



Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #91

June 2, 2021

9:00 am – 11:30 am

Zoom Meeting

NOTES

Attendance

RAC Members

Richard Whipple (Chair) and Stephanie Gaines, County of San Diego
Ann Van Leer, The Escondido Creek Conservancy
Anne Bamford, American Water Works Association
Beth Gentry, City of Chula Vista
Brook Sarson, Sustainable Living Institute
Charlie de la Rosa, San Diego Zoo Global
Chris Trees for Mike Thorton, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority
Connor Leone for Anne Middleton, ECOLIFE Conservation
David Walker, San Diego Audubon Society
Don Butz, Lakeside Fire Protection District
Elizabeth Lovested for Kelley Gage, San Diego County Water Authority
Erica Pinto, Jamul Indian Village of California
Erick Del Bosque, Sweetwater Authority
Jennifer Hazard and Katrina Hiott, Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Joey Randall for Kimberly Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Julia Chunn-Heer, Surfrider
Julia Escamilla, Rincon del Diablo MWD
Justin Gamble and Tim Murphy, City of Oceanside
Keli Balo, City of San Diego
Kimberly O'Connell and Jennifer Gonzales, UCSD Clean Water Utility
Marisa Soriano, City of Chula Vista
Mark Seits, Floodplain Management Association
Michael McSweeney, Building Industry Association
Michelle Berens, Helix Water District
Oscar Romo, Alter Terra
Patrick McDonough, San Diego Coastkeeper
Phil Pryde and Rob Hustel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Sandra Jacobson, California Trout

RWMG Staff and Consultants

Arthella Vallarta, Woodard & Curran
Chelsea McGimpsey, County of San Diego
Karina Danek, City of San Diego
Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority
Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority
Mark Stephens, City of San Diego
Nicole Poletto, Woodard & Curran
Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran
Sarah Brower, City of San Diego
Roselyn Prickett, Woodard & Curran

Interested Parties to the RAC

Carmel Wong, City of San Diego
Gail Patton, San Diego County Water Authority
Greg Johansen, City of San Diego
Inken Mello, Woodard & Curran
Jeremy Haas, San Diego Regional Water Quality Board
Kelly Craig, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance
Kelly Rodgers, San Diego County Water Authority
Laurie Broedling, LB Organizational Consulting
Meagan Openshaw, City of Imperial Beach
Patricia Watkins, County of San Diego
Paul Romero, City of El Cajon
Sarah Hutmacher, San Diego River Park Foundation

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Rich 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.

Regional Conveyance System Study

Ms. Kelly Rodgers, Director of the Colorado River Program, San Diego County Water Authority, provided an update on the Regional Conveyance System Study (Study). The San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) has been the region's water wholesaler for 76 years with 24 member agencies, serving 3.3 million people and providing about 75% of water used in San Diego County. There are very few natural water aspects to support the economy and quality of life in San Diego County. The SDCWA worked strategically and collaboratively with its member agencies over the years to diversify the County's water supplies.

SDCWA has a history of long-term planning, and Ms. Rodgers highlighted some of the agency's projects. The Twin Oaks Valley Water Treatment Plant was completed in 2008, and it produces up to 100 million gallons of treated water per day, giving the region flexibility. The Olivenhain Dam and Reservoir, completed in 2003, has a storage capacity of 24,00 acre-feet of water, with up to 18,000 acre-feet of water stored in the reservoir reserved for emergencies. As a result of these projects, the region now has a more diverse water supply portfolio than it did in 1991 when it was almost entirely reliant on water supplies from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD).

The focus of Ms. Rodger's presentation is the study of the water supplies obtained from the 2003 Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA). The QSA defined the rights to a portion of Colorado River water for SDCWA, Coachella Valley Water District, Imperial Irrigation District (IID), and MWD. The QSA was a response to California using more than its 4.4 million acre-feet of annual apportionment of the Colorado River water. In order for the State to stay within its annual allotment to the Colorado River, SDCWA agreed to a water transfer with the IID for up to 75 years. Another critical component of the QSA is the All American and Coachella Canal Lining Projects, which conserves about 67,700 acre-feet of water per year. As a part of the agreements, SDCWA receives the rights of the conserved water for 100 years.

