



Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #86

August 5, 2020

9:00 am – 11:30 am

Zoom Meeting

NOTES

Attendance

RAC Members

Elizabeth Lovsted, San Diego County Water Authority
Rania Amen for Al Lau, Santa Fe Irrigation District
Brook Sarson, San Diego Sustainable Living Institute
Eric La Chappa, La Posta Band of Mission Indians
James Cuero III for Erica Pinto, Jamul Indian Village
Jennifer Hazard, Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Jonathan Witt, San Diego County Office of Education
Julia Escamilla and Clint Baze, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District
Keli Balo for Surraya Rashid, City of San Diego
Darbi Berry for Julie Kalansky, San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative
Justin Gamble, City of Oceanside
Elizabeth Lovsted for Kelley Gage, San Diego County Water Authority
Kimberly O'Connell, UCSD Clean Water Utility
Joseph Randall for Kimberly Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Marisa Soriano, City of Chula Vista
Mark Seits, Floodplain Management Association
S. Wayne Rosenbaum for Michael McSweeney, Building Industry Association
Michelle Berens, Helix Water District
Mike Thornton and Chris Trees, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority
Patrick McDonough, San Diego Coastkeeper
Rob Hutsel for Phil Pryde, San Diego River Park Foundation
Kelly Craig for Robyn Badger, Zoological Society of San Diego
Ron Mosher, Sweetwater Authority
Sarah Pierce, San Diego Association of Governments
Sandra Jacobson, California Trout
Seval Sen, Padre Dam Municipal Water District
Beth Gentry for Yazmin Arellano, City of El Cajon

RWMG Staff and Consultants

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

Stephanie Gaines, County of San Diego
Rosalyn Prickett, Woodard & Curran

Interested Parties to the RAC

Anna Shepherd, Naval Base Coronado
Christopher Paulino, Viejas Tribal Government
Efren Lopez, San Diego County Water Authority
Gail Patton, San Diego County Water Authority
Heidi Brow, Pala Band of Mission Indians
Joni German, San Diego County Water Authority
Robert Leiter, American Planning Association / STAY COOL for Grandkids
Thomas Ciaramitaro, Viejas Tribal Government

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Elizabeth Lovsted, San Diego County Water Authority welcomed everyone to the first virtual RAC Meeting. This meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19. Ms. Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran reviewed the virtual meeting process including how to use the virtual controls and chat feature. The RAC congratulated Karina Danek on the birth of her son, Raphael Sol Glenn.

Future of San Diego IRWM – Summit Feedback

Ms. Stephanie Gaines, County of San Diego provided an overview of the IRWM Summit that was hosted in March. One of the activities during the Summit was to collect feedback on the future of the IRWM Program. During the Summit, attendees were asked what the San Diego IRWM Program should look like in the next four years. Feedback boards were divided into categories and attendees used stickers to prioritize ideas. Priorities were organized into five key themes:

1. Expand topics and activities
2. Engage with more entities and initiatives
3. Go beyond planning and funding
4. Increase funding-related support
5. Encourage changes at State level to improve funding and administration process

The first three themes were discussed in small breakout rooms and the last two themes will be discussed during the October RAC Meeting. The purpose of the discussion is to provide actionable recommendations for the RWMG to implement for the future of the San Diego IRWM Program. Key takeaways from the breakout rooms are discussed below.

Theme 1: Expand Topics and Activities

Include topics or activities such as:

- Regulatory Issues Forum and/or Panel with Regulators
 - Grey water, understanding recycled water orders, PFAS orders, MCLs
 - Regulatory updates to help reduce silos
 - Involve more regulatory agencies – regulatory plans must be well laid out to maintain project schedule
 - Lessons learned from lawyers to discuss past mistakes compliance
 - 401 Permitting

