpose:** The goal of the stakeholder coordination effort is to provide a means for the region's various entities with interests and/or authority over water resources management in the region to maintain an active level of involvement in the IRWM planning process and implementation of the IRWM Plan. These individuals have a vested interest in the San Diego IRWM Plan and can assist in articulating the needs of the region during the planning phase as well as implementing projects during implementation. These are also the individuals with the greatest potential to oppose the IRWM planning effort if not engaged. Opposition to the IRWM Plan by entities with water resources management authority could present a significant obstacle to IRWM Plan implementation if these groups are not given ample opportunity to participate and engage in the planning effort.

Currently, and for the duration of the IRWM planning process, the RAC serves as the main avenue of stakeholder coordination. The RAC, however, is intended as a transitional advisory body, and will eventually be replaced by a long-term institutional structure. In order for the long-term institutional structure to adequately represent stakeholder and community interests, continued coordination with stakeholders will be of critical importance.

**Participants:** All interested stakeholders and members of the general public are invited to maintain coordination with the RAC and the subsequent long-term institutional structure.

The Project Clean Water database has served as a good starting point for identifying interested parties. However, because Project Clean Water is focused primarily on water quality, additional contacts with local entities reaching stakeholders that have broader interests in water supply and/or natural resources should be established. Individuals representing the following groups are expected to be identified through the stakeholder coordination efforts:

- Cities
- Public Agencies
- Community Organizations
- Water Retailers
- Water Quality Interests
- Environmental and Natural Resources Interests
- Recreational Interests
- Agricultural Interests
- Regulatory Agencies

**Outreach Activities:** Current outreach involves announcing and posting agendas, summaries, handouts and presentations of the RAC meetings on the San Diego IRWM website ([www.sdirwmp.org](http://www.sdirwmp.org)), which can be accessed directly or via links from the Project Clean Water website ([www.projectcleanwater.org](http://www.projectcleanwater.org)). When the subsequent long-term institutional structure is implemented, this avenue of outreach is anticipated to continue.

Additionally, beginning in 2008, the RWMG will hold quarterly stakeholder meetings to formally discuss the progress of the IRWMP implementation with the stakeholders and to establish a forum for receiving feedback.

In order to encourage the formation of regional partnerships, the RWMG may also host smaller focus group meetings among stakeholder with overlapping interests and members of the long-term institutional structure with that area of technical expertise.

**Correspondence:** A stakeholder distribution list will be maintained. E-mail notices noting the availability of new materials on the San Diego IRWM website and announcements for upcoming meetings will be sent to this stakeholder distribution list.

### 3 Public Involvement

**Purpose:** The goal of public involvement is to increase awareness, understanding, and support for the San Diego IRWM planning effort among the general public. The benefits of keeping the general public informed of the IRWM planning process and subsequent IRWM Plan implementation include educating constituents and politicians about the importance and interrelation of water management strategies, increasing regional as well as local support for projects, and generating broad-based support for continued regional coordination.

**Participants:** All members of the general public are encouraged to stay up-to-date on the IRWMP; though special attention will be given to policy-makers.

**Outreach Activities:** Public outreach began with the first San Diego IRWM Plan public workshop, which was held on April 25, 2007. This workshop provided attendees with background on the IRWM

Grant Program and IRWM planning process. In the near-term, public involvement will consist of a series of focused workshops to facilitate the completion of the SD IRWMP. These meetings are anticipated for:

- June 18, 2007 – Release and Presentation of the Public Draft IRWM Plan, IRWM Project Workshop
- July 10, 2007 – Public Comments on the Public Draft IRWM Plan
- August 16, 2007 – Summary of Public Comments on the Public Draft IRWM Plan

Future public meetings will be scheduled on a bimonthly basis throughout the Region to maintain support and engagement in the ongoing IRWM planning process. Meetings will be publicly noticed, and are tentatively scheduled for the following dates:

- September 20, 2007
- November 15, 2007
- January 9, 2008
- March 11, 2008
- May 14, 2008

In addition, public meetings will be scheduled in conjunction with revisions and significant milestones in the IRWM Planning process. For example, additional public meetings may be scheduled for the September-November timeframe to coincide with major revisions to the Plan, Plan finalization, and adoption by each of the RWMG agencies.

Additional long-term public outreach activities will include development of poster boards for display and fact sheets for distribution during community events such as Ocean Day, National River Cleanup Week and California Coastal Cleanup Day. The SDCWA may also consider coordinating with member agencies to include informational inserts with customer correspondence.

**Correspondence:** In addition to the measures noted in the outreach activities sections above, information regarding upcoming meetings may be relayed to the general public via fliers posted at community facilities and city and county office buildings and announcements published in local newspapers and organizational newsletters.

Local newspapers will be encouraged to provide coverage of meetings or to provide updates on the progress of IRWM planning efforts. Media relations provide a credible and economic approach to achieving widespread dissemination of key project information. Studies show that information presented to the public through a third party, such as the media, is more readily believed by the public, as opposed to advertising or other methods of information coming directly from the source.

## 4 Environmental Justice Identification

**Purpose:** The goal of identifying environmental justice needs is to identify and obtain input from groups that have historically been disproportionately impacted by water-related issues. Through targeted outreach, the RWMG seeks to learn more about the major water-related concerns facing these groups such that long-term implementation of the IRWM Plan is responsive to those concerns.

**Participants:** Communities targeted as part of the environmental justice outreach are communities that have historically been disproportionately impacted with respect to the development, implementation or enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies due to race, culture or income.