The region greatly depends on QSA supplies, serving 50% of the region's demands. California holds high-priority status on the Colorado River, meaning that California would be the last state to receive water restrictions. Among the agencies that receive Colorado River water in California, the IID water holds a higher priority status. Additionally, the QSA supplies provide a low-cost base supply and support conservation programs.

A significant aspect of the Study is researching how to transport the QSA supplies in the San Diego region. The SDCWA does not have a direct pipeline that connects to the Colorado River. The agency currently pays MWD to transport these supplies to the region via a separate agreement. However, the agreement expires in 2047 and SDCWA has an option to negotiate a new agreement with MWD or build an aqueduct.

The Study was divided into two phases in order to plan for generations to come, ensure reliable and cost-effective water supplies, and provide options and flexibility in decision-making. The first phase, Phase A, was completed last summer. Three routes were studied in this phase: Alternative 3A, Alternative 5A, and Alternative 5C. All three routes begin in Imperial Valley and connect to the All American Canal. Alternatives 5A and 5C end at San Vicente Reservoir and Alternative 3A ends at the Twin Oaks Valley Water Treatment Plant. All three routes are approximately 100 miles long. Half of Alternatives 3A and 5A are tunneling and the other half is an open trench.

Phase A was focused on engineering and cost. The key findings are that all alignments are technically viable. However, only Alternatives 3A and 5A are cost-competitive with other options. The capital costs are estimated at \$5 billion. Additionally, SDCWA identified several partnership opportunities along the proposed routes that support Governor Gavin Newsom's Water Resilience Portfolio. There are also opportunities for multiple benefits, including water storage, Salton Sea habitat creation, renewable energy integration, emergency preparedness, public-private opportunities, etc.

Phase B began in November, and it will be completed in June 2022. In this phase, only two routes (Alternatives 3A and 5A) were analyzed. Phase B is focused on refining the technical cost-analysis, as well as partnerships and economics. The goals of Phase B are to refine Phase A's technical and cost analysis, perform a detailed economic analysis, engage in dialogue with potential partnerships, and outreach to a diverse group of stakeholders.

Questions/Comments

- The San Diego River Park Foundation is very interested in being involved in this project and being considered a stakeholder. Would it be possible to set up a meeting and discuss this opportunity?
 - Yes, we would be happy to set up a meeting.
- A part of your investigation is doing a cost-benefit analysis, which is very important. Are you balancing the cost of water reuse versus the cost of building another conveyance system to see which makes more sense?
 - Yes, we are considering that in the equation. We are also assuming that all member agencies that have planned projects will complete them on schedule and will be part of the water supply that is being analyzed.

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- I listened to the Board meeting back in November. During the meeting, there was some concern that the restoration of the Salton Sea was not viable due to the lack of funding or partnership opportunities, but it is still listed in your presentation. Has that been addressed?
 - SDCWA has discussed the Salton Sea Restoration Program with the State of California. The State is highly interested in a desalination plant needed in the Imperial Valley which would produce a brine byproduct that is much less salty than the Salton Sea. We would send that water around the Salton Sea and create habitat.
- Has Phase B incorporated or considered the findings of the independent member agency manager study which found that the economics of Regional Conveyance System did not pan out due to unrealistic assumptions in Phase A regarding MWD rates?
 - That was a Phase A assessment. We are working with our member agencies during Phase B to give them updates. I am not aware that they have hired an independent consultant for Phase B. Staff will be doing an economic analysis based on our other planning efforts. We are also going to have our independent reviewer of that work.
- The tunneling is going to be fairly lengthy and involve moving a lot of rock, dirt, and other material. Have you decided where all the material is going to be relocated? Additionally, how do you plan to transport it there?
 - One of the ideas we had is similar to what we did when we raised the San Vicente Dam. We processed a lot of excavated material and created aggregate, which we used. One idea is to process that material close to where the tunnels will be and truck that over to the Salton and use that as stabilization material for dust emissions.
 - Will there be more detail about that in the current phase planning?
 - Yes, there will be more details. We will be preparing a summarized version of the 700-page report and uploading that onto our website. We will also be posting the full report.
- Can you share how this effort may coordinate with the stormwater capture/use study the CWA is currently developing?
 - The study is being developed in partnership with existing studies, including the Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). Though it is a separate effort, we will coordinate to ensure there are no outcomes that will change the results of the study.
- With new reports on low future supplies from the Colorado River, how secure are future supplies?
 - California has high priority rights within the Colorado River and IID has high priority rights in the State. Within the State, MWD has the lowest rights on priority systems, so they would receive cutbacks first. If there were water supply reductions to IID, SDCWA would have very small cuts, but this is an unlikely scenario.
- It is interesting to see how diversified the sourcing of water resources has changed and is projected to change into the 2030s. Do you think all these projects would increase or decrease overall costs to the end user, in particular, residential folks? Are there stakeholders involved with respect to keeping those end-user economic considerations in mind while making all these sourcing and planning decisions?
 - We set rates every year during a public meeting, so we do get stakeholder input. We also get input from our member agencies. Local supply development projects can be expensive to develop, but the QSA supplies are a low-cost base that help bring the overall cost of the supply down. It allows these local supply projects to come online, so they are very complementary.

