



**Regional Advisory Council
Meeting #7 Notes**

May 16, 2007, 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

San Diego County Water Authority

4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

Attendance – RAC Members

Craig Adams, San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
Rick Alexander, Sweetwater Authority
Kirk Ammerman, City of Chula Vista
Meleah Ashford, Consultant to the City of Encinitas
Michael Bardin, Santa Fe Irrigation District
Chris Basilevac, The Nature Conservancy
Neal Brown, Padres Dam Municipal Water District
Kathleen Flannery, County of San Diego
Linda Flournoy, Sustainability Consultant
Karen Franz, San Diego CoastKeeper
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Megan Johnson, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Network
Greg Krzys on behalf of Meena Westford, U.S. Department of Interior
Eric Larson, Farm Bureau of San Diego County
Keith Lewinger, Fallbrook Public Utility District
Judy Mitchell, Mission Resources Conservation District
Jeff Pasek on behalf of Marsi Steirer, City of San Diego
Shelby Tucker, San Diego Association of Governments
Ken Weinberg, San Diego County Water Authority
Meena Westford, U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation
T. Whitaker on behalf of Dr. Richard Wright, Department of Geography, San Diego State University
Susan Varty, Olivenhain Municipal Water District

Attendance – RWMG Staff

Dana Frieauf, San Diego County Water Authority
Maria Mariscal, San Diego County Water Authority
Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority
Sheri McPherson, County of San Diego
Cecilia Padres, County of San Diego
Cathy Pieroni, City of San Diego Water Department
Jeff Pasek, City of San Diego Water Department
Toby Roy, San Diego County Water Authority

Attendance – Interested Parties to the RAC

Grace Chan, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Larry Johnson, Campo / Lake Morena Planning Group
Kelly Hendrickson, Wild Animal Park
Tom Richardson, RMC Water & Environment
Persephene St. Charles, RMC Water & Environment
Jeff Stephenson, San Diego County Water Authority
Kate Streams, RMC Water & Environment
Alyson Watson, RMC Water & Environment
Michael Welch, Welch Consulting

Attendance – Public

James A. Alexy
Peg Crilly
Marty Leavitt

Introductions

Ms. Kathleen Flannery welcomed RAC members to their seventh meeting. Brief introductions were made by all RAC members, consultants, and other members of the general public in attendance.

Ms. Flannery reiterated the RAC meeting “ground rules”. These rules included: turn off cell phones or put on vibrate; limit side conversations; wear a regional hat or tell us if you can’t; put your stake in the ground and be willing to move it; encourage even participation; no monologues; use microphones; allow at least two people speak before re-speaking; tap on table to show agreement or to indicate support of a statement; and we know we have flaws, tell us how to make things better.

Future RAC Meeting(s)

Ms. Kathleen Flannery reviewed the current status of Proposition 50 and IRWM Plan development, noting that the Proposition 50 Cycle 2 grant application must be submitted by August 1. The IRWM Plan must be complete and a 30-day public comment period must have been completed prior to this date. The draft Plan will be accepted by the Water Authority’s Board on July 26th. Project prioritization remains a significant issue.

Ms. Flannery indicated that an email was circulated on May 4, 2007, suggesting it would be helpful to have additional RAC meetings/items. She reviewed the proposed agenda items cited in the e-mail:

1. The "watershed" question - examination of other regional watershed plans and key issues / conclusions emerging from these plans
2. The "integrated" question - discussion of integration and examples from other plans
3. The "governance" question - the role of the RAC and whether the RAC needs to be mentioned or specified in the existing MOU or if it needs to be realized in a separate MOU
4. Key issues / conclusions from other county IWM plans in the state of California
5. Discussion on the role of the RAC / the potential role of the RAC as a voice for statewide issues affecting our region.

RAC Member Comments and Responses:

- Do we want to have a chapter on the actual watershed plans to identify the plans already in existence? *The plans are identified and acknowledged in the Plan, but can't be summarized prior to the Public Draft release date.*
- The governance needs to be identified soon. *The plan will identify the RAC as part of the governing structure in the interim and a long term governance structure will be developed later. Procedurally only one agency needs to accept the draft to send up to Sacramento.*
- The MOU was adopted months ago. Why isn't it in the draft Plan? *The MOU will be included as an appendix to the draft Plan.*
- San Diego County Water Authority will accept the Public Draft IRWM Plan in July, prior to the Step 1 submittal deadline. All three agencies will adopt the final Plan prior to the end of the year.
- A significant effort has been expended for Plan development. There are currently 13 staff people working on Plan development nearly full-time. In addition, the City, the County and the County Water Authority have already committed close to a million dollars for Plan development.
- Should there be another RAC meeting to talk about watersheds, integration, governance and any other conditions/issues from across the state and about the role of the RAC? *These topics can and will be discussed after the August 1 submittal deadline.*
- Defining integration is important to determining how we will prioritize projects. *This will be discussed in today's presentation on the revised prioritization process.*
- A list of watershed management plans in this Plan is not sufficient. The RAC should discuss how watershed management plans will be integrated into the Plan.
- The plan lists all watersheds and existing plans and discusses consistency with existing plans. It is unclear what additional information would be useful. Further, including additional information for watershed plans would necessitate including similar information for water plans, etc. Watershed plans should be referenced, but cannot be fully integrated unless someone volunteers to champion that effort.
- The information on the San Dieguito watershed does not seem to come from the watershed management plan, and it is unclear where this information originated.
- The plan lacks clear definition of issues and challenges – what are the regional issues?.
- The watershed planning issues are part of a bigger planning issue. The Plan describes the on-going planning process. The watershed planning issue should be a part of that process. The idea that the Plan is a living document and will continue to evolve needs to be emphasized and the priorities of the region need to be defined.
- The Plan does not identify the needs of each watershed. The Plan only identifies what is important for the county.
- Prior to the public draft, the prioritization process must be determined. It should be clearly articulated that the Plan is an on-going planning document and will change over time.
- Do we have a funding portion in the application to fund the ongoing portions of the plan? Are we asking for more money to continue the process? *Prop 50 does not offer funding for that purpose, but Proposition 84 does. The existing funding from the RWMG members is to complete the Plan and a Prop 50 application. Pursuit of Proposition 84 is*

not yet funded. Planning grants will be pursued from Proposition 84 for further updates to the IRWM Plan.

- We should consider eliminating the larger projects from consideration, recognizing that they may carry greater dis-benefits or negative impacts, and instead, we should focus on implementing a large number of very small environmental projects now which would reduce the list significantly.
- Schedule is a critical driver for prioritization in the Plan and the funding application. The first step is to understand and comment on the revised Plan prioritization process as presented by Ms. Alyson Watson. Following the presentation, Ms. Persephene St. Charles will facilitate a discussion.

Conclusions/Actions

The group determined that these topics will be covered in future, scheduled RAC meetings.

Revised Plan Prioritization Process

Ms. Alyson Watson (RMC Water & Environment) gave a power point presentation on the proposed revised Plan prioritization process. The major changes to the process originated from overarching comments from the RAC and Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) on the previous process. These comments suggested that additional criteria should be considered at the plan level; the process should reduce the pool of projects further; and the previous process was too complicated/confusing and should be simplified. Like the previous process, the revised process includes both screening and scoring criteria. The plan screening criteria are assessed on a pass-fail basis. After screening, projects are scored, ranked, and grouped into tiers. A ranked list representing preliminary results from the proposed prioritization process was distributed to the group for discussion. Individual scores were not shown. Ms. Watson cautioned the group that results were very preliminary and will change based on modifications to the prioritization process by the group.

After the presentation, Ms. Watson directed the group to the attention of Ms. Persephene St. Charles (RMC Water & Environment) to facilitate discussion and feedback concerning the revised Plan prioritization process.

RAC Member Comments and Responses:

- There are still two steps to the prioritization process – screening and scoring. Criteria are used to score projects. The top 33rd percentile then becomes Tier 1. Tier 1 and Tier 2 are both in Plan, but the Plan highlights Tier 1 projects. If projects don't address at least one objective, they are excluded from the Plan. If they pass all screening criteria, they move on to scoring. Therefore, if a project does not make it into Tier 1 now, then it will not be considered for Prop. 50 funding?
- How does this ranking process get us to where we want to go? What happens with this list? How will we comment on the process? *Commenting on the process should occur now and during the public review/public comment process.*
- A project that was previously a top priority project in the first round (Cycle 1) is now in Tier 2. This raises concerns with whether this process is working.