**Outreach Activities:** The outreach process will benefit from coordination with existing environmental justice organizations. Preliminary research efforts have identified the following environmental justice organizations serving the San Diego region:

- CoastKeeper

- San Diego Environmental Health and Justice Program
- Environmental Health Coalition

The RWMG will work with these organizations to identify existing environmental justice issues in the region as well as those communities where environmental justice is a concern, placing specific emphasis on water-related issues.

After environmental justice issues and communities have been identified, the RWMG will work with members of environmental justice advocacy organizations to identify potential solutions. The RWMG will solicit input from environmental justice advocacy groups to develop a review process for IRWM projects aimed at identifying projects capable of addressing environmental justice issues as well as those projects which may create new environmental justice issues where issues did not previously exist. By engaging environmental advocacy groups in project development and review, the RWMG will be better equipped to understand the potential benefits and impacts of proposed IRWM planning efforts on environmental justice communities in the region. In addition, this will enable the IRWM planning process to generate solutions specifically targeted at addressing environmental justice issues.

One environmental justice advocacy group will be invited to serve on the RAC. While members of the RWMG and RAC are sensitive to environmental justice concerns, and continually seek to identify and address these concerns, there is currently only one position on the RAC occupied by an environmental justice advocacy organization (CoastKeeper). The addition of one RAC seat for an environmental justice advocacy group will double the representation of these interests on the RAC.

The anticipated schedule for completing the outreach activities identified above is as follows.

June 1 – July 1:	Contact Environmental Advocacy Organizations
July 2 – August 1:	Identify Environmental Justice Communities and Critical Needs
August 2 – September 1:	Develop Potential Solutions and IRWM Project Review Process
September 2 – October 1:	Review IRWM Projects for Potential Environmental Justice Benefits or Negative Impacts
October 2 – November 1:	Update IRWM Plan to Discuss Environmental Justice Communities, Needs, and Potential Solutions

**Correspondence:** CoastKeeper has volunteered to serve as the liaison between the environmental justice communities and the RWMG and RAC. Key messages will be developed by the RWMG and RAC and relayed via Coast Keeper.

## 5 Disadvantaged Communities Assistance

**Purpose:** The goal of implementing targeted outreach to disadvantaged communities is to recognize and engage communities that may be otherwise restricted from participating in the IRWM planning and implementation efforts due to financial constraints. The first step to implementing targeted outreach to disadvantaged communities will be to work with local entities to identify the specific locations of these communities throughout the region. Once disadvantaged communities have been identified, the RWMG can offer assistance in identifying those communities' critical water and natural resource needs and ensure that their needs are incorporated into the IRWM Plan. One issue that has already been identified as a critical need for disadvantaged communities in the region is equal access to recreational open space; however, other water-related needs still need to be identified.

**Participants:** As defined by the State, a disadvantaged community is a community with an annual median household income (MHI) that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household

income. While this provides a general overview of areas where disadvantaged communities may be found, there are some issues with this definition. First, many depressed areas would not be identified using this definition alone. For example, areas within the City of San Diego are generally considered to be disadvantaged; however, the City of San Diego as a whole does not meet the State definition of a disadvantaged community. Second, because the MHI of San Diego County differs from the Statewide MHI, this definition of disadvantaged communities may underestimate the number and extent of disadvantaged communities throughout the region.

**Outreach Activities:** The outreach process will begin with a review of 2003 census data to identify those communities that qualify as disadvantaged communities by the State's definition. Further, census data will be used to calculate the MHI for the San Diego region to locate disadvantaged communities that would otherwise be overlooked based on the State definition. Based on the local knowledge of RWMG staff, areas that are generally considered to be disadvantaged despite being located in census tracts not identified as disadvantaged will also be identified.

Once disadvantaged communities have been identified, RWMG staff or volunteers from the RAC will contact appropriate individuals representing these communities. These individuals may include city managers, chamber of commerce, tribal Chairs, and/or other community leaders. One disadvantaged community leader will be invited to serve on the RAC. Currently, one position on the RAC is occupied by a disadvantaged community advocacy organization (CoastKeeper). The addition of one additional RAC seat for disadvantaged community advocacy will double the representation of these communities on the RAC.

In addition, RWMG staff will work with community leaders to identify the current state of their water-related resources. Coordination with identified community leaders and advocacy groups will focus on identifying the critical needs of the targeted communities. Once identified, these critical needs will be translated into long-term targets for the IRWM Plan. In addition, one-on-one communication with representatives from disadvantaged communities and the RWMG will be used to encourage participation in IRWM Plan public meetings. As appropriate, public meetings may be located in disadvantaged areas to facilitate attendance by members of the local public.

Additional long-term outreach efforts may include the dedication of RWMG staff to assist disadvantaged communities with project planning efforts. Proposition 84 provides funding specifically for disadvantaged communities which could help with this type of effort.

A timeline for proposed efforts to engage disadvantaged communities in the IRWM planning process is presented below.

June 1 – July 1:	Contact Leaders within Disadvantaged Communities
July 2 – August 1:	Develop Approach for Identifying Needs
August 2 – September 1:	Implement Targeted Outreach to Identify Needs
September 2 – October 1:	Update IRWM Plan to Discuss Needs of Disadvantaged Communities
October 2 – November 1:	Identify Projects to Address Disadvantaged Community Needs

**Correspondence:** Communities identified as disadvantaged communities will have direct connection with a RWMG or RAC representative. Communication will be conducted mainly via telephone; however, office visits may be arranged as feasible. Through one-on-one communication, the RWMG will encourage participation by disadvantaged community representatives in IRWM Plan public meetings.