Additionally, we pay only \$15 per acre foot for the canal lining supplies that we get every year, which is approximately 80,000 acre-feet. We pay for the operations and maintenance of those sections of the canals. Our water transfer from IID is tied to the gross domestic product price deflator index, which increases about 1.7% a year. It is very low, so it is all complementary. Our main goal is to avoid those rate spikes and smooth the rates going into the future.

- How many miles of tunneling would be in either of the 2 options and, for context, can you tell us roughly how many miles of tunnel we currently built and manage in our existing water supply system?
 - The proposed regional conveyance system will be about 40-45 miles of tunneling, and the San Vincente pipeline is about 11 miles. We have tunneled several miles from Lake Hodges reservoir to Olivenhain reservoir as part of the pump storage facility, so I would say we have a significant amount of tunneling experience.
- How many earthquake lines will the route cross?
 - It does cross some faults, but the two proposed alignments do not cross the San Andreas Fault.
- Has the need for this project been demonstrated somewhere else besides the UWMPs?
 - As part of the economic analysis, we will be using the Monte Carlo analysis method. Separate from the UWMPs, we are going to consider the local supply development projects that are coming online as well as our QSA and other supplies. We are going to do a separate analysis based on history and do a range of sensitivity to examine high and low probability ranges. It is going to be independent of the UWMP, but also use some of the inputs of the plan.
 - Are you looking at just the cost impacts of these projects and impacts on ratepayers?
 - I am not sure if we are going to do that agency by agency, but I think we are. I would have to check on that.
- A Scripps Institution of Oceanography presentation to SDCWA last year regarding climate change impacts on supply sources forecasted that Colorado River volume will likely be reduced at least 10% by 2070-2100, but could easily be up to 20% (rule of thumb is 5% reduction for each 1 degree of Celsius warming, and they forecasted 3-4 degrees of Celsius warming in the southwest). Is this updated climate change forecast being considered in Phase B?
 - Yes.

Project Completion Report: Healthy Water for Forester Creek

Ms. Sarah Hutmacher, San Diego River Park Foundation updated the group on the Healthy Water for Forester Creek project. Forester Creek is an 11-mile-long tributary of the San Diego River, flowing from East County hills near Crest. Within the City of El Cajon (El Cajon), Forester Creek runs through mostly Disadvantaged or severely Disadvantaged communities (DACs). The creek is channelized and runs through many urban areas, which are hidden behind parking lots and between freeways.

There are two main project needs. The first project need is to address the illegal dumping and trash in Forester Creek. Trash gets accumulated in the channels. When it is not captured in time, the trash enters the vegetated areas where it becomes difficult to remove and harms the habitat. The second project need is to address the lack of recreational space in the Forester Creek Study Area and El Cajon. The Forester Creek Study Area averages about 1.51 acres per 1,000 persons and El Cajon averages about 1.02 acres per 1,000 persons. These are very low numbers compared to San Diego County's average of 31.08 acres per 1,000 persons (excluding State Parks). This park poverty is not occurring throughout San Diego County, but it is concentrated along Forester Creek.

