



Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #79

February 6, 2019

9:00 am – 11:30 am

**San Diego County Water Authority
Board Room**

**4677 Overland Ave., San Diego CA 92123
(858) 522-6600**

NOTES

Attendance

RAC Members

Lan Wiborg, City of San Diego (chair)
Ann Van Leer, Escondido Creek Conservancy
Bill Hunter, Santa Fe Irrigation District
Eric La Chappa, La Posta Band of Mission Indians
Julia Escamilla for Greg Thomas, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District
Jennifer Hazard, Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Joel San Juan, Alter Terra
John Flores, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians
Jonathan Witt, San Diego County Board of Education
Justin Gamble, City of Oceanside
Mark Stadler for Kelley Gage, San Diego County Water Authority
Ashkan Mozaffarian for Kimberly O'Connell, University of California – San Diego Clean Water Utility
Joseph Randall for Kimberly Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Laura Walsh, San Diego Region Climate Collaborative
Marisa Soriano, City of Chula Vista
Alex Yescas for Mark Seits, Floodplain Management Association
S. Wayne Rosenbaum for Michael McSweeney, Building Industry Association
Michelle Berens, Helix Water District
Mike Thornton, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority
Patrick McDonough, San Diego Coastkeeper
Yazmin Arellano, City of El Cajon
Phil Pryde and alternate Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Richard Whipple, County of San Diego
Robyn Badger, Zoological Society of San Diego

Ron Mosher, Sweetwater Authority
Sandra Jacobson, California Trout
Sarah Pierce, San Diego Association of Governments
Seval Sven, Padre Dam Municipal Water District

RWMG Staff and Consultants

Gail Patton, San Diego County Water Authority
Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority
Mark Stephens, County of San Diego
Nicole Poletto, Woodard & Curran
Ruth de la Rosa, County of San Diego
Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran
Sarah Brower, City of San Diego
Stephanie Gaines, County of San Diego

Interested Parties to the RAC

Aaron Cook, Fallbrook Public Utilities District
Alison Pau, University of California, San Diego
Brian Nemerow, City of Vista
Carlos Michelin, San Diego County Water Authority
Carmel Wong, City of San Diego
Daniel DuGal, Viejas Tribal Government
David Wells, City of San Diego
Deena Isa, City of San Diego
Elisa Marrone, City of Escondido
Hengameh Maher, City of San Diego
James Owen, NV5
Jessica Spurlock, Camp Pendleton
Joni German, San Diego County Water Authority
Katherine Sharp, Wood PLC
Lance Andersen, Mission RCD
Lori Johnson, Pauma Valley Water District
Mark Niemiec, Padre Dam Municipal Water District
Michelle Berens, Helix Water District
Sylvia Solis Daniels, City of Vista

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Lan Wiborg, City of San Diego, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the room. Ms. Wiborg introduced and welcomed the 2019-2022 incoming RAC members.

RAC Attendance Report

Mr. Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA), reminded RAC members about the RAC Attendance Policy. The RAC Charter requires an annual report to the RAC on attendance. There are only two unexcused absences allowed per calendar year. If a conflict arises, a RAC member can

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send an alternate or designated representative in their stead. If an alternate attends, the meeting does not count as an absence. RAC members may name a replacement mid-term if unable to fulfill duties. There are four mid-year replacements starting in 2019.

Two positions are in non-compliance with the attendance policy. Previous members either resigned or did not want to name a mid-term replacement. This has left two open positions needing replacements on the RAC. The two open positions are the agriculture representative and a representative from an NGO in water conservation. The workgroup has received a recommendation for Lance Andersen to fill the agriculture position.

RAC discussion on recommendations for either seat was encouraged. Recommendations will be accepted and forwarded to the RAC Membership Workgroup. The Workgroup will review and forward to the RWMG.

Questions/Comments:

- Has anyone from Cuyamaca Conservation Garden served on the RAC before? We have not received an official recommendation.
 - No, they have not but you are welcome to submit a recommendation for the Water Conservation (NGO) seat.
- What is the process for discussion on names to recommend?
 - If there is consensus on names, then the Workgroup will contact them to ask if they are willing to accept a recommendation to join the RAC.
- Motion for Mark to reach out to the Cuyamaca Conservation Garden to become a RAC member.
- I am concerned about the process for recommending RAC members. I would prefer that we advertise that there are open seats as opposed to hand picking who the next member would be. This lends to more transparency in our policy. We need to say that we have an opening, interested stakeholders can apply, and the RAC will consider the candidates.
 - The current process for selecting RAC members is that names are forwarded to the Workgroup, who forwards them to the RWMG. The RWMG selects the RAC members and then tells the RAC.
- Was this position forwarded to the Workgroup?
 - No, it was not originally advertised when the 2019-2022 RAC application opened because they were not open at the time. These seats opened due to previous members failing to meet the attendance policy criteria.
- If we have a procedure, we need to follow the procedure consistently to make sure we don't get into trouble.
 - We have time to advertise for both positions if we also want to open up the Agriculture position outside of Lance Andersen.
- Question for RWMG to clarify what is being put in front of the RAC.
 - We found two positions are open because of the attendance policy.

