



Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #100

February 1, 2023

9:00 am – 11:30 am

Zoom Meeting

NOTES

Attendance

RAC Members

Richard Whipple (Chair), County of San Diego
Anne Bamford, American Water Works Association
Anne Middleton, ECOLIFE Conservation
Beth Gentry, City of Chula Vista
Brook Sarson, San Diego Sustainable Living Institute
Charlie de la Rosa and Kelly Craig, San Diego Zoo Global
Mike Thornton and Chris Trees, San Elijo JPA
David Walker, San Diego Audubon Society
Elizabeth Lovsted for Kelly Gage, San Diego County Water Authority
Jimmy Smith, San Diego Waterboard
Joey Randall for Kim Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Julia Chunn-Heer, SurfRider
Julia Escamilla, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District
Kimberly O'Connell and Amanda Loeper, UCSD Clean Water Utility
Leslie Cleveland for Jack Simes, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mark Seits, Floodplain Management Association
Patrick McDonough, San Diego CoastKeeper
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Sandra Jacobson, California Trout
Tim Murphy for Justin Gamble, City of Carlsbad
Toby Roy, RCAC
Wayne Rosenbaum and Tory Walker, Building Industry Association
Wenda Alvarez, WSA Marketing

RWMG Staff and Consultants

Arthella Vallarta, Woodard & Curran
Chelsea McGimpsey, County of San Diego
Ernesto Rios, City of San Diego
Julie MarLett, City of San Diego
Lesley Dobalian, San Diego County Water Authority
Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority
Mark Stephens, City of San Diego
Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran

Interested Parties to the RAC

Ayden Zielke, MURP
Bill Luksic, Public
Brian Pollard, Urban Collaborative Project
Cristina Torres, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
Debby Dunn, San Diego County Water Authority
Elisa Marrone, City of Oceanside
Gail Patton, San Diego County Water Authority
Joel H. San Juan, Public
Joni German, San Diego County Water Authority
Jordan Alejo, Public
Juan Magdaraog, City of Escondido
Karen Falk, City of Del Mar
Kumiko Hayazaki, City of San Diego
Luis Valdez, Helix Water District
Mariah Mills, City of San Diego
Megan Chery, Public
Mia Gil, Viejas Tribal Government
Mick Cothran, Fallbrook Public Utility District
Mina Ziaei, San Diego County Water Authority
Soleil Develle, Fallbrook Public Utility District

Welcome, Introductions, & Land Acknowledgement

Mr. Richard Whipple, County of San Diego, welcomed everyone to the virtual RAC meeting. Ms. Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran, reviewed the virtual meeting process including how to use the virtual controls and chat feature. Meeting participants were encouraged to enter their name and organization into the chat for roll call and to update their name on Zoom.

Mr. Whipple read the Tribal Land Acknowledgment to the group, which was written to be delivered in a virtual setting:

We acknowledge that this virtual meeting of the San Diego IRWM Program Regional Advisory Committee is taking place in the traditional lands of the Kumeyaay and Luiseño people. As we begin this meeting, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of our region. A land acknowledgment is a critical step toward working with native communities to secure meaningful partnership and inclusion in the stewardship and protection of their cultural resources and homelands. We respect these ancestral grounds where we are collectively gathered and support the resilience and strength that Indigenous people have shown worldwide.

Mr. Whipple welcomed the new and returning 2023-2026 RAC members and thanked previous members for their service. New RAC members were encouraged to introduce themselves.

Regional Water Supply Update

Ms. Mina Ziaei, San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA), provided an update on the region's current water supply conditions. The San Diego region experienced winter storms due to atmospheric rivers. The Northern Sierra Precipitation 8-Station Index shows the long-term average rainfall. Currently, the precipitation has been well above average compared to last year, but it is too early to forecast this year's precipitation. The Statewide Snow Water Content – Percent of April 1 Average is off to a better start compared to last year. Lake Oroville Reservoir is at 65% of capacity and the San Luis Reservoir is

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61% of capacity as of January 30, 2022. The Upper Colorado Basin's precipitation is 128% of normal and the snow water equivalent is 147% of normal. Lake Powell is 22% full. In the Lower Colorado Basin, Lake Mead is 28% full. In terms of local precipitation, the Lindberg Field Station is at 7.54 inches or 156% of normal, and the Ramona Airport Station is at 12.61 inches or 187% of normal.