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The goal of the project was to empower the diverse community in El Cajon to provide input and guidance in the development of two plans: a Trash Capture and Reduction Plan and a Recreation Access Plan, both focused on the Forester Creek system in the Cajon Valley. The San Diego River Park Foundation implemented five activities to achieve the goal of the project. The first task focused on project administration, such as invoicing, permitting, coordination, and reporting. The second activity centered on stakeholder committee and outreach. The stakeholder committee included 36 members (5 junior members), representing more than 25 community organizations such as school districts, refugee communities, and community colleges. The stakeholder committee assisted the San Diego River Park Foundation with participatory planning. In total, the organization conducted outreach at 67 separate events, which were attended by 48,072 community members. Ms. Hutmacher stated that they directly engaged with 4,550 people and collected over 1,064 survey responses in 4 different languages. The organization also hosted a public workshop for 150 attendees in 6 languages and presented twice to the City Council. Ms. Hutmacher reported that they were able to earn sufficient media coverage from the activities they implemented to raise awareness of the creek system. Additionally, the project had social media presence, direct mail, and e-newsletters. In total, the project has 424,048 impressions.

The results from the surveys provided important information regarding the community's knowledge about Forester Creek. Less than 33% of respondents knew that Forester Creek was connected to the ocean, and 72% of respondents reported having seen areas of the channelized portions of the creek, but had little awareness of the connection to natural systems. This information was shared with the stakeholder committee and Cal Poly Pomona to inform the Recreation Access Plan.

The third activity focused on volunteer engagement regarding trash data. 12 assessments were completed at 6 different 1,000-meter sections on Forester Creek, Broadway Channel, and Washington Channel. The assessments were conducted in the pre- "first flush" and post-flush conditions. A total of 104 volunteers collected and sorted 7,533 pieces of trash into 41 different categories. Approximately 57% of the items collected contained plastic, and 38% of the items collected were related to food and drink consumption. The number of plastic bags found during the assessments decreased 40% between Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. This data was provided to the City of El Cajon Public Works Department and D-Max Engineering for their Trash Capture and Reduction recommendations.

The third activity focused on youth engagement and education. In partnership with the Earth Discovery Institute, the San Diego River Park Foundation hosted field trips for 291 third and fourth graders from El Cajon. The students also completed surveys to assess their knowledge about Forester Creek. Only 22% of students reported having ever heard of Forester Creek. About 43% reported going into nature as little as once a month or never, and 75% of students expressed that they would like to spend more time in nature.

The fourth activity fixated on the Trash Capture and Reduction Plan. The San Diego River Park Foundation worked closely with El Cajon, which manages the trash in Forester Creek and its tributaries within the city as an Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permittee. As a result of the Trash Amendments and Trash Order, El Cajon selected the "Track 1" option to install and maintain full capture devices at storm drains. To inform this effort, this plan proposes 14 types of structural and non-structural BMPs. Of 211 possible BMP locations evaluated, 133 sites were selected for inclusion in the plan based on field observations, trash data assessment, and desktop analysis. The sites that were selected prioritized trash from the two main pathways, which were trash transported by people experiencing homelessness and trash transported by El Cajon's storm drain system. The plan is available on San Diego River Park Foundation's website.

The fifth activity concentrated on the Recreation Access Plan. The San Diego River Park Foundation partnered with Cal Poly Pomona Studio 606 Landscape Architecture Master's Program. A cohort of graduate students and instructors engaged stakeholders in developing the Recreation Access Plan for Forester Creek, convened stakeholder committee and facilitated community input, facilitated community workshops for members of the

public, and developed Recreation Access Plan that synthesizes community input, research, and professional recommendations.

There are four overall concepts of the Recreation Access Plan, which are to plan parks and pedestrian/cycling routes near schools and creeks, develop an interlocking system of recreational resources at a range of scales, and create “Human Flow to the Creeks” by drawing people’s lives closer to the creek and rendering a stronger connection between the people of El Cajon and the Forester Creek system. In addition, the stakeholder committee recommended 7 aspects of the plan, which are implementing mini-projects, collaborating with local grassroots organizations, supporting 2-3 more easily implementable pocket parks, identifying roles for community members in planning, integrating health and environmental quality benefits into planning, integrating the Forester Creek System into K-12 curriculum, and creating a connected pedestrian and cycling loop system.