Motion to approve recommendations from the RAC about the two vacant positions. This includes a stakeholder list email announcement and advertising the positions on the SDIRWM website.

Yes votes: 23

Project Completion Report

Ms. Jennifer Hazard, Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and James Owen, NV5 presented the Project Completion Report for Phase 1 of the Rural Disadvantaged Community Partnership Program. This project was awarded funding during the Prop 84 grant cycle. The purpose of the project was to reduce potential for high public health risks in water and/or wastewater systems and to provide funding to address water supply and water quality issues affecting rural DACs and tribal communities.

In the original grant proposal, RCAC led a project selection group to disperse Prop 84 funding to selected DACs while providing project oversight and technical assistance. The project ran into challenges with the state requirements that were deemed to not be tribal friendly. Revisions to Scopes of Work were needed but there was a lengthy approval process and reimbursement turn-around time for each needed amendment, causing the project to run overbudget and behind schedule. Ms. Hazard took this opportunity to suggest a monthly LPS regional water management group team call. Monthly meetings with the funder would help address the delays experienced with the approval process for an amendment or reimbursement turn-around time.

Two projects were completed within this program: 1) La Jolla Reservation (Poomacha) Potable Water Pipeline Replacement Project and 2) Quiet Oaks Mobile Home Park Nitrate Study Project. The La Jolla Reservation potable water replacement consisted of water main replacements to 6-inch PVC in two locations. The Quiet Oaks Mobile Home Park is a public water system that provides potable water to approximately 35 service connections that has documented exceeding, recurring nitrate exceedances since 2011. Due to shallow bedrock, deeper wells are not an option and the study concluded that well redevelopment is needed as treatment is not ideal.

Questions/Comments:

- The next best option, although not ideal, is nitrate treatment for the Quiet Oaks Mobile Home Park Study. What type of treatment would be used?
 - Ion exchange treatment may be the treatment that would be result if a well cannot be dug deep enough
- Well development is the right way to go. If you must go the treatment route, it would be helpful to reach out to the engineering community because there might be a number of firms that would see the work as pro-bono. They are in a unique position where they have several limitations and it would be helpful to connect people with opportunity and need.
 - We are working with a Merl Johnson, a pro-bono operator on the project. The project was also previously put out to bid and won by James Owen with NV5, an engineering firm.
- This is the first of three funded RCAC projects that is an umbrella program with multiple, smaller projects within it. The RWMG and the RAC realized that the process for applying for IRWM funds and administering and managing the grant can be difficult. The state asks for a lot of information which some of the smaller, rural, disadvantaged communities struggle with. The goal of RCAC's project was to secure a grant award and then administer those funds to smaller, rural disadvantaged community projects.
- Jennifer, what is a high-level lesson learned?

- In smaller communities, projects change. People change, the scope changes, the Board changes and then decides they no longer want to consolidate and want a treatment project. Meanwhile, the number of projects also grows with each round of funding. More flexible work plans are needed in these umbrella programs. Each slight change to the work plan requires an amendment with DWR, which takes 6 months.
- DWR has visited the RAC in the past and specifically asked how they can support local projects and needs. The RAC would like to connect Jennifer to DWR representatives to provide them with first-hand experience of the challenges faced in rural communities to request more flexible work plans.
 - That would be great, I would appreciate that opportunity. Thanks.
- This is a similar challenge to one our project experienced several years ago. Habitat restoration projects are prone to changes in scope as well. Things change between the time you write a proposal and when grants are awarded. We may want to expand that flexible process to more projects.
 - When we first applied for funding the project contained 10 community water systems, 2-3 of which had “do not drink” orders. After they had waited 2-3 years for funding to be available, the projects had changed.
- RCAC has helped us with a few projects. Before we applied for RCAC funding, we applied for pre-planning dollars which may be what other small communities need so they know what project to do and how to do it. Otherwise you end up with a lot of amendments and changes in the projects. Smaller/rural communities needs pre-planning dollars.