Questions/Comments:

- The San Diego region relies on the Colorado River for water supply. Currently, the data shows that we are above normal, but as the wet season continues, that can level off. Do you have additional information on what the Colorado Basin may look like if we continue on a dry pattern?
 - As of right now, we are above average compared to last year, but it is too early to forecast.
 - We can do a follow-up presentation at a future RAC meeting.
- Does the San Diego region have plans in the event the State receives cuts from the Colorado River?
 - Although the region relies on the Colorado River, the region is investing in recycled water and water conservation. This long-term plan is paying off, but we are not out of the drought. SDCWA will continue these investments.
 - There are many conversations and negotiations ongoing regarding the Colorado River.

Project Completion Report

Ms. Joni German, SDCWA, presented the project completion report for the Regional Demand Management Program Expansion (Program). The Program included three components. The first component was the Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility Plumbing Retrofits. This component provided financial incentives for the direct installation of water efficiency hardware upgrades, such as toilets equipped with electronic flush valves, valve converters, and showerheads. In total, the first component saves approximately 29 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water.

The second component was the Turf Replacement Rebates, which provided financial incentives for residential and commercial customers to replace turf landscapes with sustainable landscapes. In total, 1,018,041 square feet of turf were replaced, saving approximately 137.1 AFY of water.

The third component was WaterSMART Landscape Classes, which provided resources and workshops for residents to learn and practice sustainable landscape guidelines. This component provided technical assistance, including professional site evaluations, creation of initial site plans to scale, personalized in-class landscape design coaching, and on-site design coaching. The third component also developed marketing and outreach materials and conducted regional outreach to raise program awareness and interest. The WaterSMART Landscape Classes allowed residents to develop the skills and confidence to complete a turf conversion project. In total, this component saves approximately 24 AFY of water.

Questions/Comments:

- Are the WaterSMART Landscape Classes still ongoing? We have monthly meetings for neighborhood groups and these groups would benefit if someone from SDCWA can present.
 - Yes, the Program is still continuing and I would love to present.

Upcoming SDIRWM Activities

Ms. Julie MarLett, City of San Diego, presented updates on upcoming SDIRWM activities. SDIRWM's Proposition 1, Round 2 funding request was fully funded. There are potential changes to SDIRWM being

evaluated by the RWMG to align with Statewide and regional priorities. Upcoming activities include RAC meetings, the Drought Project Development Workgroup, and the 2024 IRWM Summit.

In January 2023, the RWMG emailed a RAC Meeting Topics survey to solicit feedback on future topics RAC members and SDIRWM stakeholders want to hear about. The RWMG received a total of 16 responses. Most respondents indicated an interest to learn more about climate change and water quality in the region. Other potential topics included stormwater capture, flood risk and water quality, climate action plans, periodic information on the status of the Colorado River, updates on State and regional funding for water projects, and improving water and wetland habitats.

Questions/Comments:

- Add conservation and efficiency.
- Emphasize the importance of stormwater capture, specifically as it pertains to development and redevelopment. We are going to get a commercial, industrial, and institutional permit where we are going to be required to look at either capture or treatment of stormwater from a vast variety of facilities, such as private hospitals and schools.
 - Agree, particularly as it relates to stormwater infrastructure.
- There is a lot of development ongoing in the affordable housing arena. What is the RAC doing to get effective water management tools into these units?
 - I believe the City of San Diego has implemented water use efficiency standards into our building codes. This could be a future presentation.
- The water industry has very aggressive water conservation standards, which resulted in negative consequences on the wastewater side. There is a lot of information on indoor water usage available. The focus should be on external outdoor water usage.
- Another topic for consideration is water for environmental benefit and creative solutions to make sure local rivers have sufficient flows and recharge, especially in the face of climate change.
- Consider seasonal presentations on wildfires before the wildfire season starts.
- Water conservation has come a long way. We have done a lot in improving indoor water conservation, but we are still not talking about greywater opportunities.
- What kind of collaborations with Tribes are people looking for?
 - We can discuss the ways the region can better collaborate with each other.
- Discuss Risk Informed Decision Making, which is an ongoing approach to how we operate our reservoirs, primarily our dual-purpose reservoirs. Most of these reservoirs have a draw-down date where they make enough room for the rainy season. There should be local or State agency staff that can present on this topic and how it is being considered in the region.
- There needs to be a distinction between sewer customers and septic customers with regards to greywater (and collection system flow issues) - septic customers implementing greywater systems could be beneficial.
- RCAC does a lot of collaboration with underrepresented communities. It is helpful to have 100% funding on projects or co-funding on projects.
- The Orange County Hydrology Manual update is underway. The update is challenging due to the lack of data. There is a need for more gages and good models. We cannot have good information without good data.
- Lake Hodges is the only reservoir that has an issue related to wildlife.