To end her presentation, Ms. Hutmacher reviewed the benefits and findings of the project and the organization’s recommendations for the next steps of the project. The benefits of the project were increased awareness of the Forester Creek system among key stakeholders, elected officials, children, and community members; development of outreach and education materials to continue outreach; and production of planning documents that lay the groundwork for future investment in recreation and interpretive resources and water quality improvement. The project found a high community interest in improving recreation access and reducing trash in waterways; however, community engagement in El Cajon must first address barriers in language, immigration status, refugee population, charisma of the creek system itself, and communications strategy. Finally, the San Diego River Park Foundation recommends additional creek monitoring, implementation of the Recreation Access Plan recommendations and Trash Capture and Reduction Plan BMPs, naturalization of the creek channels, strategic partnerships, and youth creek education.

Questions/Comments

- What happens to the trash once you collect it? Does it go to a landfill or is there a different use for it? Are you able to recycle it?
 - We do separate recycling and e-waste, but beyond that, all the trash goes to landfill.
- Has the community expressed any interest in utilizing the trash for other purposes?
 - I had questions about using it to create sculptures. We have done temporary sculptures a few times before. Beyond that, I have not heard anything in the community.
 - The reason why I am asking is because my organization, Alter Terra, is repurposing trash into useful projects. Perhaps we can help the San Diego River Park Foundation in the future if you are interested.
 - Awesome, that would be great.
- I was wondering if you could share a little bit more about your lessons learned and recommendations for successful outreach. I know you talked about it at the end, but I am particularly interested in your survey engagement because your numbers are impressive. What can we learn from your experience?
 - The short answer is our stakeholder committee. We invested a lot of time in developing a stakeholder committee that was engaged and knowledgeable. That committee leveraged our reach in the community. For example, they informed their network about the workshops we were hosting. We also made a very calculated effort to make sure that all our outreach and educational materials were available in multiple languages. We had a lot of translators available during the public workshops. Those actions made it clear to the community that we wanted their opinion because we were asking them in their native languages.

- How much of the trash problem is the homeless population versus the trash that people illegally dump or throw out of car windows?
 - In our study, the amount of trash by mass that we determined was probably unrelated to encampments was less than 1%. We do not have data on El Cajon's clean-up as far as how much of it is from encampments and how much of it is from something else. I cannot answer that part of the question.
- Have you investigated the possibility to construct capture devices by the airport?
 - Yes, on that slide where I showed the different BMP locations for the capture devices, the highest tiers were mostly in all the area leading up to where Forrester Creek naturalizes. There are tons of opportunities for nets and other things that we can deploy on the smaller creeks before we get to that issue on Forrester Creek. The challenge is that whenever there is any high flow, it becomes ineffective and breaks away to prevent flooding and damage. Waiting until the last moment is not effective. Our plan recommends increasing the upstream location points, so we can filter that amount.
- This project was dear and near to our hearts at the San Diego River Park Foundation. We all believe strongly in our core that one way to care for the water ways is to create public access so people can know what is there and appreciate the value. This study shows a lot of promise, but it also shows that a lot of work needs to be done. If anyone has more questions, I would be happy to set up a meeting with Sarah and the team.
- Is there any treatment of stormwater before it discharges to the creek or is that not possible?
 - I believe the answer is no. There is stormwater capture, but I do not think there is treatment.

Statewide Updates

Mr. Mark Stadler, SDCWA, provided a Statewide Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program update to the group. Governor Gavin Newsom released a May Revise on the California State Budget, which included a \$5.1 billion budget for water infrastructure, drought response, and climate resilience. The State Assembly and State Senate are currently doing their budget processes. Budgets will be merged and submitted to the Governor Newsom by June 15. There is no direct appropriation for IRWM. Mr. Stadler asked the group to send a letter advocating for inclusion of IRWM in the final 2021-2022 State budget to the Senate Budget Committee, the Assembly Budget Committee, and Local State Legislators. Instructions and a template were emailed on Tuesday, May 18.

Additionally, there are other opportunities to advocate for IRWM funding. RAC members can set up a meeting with their legislators. Template and instructions were provided on Thursday, May 27 along with the San Diego IRWM Fact Sheet. RAC members should target the week of June 7 for legislative outreach. RAC members can also advocate for IRWM funding in proposed Water Bonds Assembly Bill (AB) 1500 and Senate Bill (SB) 45. Mr. Stadler stated that they are focusing to request \$510 million in the State budget as opposed to these water bonds. Depending on State budget outcomes, San Diego IRWM may request the group's help advocating for the bond measures.