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- Climate Resilience
- Funding
 - Deeper dive into funding opportunities
 - Funding application support (walk through application process, especially environmental permitting)
- Alternative Compliance for Co-Permittees
- Creative Stormwater BMPs
- Collaborative Opportunities to learn from others including RAC Member highlights or speed dating sessions for NGOs
- Engaging NGOs
 - Encourage and Foster Partnerships
 - Partnerships to help with applying for/administering grants
 - Partnerships to engage with more people/demographics
 - Streamline permitting requirements
- IRWM Project Site Visits
 - Focus on ones that use multiple funding streams
 - Projects with climate resilience
 - Innovative water conservation projects
 - Virtual tours of funded projects
- Organizations to invite: Regional Board, DWR State Board Army Corps of Engineers, esp. on removing hydromodifications, District Engineer for San Diego and Regulatory agencies to discuss CEQA, permitting, environmental challenges

Theme 2: Engage with More Entities and Initiatives

- Find Commonality between RWMG members and SANDAG on Climate Change
- Incorporate SD Green Building Council's Living Building Challenge
- Speed dating to discuss assisting each other (see Engaging NGOs in Theme 1)
- Coordinate on IPR, Stormwater, and Water Quality. Learn from Measure W
- Water Resilience Portfolio/Regional Portfolio:
 - Regional Vision of Water Resilience - have series of speakers, develop vision
 - Water Authority has Regional Portfolio of Projects
 - Invite DWR to RAC to present Portfolio
 - Discuss possibilities and conflicts
 - Do all water use/augmentation folks have common understanding of problems?
 - How is State looking to implement portfolio in different regions?
 - What is applicable to San Diego region?
 - Blend Portfolio and IRWM principles
- Involve Tribes into Process
 - Incorporate what tribes doing with what region is doing
 - Invite Tribes to present at RAC
 - Invite all Tribes
 - Involve NAPEC, Councils, and Environmental Offices to disseminate information to Tribes
 - Region 9 Tribal Environmental Conference
- Non-traditional IRWM Stakeholders:
 - USFS, headwaters, forest groups
 - County Education Office
 - CPUC – water/energy

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- SGMA groups – relationship with conservation and recycling
- Land use agencies
- Sustainable Landscapes Program (Water Authority) – has existing relationships
- Use data to identify communities not engaging we should reach out to
- CalFire – resiliency related to GHG emissions, fuels reduction and water savings
- Landscape architecture community
- Elected officials

Theme 3: Go Beyond Planning and Funding

- Look at Regional Funding Needs
 - Grants and Regional Funding Strategy
- Lessons Learned on Low-Interest Loans
- Host Local Funding Workshops
- Host Grant Admin Workshop
- Look at Progress Made Towards IRWM Goals
- Coordinate/Partner with Private Sector
- Coordinate with Landscape Architects
- Use RAC Consulting Firms to Educate on Technical Advancements
- Collaborate with End Extinction San Diego
- Develop IRWM Website Infrastructure
- How our Projects Align with State Priorities
- Discussion with DWR re: future of IRWM (State views and RAC views)
- Cost-Benefit Analysis for Projects
- Look at LA One Water for knowledge sharing
- Climate Change:
 - Reach out to Tribes with Climate Change Adaptation Plans
 - Changes in Habitat and Agricultural Practices with Climate Change
 - Hear from Agriculture about Climate Change Impacts
 - Sea Level Rise and Groundwater Salinity
 - Small Systems Resiliency to Climate Change, including resources
 - Solidarity Farms – carbon sink, soil moisture/water retention projects
 - How can we help agencies with CAPs?
 - Impacts of climate change on regional supply – updates from previous presentation?
 - Partner with Scripps?
- Climate Change Data
- Conservation Legislation (SB 606 and AB 1668) Presentation

DAC/URC Support

Mr. Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority discussed underrepresented community project (URC) support in the San Diego IRWM Program. URC projects often face additional hurdles to planning, securing funding, implementation, and on-going maintenance. The San Diego IRWM Program would like to understand how to help URCs overcome this hurdle. The Project Selection Workgroup spent 35 hours discussing the Proposition 1, Round 1 project applications and only one of the seven projects were funded. Other projects were considered, but the Project Selection Workgroup ultimately decided that they didn't have the resources to follow through on the project. The RAC had a discussion in October 2019 on strategies to support URC projects in addition to discussions during the San Diego IRWM Summit.