- There is a difference between hydrologic units and watersheds. This raises potential issues. For example, a project that benefits multiple watersheds may not benefit multiple hydrologic units. Therefore, points may not be issued for those projects that cover multiple watersheds, which seems unfair. *A significant amount of information on projects has already been requested, and the prioritization process should adhere to this constraint. Securing additional information prior to the June 1 public draft release, such as identifying the hydrologic units for each project, is infeasible at this time.*
- What happened to the subcommittee for project review and evaluation that we talked about last time? *That committee will be developed as part of the funding application prioritization process.*
- Is it possible that the person scoring a project misinterpreted the application? Will we get to review the points given to each project? We need to understand the rationale used to score points. *Details of individual project scores will be provided along with the public draft IRWM Plan. Comments on project scoring may be submitted during the public review period.*
- If a project is identified in existing plan, it gets 8 points for yes and 0 points for no. We should lower the points on this criterion – suggestion of lowering to 2 points.
- What about projects that benefit multiple hydrologic units or create a new water supply? Don't these projects benefit the whole county? If so, should that project get points for benefiting every watershed in the region? Project proponents may not have been consistent in how they identified this criterion. *Projects have not yet been mapped, as they were just received last week.*
- When the projects were scored, were we looking at them in a quantitative manner? *The consultant team reviewed the project submittals and did not look for omissions or places where the proponent should have claimed additional benefits. The team did review each response to determine whether the response was consistent with the criteria being scored. Rationales for scoring assignments will be provided with the Public Draft IRWMP.*
- Projects that are identified in existing plans should receive two points.
- Doesn't integration mean marrying projects together to develop a suite of projects? This would help smaller standalone projects. Projects should get more points by marrying up with something different. Projects should get a different score based on who the partners are. For example: partners that already exist, or those that would likely occur on their own, should not be awarded as many points as someone who steps outside the box to partner with dissimilar groups.
- There is insufficient time to properly review the scoring. How far do we have to take this step before August 1? *By the first week of June, we need to have a prioritized project list. However, this list can and will change between June 1 and the end of the year when the funding application is submitted. This process will also be refined through Proposition 84.*
- What is the combined cost of the Tier 1 projects? *Costs haven't yet been tallied, but it will be a lot.*
- As a point of clarity, this process is not determining those specific projects for which Proposition 50 funds will be sought, so cost does not matter at this stage. There will be a much smaller suite of projects included in the Prop 50 application.

- The points awarded for multiple hydrologic units seems high and should be lowered. This brings up the question of larger versus smaller watersheds.
- The number of points awarded for inclusion in the existing plans is good because those projects have already been vetted/validated through a process; points should not be reduced.
- It will be interesting to see how we will get down to \$25M.
- Are we required to prioritize as part of the plan? Do we have to have a prioritized list of projects for the plan? Don't we need to have that specific group for Prop 50? *We are required to prioritize in the Plan, but we don't have to have the specific group of projects until the Step 2 application.*
- There is a lot of repetition in the titles – many projects seem to be the same or overlapping. Can we approach groups with similar projects to achieve integration? *This can't be done prior to the June 1 public draft release, but may be done later.*
- There should be a process in place to follow-up with project proponents to ensure/validate accuracy in the data provided.
- We should look at those projects that were formerly high priority projects in Cycle 1 to see if they ranked lower (Tier 2) in this new prioritization process and identify why this happened. Maybe we should see if adjustments should be made to balance out the point system.
- Regarding the top two scoring criteria: integrate multiple strategies and address multiple objectives –these criterions should be weighted more.
- Need to compare objectives and strategies against one another, rank their priority, and assign different levels of weighting.
- VOTE: a vote was taken to determine whether objectives and strategies as groups should we ranked/weighted differently. The majority of RAC members voted for objectives and strategies to be weighted equally.
- We will lose the importance of this as a regional Plan if we elevate strategies above the regional objectives. Strategies were developed by the state, not this group. Strategies and objectives should be weighted the same.
- Were the three extra objectives included? *Yes, those are included.*
- New supply that exists outside of the SDCWA service area does not benefit the entire region. New supply projects within the service area should be worth more points than those projects located outside the service area.
- The second level of criteria should include: spans multiple hydrologic units, linked to other projects, and involves more than one entity.
- Additional points should be awarded to projects with multidisciplinary partners. *We do not have enough information on projects to determine whether partners are multidisciplinary, primarily because a single partner may have multiple areas of responsibility.*
- This process is about regional needs and not individual project needs.
- Project proponents should consider combining projects. Not sure how this would actually be accomplished, but it could help the process. There are lots of projects and little money.

Conclusions/Actions

The team will update the project scoring to reflect the revised weightings determined by the RAC with input from the public:

- Multiple Objectives: 23%
- Multiple Water Management Strategies: 23%
- Multiple Hydrologic Units: 10%
- Linkages with Other Projects: 10%
- Generates New Water: 10%
- Involves more than one entity: 6%
- Identified in an Existing Plan: 6%
- Benefits Disadvantaged Communities: 6%
- Provides Environmental Justice Benefits: 6%

Updates

The next RAC meeting will be held June 12 from 9 -11:30 AM.

Public Comments

The 100% total score can be reached using the following weightings:

- Multiple objectives, multiple water management strategies: 23% each
- Multiple hydrologic units, linkages with other projects, generates new water: 10% each
- Involves more than one entity, identified in an existing plan, benefits disadvantaged communities, and environmental justice benefits: 6% each

RAC members agreed to this suggested method of weighting.