Mr. Stadler discussed the Roundtable of Regions (RoR) recommendations on the future of IRWM. The RoR is a voluntary association of all IRWM planning regions in California. The RoR recently completed an assessment report of the 48 IRWM planning regions and discussed three recommendations on the future of IRWM. The first recommendation is to use existing IRWM regional boundaries when designating regions that integrate water and natural resource management with climate resilience. The second recommendation is to maintain State support for IRWM regions regardless of transition to an expanded role. The third recommendation is State leadership

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should express strong commitment to IRWM, given tremendous benefits it had provided. These recommendations will be discussed at the special RoR meeting on July 1. If interested in attending, please email Mr. Stadler.

San Diego IRWM finalized their contract with the State for Proposition 1, Round 1. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a virtual workshop on May 6 to review Round 1 Survey and Round 2 proposed changes. The goal of Round 2 is to simplify the application and complete contracting more quickly. DWR reaffirmed their support for projects with multiple benefits or multiple partners. There is also an emphasis on climate resiliency and support for projects identified in Needs Assessments and Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACI) funding round. The draft Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) is expected to be released this summer for public comments, and the final PSP is anticipated by the end of 2021. For the grant application, DWR is proposing two separate deadlines: March 2022 or September 2022.

There will be a call for projects in Proposition 1, Round 2. Mr. Stadler discussed some elements that organizations should consider in Round 2. First, projects should establish a partnership or determine an integrated approach, meaning that projects should have more than one element. There is a section in the San Diego IRWM Plan that defines 5 different ways to achieve integration. Second, projects must incorporate a community engagement component. Third, Mr. Stadler recommended that potential applicants request and review Proposition 1 grant agreement to understand agreement compliance requirements. Copies of the agreement can be requested from Loisa Burton, SDCWA. Fourth, potential applicants should register for the project database via OPTI. To end his presentation, Mr. Stadler went over materials to strengthen project applications, which are an updated itemized project budget, project schedule (planning and construction), strategy for CEQA and permits, measurable/quantifiable benefits of the project, and feasibility study or preliminary design.

Questions/Comments:

- None.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Workgroup Update

Ms. Brook Sarson, San Diego Sustainable Living Institute, updated the group on the Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI) Workgroup. The Workgroup contains 17 volunteers representing a diverse group of agencies, tribes, and NGOs. The Workgroup met twice on May 4 and May 24. During the first meeting, the workgroup framed JEDI in the context of San Diego IRWM and began to define JEDI. The second meeting focused on finalizing JEDI definitions, setting goals and metrics, and evaluating the project selection process. Ms. Sarson stated that the Workgroup will present the definitions to the group and then will hold a vote to recommend these definitions to the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG).

The Workgroup examined what the JEDI terms mean for the San Diego IRWM program. The Workgroup decided to combine diversity and inclusion, resulting in inclusive diversity. Additionally, the Workgroup had conversations regarding the term “disadvantaged communities (DACs).” The Workgroup agreed that DACs are not the term by which communities want to be defined or acknowledged. Some IRWM funding guidelines specifically mention DACs, so that term must be used appropriately. The JEDI Workgroup recommended using the terms “underserved communities” or “opportunity areas.” Ms. Sarson explained that the term “DACs” could specifically apply to economics. The terms “underserved communities” or “opportunity areas” will be broader and include many communities such as tribes and minorities. Most importantly, communities will be acknowledged without using derogatory terms.

The overriding goal is to entrench a culture of equal status for all communities within the planning region in the eyes of those making decisions about IRWM activities and funding. Key concepts and ideas were determined by the Workgroup. Ms. Sarson explained that the Workgroup had robust discussions about the definitions.

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Additionally, Hei-ock Kim from the Kim Center has facilitated the Workgroup meetings. Ms. Kim brings her expertise in this realm to the Workgroup. Please refer to the handout for complete definitions.