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The San Diego IRWM Program has existing support for URC projects including the technical workshop on submitting projects to the project database (OPTI) and the Grant Administration Program team works with Local Project Sponsors for a successful grant process, administrative assistance, training and coordination. Partnerships to support URC projects are supported, and the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) disbursed funds to DACs and Tribes in Proposition 84 Rounds 1, 2, and 4 to 12 rural projects. We've been advocating for 100% advanced payment to expand from the current 50% provided by DWR.

Outcomes from the October 2019 RAC discussion highlighted additional challenges to URC support that included issues with contracting during grant awards, which can put real pressure on URCs. Compliance with DWR processes and urgent water quality/supply needs are not appropriate for IRWM, due to length of process. Suggestions to improve URC support include:

- Flexibility for URCs to use a programmatic scope in grant applications
- Provide joint feedback with other IRWM regions to advocate for changes at State
- Partnerships, such as fiscal partnership with larger NGOs
- Add an intermediary step in application process for URC projects to provide feedback prior to evaluation against other projects
- Involve regulators in pre-application discussions, or people knowledgeable about permitting to provide feedback/assistance.

To provide additional support, the San Diego IRWM program is offering seven virtual one-on-one URC working sessions to help URCs prepare for the next grant application. Organizations that have applied in the past to IRWM opportunities but may not have been successful will be targeted for this opportunity. Woodard & Curran will be developing a "Grants 101" presentation for future RAC meeting that will summarize some of the information discussed during the meeting. This is just one way we are trying to expand our support for URCs; if you are interested in requesting a workshop please email Mark Stadler (mstadler@sdewa.org) by August 19.

Questions/Comments:

- When RCAC supported URC projects during the IRWM rounds, there was one round that worked particularly well (either Round 1 or Round 2). The structure included a set aside for a certain dollar amount for coordination with URCs. Once the grant was awarded, we had available funds to put together a working stakeholder group to go out and work with URCs. We didn't start working with URCs until the finances were secured to work with URCs to put together projects to put forth to DWR. This worked so well because it was interactive and involved real-time engagement to put projects together rather than putting them together years in advance.
 - Yes, we were able to get DWR to approve those two grant awards without knowing how the money would be spent but in Round 4 it was no longer allowed. DWR required the identification of specific projects to fund to receive the grant award. Rural areas tend to sometimes change. If it is two years between proposing the project and getting funding there are some real changes. I agree, we need to convince DWR to provide more flexibility to meet URC needs.
- Kudos, the one-on-one sessions are a great idea and will hopefully help some of those projects get funding in the future.

WQIP Updates

Ms. Gaines provided an overview of the Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) reporting season. The WQIP could identify some environmental goals for their projects and look at the longer term goals to ensure there were no conflicting opportunities for engagement within different reserves. This is one of the requests we will be working on during the next two years of annual reporting. We will be reaching out to identify any state funded restoration projects you might have done to ensure they are in support of our mutual goals.

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The other item was the update for water agencies. This included coordination with water and sewer agencies on planning projects to pursue technical goals. There are some emergency maintenance flushes that occur from time to time. We are required to include an assessment in our watershed in a report of some of these events and identify where in the watershed these issues are likely occurring.

This is a heads up that while we are in reporting season, we are identifying the issues in different watersheds. We may be reaching out to different agencies for collaboration in our annual report.