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- The issue related to the biology of reservoirs is more expansive than one or two species of birds. It has to do with downstream impacts. The lack of flow is creating harmful issues.

Drought Project Development Work

Ms. Elizabeth Lovsted, SDCWA, presented on the Drought Project Development Workgroup. The purposes of the Drought Project Development Workgroup are to define regional drought impacts to be addressed, establish drought response priorities for the region, examine existing drought response projects/programs, consider existing projects/programs and identify opportunities for expanding or refining to meet established priorities, and identify potential funding resources to implement regional drought response projects/programs. The Workgroup will be comprised of the RWMG and volunteers from the RAC and will be active from February to August. The RWMG anticipates four two-hour meetings. If interested in volunteering, please email Lesley Dobalian at LDobalian@sdewa.org.

The RWMG will send out a Drought Project/Programs Types survey after the RAC meeting. The purpose is to solicit project/program ideas that meet the purpose of the Workgroup and key considerations on project prioritization criteria. The first meeting will review and refine the goals of the Workgroup, review the survey results, define prioritization criteria for regional drought projects/program, and review existing drought projects in the SDIRWM project list and from the survey.

Questions/Comments

- The Workgroup is a low effort for volunteers. The consulting team will develop materials related to the Workgroup.

Grant Administration

Ms. Loisa Burton, SDCWA, presented updates on grant administration. Total grant funding awarded to the San Diego IRWM is more than \$113 million for 84 regional projects with the additional six projects and funding from Proposition 1, Round 2. About \$90 million or 68% of grant funding has been spent and 53 projects are now complete out of the 84 projects funded. Proposition 84, Round 3 is on schedule to be completed by end of February. There are 10 projects remaining in Proposition 84, Round 4. Most projects are over 80% complete and in the construction and implementation phase, and the program is scheduled to end by March 2024. Only two projects remain in Proposition 1, Disadvantaged Community Involvement Grant Program. Project 4: Groundwater Planning for Pauma Valley DACs and Tribes continues to work on drilling and installing a new monitoring well. Project 7: Sediment Management for Tijuana River Valley DACs is finalizing environmental documentation. Proposition 1, Round 1 is ongoing and the majority of the projects are more than 70% complete and two projects are expected to be complete in the next couple of months. The Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief Program is ongoing and Project 4: R-2 Reservoir Rehabilitation is 95% complete. The agreement for Proposition 1, Round 2 will be executed within the next month. A program kickoff will be scheduled to review the details of the funding agreement and grant administration.

Questions/Comments

None.

Public Comments

- The information the RAC provides is very helpful. My focus is examining the information presented with an equity lens to evaluate how my organization can take advantage of the program. I plan to attend more often.

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Summary and Next Steps

Ms. Johnson presented a list of upcoming funding opportunities. They have been included in the table below.

Project Types	Deadline	Website
USBR: WaterSMART Water Recycling and Desalination Planning	February 28, 2023	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=345107
USBR: WaterSMART Environmental Resources Projects	March 28, 2023	https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/ewrp/index.html
EPA: Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program	April 10, 2023	https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-collaborative-problem-solving-cooperative-agreement-5#applications
EPA: Environmental Justice Government-to-Government Program	April 10, 2023	https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-government-government-program
SWRCB: Prop 1 Technical Assistance Funding Program	Open: rolling	https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/proposition1/tech_asst_funding.html
DWR: Water Desalination Grant Program	Open: rolling	https://water.ca.gov/News/Public-Notices/2020/Sept-2020/Water-Desal-Grant-CAP

Next RAC Meeting:

- April 5, 2023 – 9:00-11:30 a.m. via a virtual platform.

The meeting schedule for 2023 is included below. Please add them to your calendar:

- June 7, 2023
- October 4, 2023