Questions/Comments:

- Would it be possible to post the link for this document in the chat, so I can bounce between them?
 - We do not have the link posted, but it looks like Nicole was able to post the document in the chat.
- Did you discuss having the RAC become a representative of the communities we serve?
 - We started to discuss that in our last meeting about the project selection process and how we define the communities that need additional support. We recognized that there were certain limitations about how the process was handed down in the State that prevented us from doing community outreach as the RAC.
- When it gets to the time, I would love to see that as a goal in the statement both for the project selection process and for the RAC itself.
 - We are meaning to look at our RAC membership selection process in our final meeting, so we are hoping to at least start that conversation and see if there are any adjustments we want to make there.
- I am looking at the diversity definition and there is an absence of acknowledgment of big social identifiers, such as race, ethnicity, religion, and gender. I feel we may be skirting around this issue. I understand that when you start naming these social identifiers, it is difficult to determine when the list ends. However, I think it would be incredibly important to include those identifiers in the definition.
 - That is a good comment. There may have been an attempt for the efficiency of language to prevent it from becoming too long. I think the word “demographics” was used to contain all the social identifiers you mentioned.
 - Thank you for your comment. We were talking about inclusive diversity more than individuals, such as contractors or organizations getting included. I think it was bigger than an individual or human differences in the community, but it is worth discussing as we move forward.
 - This is a momentous task and I agree with what you about how it is not just individuals. I think the Workgroup did a good job capturing that in the diversity section. I still think those individual identifiers are important.
- I have been a part of the group for 5 or 6 years. We have never shunned anybody. Things in the past may not have been equal, and I do not know how we right those wrongs. When I am asked to vote on a project, I look at what is most cost-effective because resources are limited. This feels like a solution in search of a problem. I could be the only person who votes against this.
 - Thank you for your comment and no offense taken. We are committed to listening to the spectrum of voices, so I appreciate the input.
- Can we add a goal to the definition? Both the RAC and the Project Selection Committee should become more reflective of the communities we serve.
 - My understanding is that we take these definitions and input from the RAC and then decide on the final revision. That is a discussion of the goals as opposed to the definitions. I think it could be more valuable in a different place.
- As a person of color, I appreciate the way you approach seeking inclusion in communities. It is important to get them interested and engaged in these projects because these are the groups that are going to influence the success of the projects. I appreciate the discussion regarding the change in terminology and approaches to community outreach. These communities can feel that they have been put aside at times during conversations like these, especially when people of color are not present.

- Are there thoughts on how to ask the RWMG to make the group more reflective? Is it in terms of organizations, or is it in terms of individuals representing those organizations? Is it possible to more specific?
 - I think you must start reaching out to these communities in ways that are more appealing to them. I think that it is good to have those social identifiers in the definition because they are a part of how successful projects are going to be. It is important to consider different outreach methods for seeking engagement. For example, it was wonderful how the San Diego River Park Foundation had its outreach materials in different languages and had translators during the workshops. Some people are more comfortable having flyers in their native language as it makes them feel valued.
 - That was a powerful statement. I agree that having materials in different languages makes people feel more valued.
- We wrote succinct definitions. In the future, perhaps we can develop guidelines. Those social identifiers are social distractions right now. We can include them in the guidelines, so everybody can understand them. I do not know if this is the right time, but I would like to ask the RAC to approve the language the way it is and allow the Workgroup to continue working on them.
- I think it is important to inform people outside our group about our statement and values and principles so they can hold us accountable. I want to thank Ms. Sarson and the rest of the Workgroup for writing these definitions. It is extremely challenging to write these definitions, and they did a good job. I just have one question. In the RAC, we tend to select people who represent a group in some form. Did you look at people as part of an organized group as opposed to individual voices? As a nonprofit, there is a lot of value regarding these individual voices that are not associated with a group. They have a voice, and their voice is important. There might be ways to collect those voices and not many people can participate in meetings like this.
 - Our conversation was less about trying to figure out who all the voices were but trying to write a broad definition that could be inclusive and create enough of an environment for the RAC and the RWMG to further define the other details such as project selection criteria. We were trying to stay broad and compassionate to the communities as possible. We started to discuss the topics that you have mentioned such as who are these communities and how do we make people in San Diego more aware of opportunities to engage with us. We have not defined it yet, but as we move forward it would be important to understand who those communities are.
- I need to briefly address the previous comment that is not in favor of this document. This is not a personal attack, but it needs to be discussed. You said that you felt this group has not shunned anybody, and when evaluating projects, you are voting for projects that have the most outcomes or are the most cost-effective. Many problems that exist today are due to unconscious biases that maintain the status quo, which generally serves whiter and wealthier people. You mentioned that you never felt that the group has shunned anyone away. However, that is your lens as a white male, and I fully recognize that I am too. I am becoming aware of my own inherent biases. It is more about how marginalized communities felt about this. It is difficult for marginalized communities to speak up about their experiences in spaces like the RAC. We need documents like this so we can be held accountable and to ensure that we are not leaving any communities out.
 - I hear where you are coming from, and I am just one person's opinion. Based on the past decisions I made regarding projects, I do not look at the color of people's skins. I look at the cost-benefit analysis because we do not have unlimited resources. I am not trying to marginalize anybody, but I am trying to get the most outcomes for the resources we have.
 - I appreciate your opinion, but sometimes looking at cost-efficiency results in inherent biases. One of the definitions in the document is equity. We have to look at how we can right past wrongs, especially in these extremely underserved communities in San Diego.