Questions/Comments

- How will these updates be document in coordination with the water agencies, particularly in reuse? Some agencies span multiple jurisdiction or watersheds. How are you going to present the data?
 - I don't know for each watershed. Some of the responses we are collecting now are project based. One example is a dry-weather flow diversion project: for this project we would discuss how we are managing and maintaining the flows for load reductions. At the County, I think we are handling it at a project basis.
- How are we going to coordinate the wet weather flow? This is important for the Building Industry Association.
 - Wayne and Stephanie will discuss this offline.
 - Not sure if Coastkeeper is represented but this has been important to them. But, for example, can you capture stormwater and send it to the sewer? Can you augment supply and reduce the pollutant loads?
- Is there a schedule for the next updates of the 10 WQIPs?
 - No, we are waiting for the next iteration of the MS4 permit. There are no firm dates on that yet. This is high level. Without the permits we don't have a timeline. There are minor updates that are occurring in each watershed right now.
- My question pertains to climate resiliency issues. Will they be looked at in the next WQIP plans?
 - Minor findings or updates for climate resiliency? This is a very focused permit. That said, I don't know if there couldn't be some acknowledgement in the process of climate change issues. I cannot provide a definitive answer at this point.
- We support any efforts for coordination on potential capture and diversion of stormwater to sanitary sewer systems. Coastkeeper has been working hard discussing this with entities and copermittees. Would you like to discuss that offline?
 - Of course. A lot of this is going to happen over the next year. There may be some specific WQIP updates in those watersheds that we will respond to in that way.
- Will the WQIP comments be made public before adoptions?
 - Yes, they are going through the Conflict Resolution Committee.

State Update

Mr. Mark Stadler provided an overview of updates on the State's Water Resilience Portfolio. The Final Draft was released on July 28, 2020. The Water Resilience Portfolio is Governor Gavin Newsom's blueprint for equipping California to build a climate-resilient water system in the face of climate change, solicited in Executive Order N-10-19. We want to ensure the IRWM program is sustainable. The Portfolio initiative was

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presented at the August 2019 meeting and we submitted a comment letter in February 2020 following the release of the draft. The RWMG is currently reviewing the Portfolios 140+ actions.

Proposition 1 Implementation Grant

Ms. Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority provided updates on the Proposition 1, Round 1 Implementation grant. We have \$111.7 million awarded to the San Diego Region for 74 projects included the newly awarded Proposition 1, Round 1 Implementation Grant. The San Diego IRWM Region was fully funded for \$15.3 million dollars on June 26, 2020. The seven funded projects have up to 12 months to complete CEQA and permitting needed to begin construction.

Grant Administration

Ms. Burton presented updates on grant administration. In total, the San Diego IRWM Region has received \$111.7 million dollars, including the newly awarded projects in Proposition 1, Round 1. 64% of the award has been billed to DWR (\$70.8 million). Project highlights include the Safari Park Drought Response and Outreach and San Diego River Healthy Headwaters Restoration in Proposition 84, Round 4, which is scheduled to be complete in October 2022. In Proposition 1, Disadvantaged Community Involvement Round, the Storm Water Quality for Grape Day Park DACs was highlighted.

Now that the Proposition 1, Round 1 grant has officially been awarded, the Grant Administration Team is now working on the funding agreement with DWR. Next steps include a sub-funding agreement with Local Project Sponsors, a grantor kickoff meeting, and a grantee and LPS meeting and training.

Public Comments

None.

Summary and Next Steps

Ms. Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran presented a list of upcoming funding opportunities. They have been included in the table below.

Project Types	Deadline	Website
Prop 1 Technical Assistance Funding Program	Open: rolling	https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/proposition1/tech_asst_funding.html
USBR WaterSMART Drought Response Program – Drought Resiliency	August 5	https://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=70743
USBR Title XVI* *Authorized projects only	September 10	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view_opportunity.html?oppId=323197
USBR WaterSMART – Water and Energy Efficiency Grant	September 18	https://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=71343
USEPA – Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)	October 15	https://www.epa.gov/wifia

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Next RAC Meeting:

- October 7, 2020 – 9:00-11:30 a.m. via virtual platform, or SDCWA’s Board Room if applicable.