- Ultimately, we look at both elements that you both have mentioned. We are examining the struggles of smaller organizations to get projects funded. We are trying to give them more support, so they can reap the benefits of these State programs.
- I think one element that is missing is the unheard voices that was mentioned earlier. I do not see that value listed here. I also have an issue with the word “representative” in the inclusive diversity definition. “Representative” implies that you are elected to represent a body. It suggests that we are only going to hear from a certain group when we should be listening to all voices.
 - Thank you for your comment. The word “representatives” does make it sound like we are only going to hear it from a certain group of people in the community. I think it is valid that we do not use that word or figure out a different way to phrase that statement.
 - To follow up, that portion of the definition suggests that we are asking people who have been underrepresented to tell us what is wrong with our process. This is problematic because we are asking them to inform us about our inherent biases. We need to educate ourselves instead of asking someone else to teach us.
- Maybe add something to the effect that we will remain an open forum, and will seek input from all interests and persons.
- I motion to recommend moving these definitions and feedback forward to RWMG.
 - I second that.

The RAC voted to pass the motion:

- 23 yes
- 1 no
- 2 abstained

Grant Administration

Ms. Loisa Burton, SDCWA, presented updates on grant administration. In total, the San Diego IRWM region has received \$111.7 million in grant awards for 9 grant programs and 50 projects are now completed. Approximately 67% of the grant award has been billed to DWR (\$74.3 million). Proposition 84, Implementation Grant Round 3 is almost complete. Two projects are remaining, but both are over 80% complete. As a result of COVID-related challenges, an amendment to the agreement was submitted and is pending approval to extend this program for another 18 months. The new completion date for this program is February 2023. For Proposition 84, Implementation Grant Round 4, most projects are still in the implementation phase. There are 10 active projects over 50% complete.

Proposition 1, DACI program has 6 projects completed. Project 8 Storm Water Quality for Grape Day Park DACs is done with implementation, only project administration items remain. Proposition 1, DACI program will be completed by February 2022.

The sub-agreements with local project sponsors for Proposition 1, Round 1 are moving forward. The program kickoff meeting between local project sponsors will be on June 9. The first reporting and invoicing for this program will occur on July 15.

Questions/Comments:

None.

Public Comments

None.

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
CalEPA Environmental Justice Small Grants	June 30, 2021 at 11:59 PST	https://calepa.ca.gov/EnvJustice/Funding/
New Program from SWRCB and Division of Financial Assistance (DFA): O&M Costs of Specific Disadvantaged Community Drinking Water Systems	Submit Letter of Interest by July 12, 2021	https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/docs/req_for_interest_prop68_dw_om.pdf
Prop 1 Technical Assistance Funding Program	Open: rolling	https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/proposition1/tech_asst_funding.html
Water Desalination Grant Program	Open: rolling	https://water.ca.gov/News/Public-Notices/2020/Sept-2020/Water-Desal-Grant-CAP

Next RAC Meeting:

- August 4, 2021 – 9:00-11:30 a.m. via virtual platform.

The meeting schedule for 2021 is included below. Please add them to your calendar:

- October 6, 2021
- December 1, 2021