Water Needs Assessment Update

Ms. Sarah Brower, City of San Diego gave an update on the status of the Water Needs Assessment. The Water Needs Assessment will be incorporated into the 2019 IRWM Plan that will be submitted to DWR. The public draft is anticipated March 2019. Ms. Brower gave an overview of the topics covered within the report as well as an assessment of outreach methods and “barriers to involvement.” Key issues identified in the San Diego IRWM Region covered topics of drinking water quality, water supply and storage, wastewater, stormwater, and flooding. When asked about beneficial projects in the Region, DAC stakeholders noted water recycling and water supply projects as being particularly beneficial.

Questions/Comments:

- One issue identified under “Water Supply and Storage” is the threat to undeveloped resources. What is meant by this?
 - One question in the questionnaire asked if stakeholders were concerned about climate change. This statement primarily refers to the threat to water resources in the face of climate change, especially as it relates to groundwater.

Proposition 1 Round 1

Ms. Stephanie Gaines, County of San Diego provided an overview of the Round 1 Implementation Grant schedule and led the scoring workshop. The project scoring was approved by the RAC at the November 7, 2018 meeting and was used to numerically score and rank project submitted to the online database by a third party. All 15 projects submitted to the database have been scored and ranked, with

a total grant request totaling \$62.4 million. The maximum amount of grant dollars available to the San Diego IRWM Region in this round of funding is approximately \$15.4 million is the maximum amount of grant dollars available in this round of funding. Ms. Gaines requested the RAC's input on a range of total projects to fund given the restriction of available funds.

Questions/Comments:

- In the past, the projects have been broken into two tiers. It now looks like the job [*of the Project Selection Workgroup*] has become more difficult because the tiering has not been completed like it has been in the past.
 - If the RAC prefers that the projects are tiered into a first and second tier, then we can do that.
- We went through a lot of work to determine a scoring method. Is this the best method to score applicants? We developed the mechanism and since we've gone this way then we need to stick with it. If we can only afford to fund is one project because it got the highest score, then we need to stick with that.
 - This is just the first step of the selection process. The Project Selection Workgroup (PSW) looks at the scores and truths them to confirm that none of the benefits have been exaggerated.
 - The PSW rarely gives a project exactly what they ask for in terms of grant dollars requested.
- Phase 1 of the 2019 IRWM Plan is clear on the tiering process. I am not sure why we are looking at a list that hasn't been tiered already. Throwing that step out is a disservice to the entire scoring process.
- In the past, the PSW has put together a suite of projects that represents the Region's needs. I strongly support the decision to keep all of the projects in Tier 1 and move forward with the selection process with the full list as the group has done before. Typically, a larger volume of projects applies and approximately 15 projects are in Tier 1. Since there were only 15 projects that applied for funding, the PSW should be able to move forward with this amount as they have done it in the past.
- Comment and request to the PSW: The PSW should vet this list and make sure that all of the scores are correct. There are a lot of 4's in the "DAC communities" category. In order to receive this score, a project should be 100% invested in DAC community water systems not just overall disadvantaged communities. The San Diego Community Airport in particular may be not be truly investing in disadvantaged community systems.
- To echo a previous comment, we are trying to get a suite of projects to accomplish goals for the entire Region. This discussion began with the question of how many projects should be funded. It seems like the RAC should be focused on the suite of projects to fund with the \$15.4 million and not the exact number of projects to fund. Deciding a number would unnecessarily limit what is best for the region.
 - In the past we've limited the number of applications due to the administrative burden to manage the grants. We are looking for a range of projects to fund regardless of whether the projects are tiered.
- Are applications rescored after being vetted?
 - All comments are considered but projects are not re-scored.

- Can you define tiering? What is Tier 1 and Tier 2
 - Projects are divided into two tiers based on scores. The top 50% are considered for funding and not the bottom 50%. Each caucus in the PSW can nominate one project to move from Tier 2 to Tier 1 for further consideration by the PSW.
- The goal is to have the projects completed at some point. If we only partially fund one project, are they going to be able to complete it?
 - We don't negotiate a grant award with the applicants. They are told how much of their grant ask will be included in the Region's IRWM grant application.
- Fixing on a number of projects to fund at this time is not helpful to the process. In order to settle the discussion let's conclude that a targeted number or a range of projects is not necessary in this time.
 - It is helpful for the PSW to have guidance from the RAC for a range of projects.
- If we have a process, we should not deviate from it. That puts the process and the RAC up to scrutiny. If we want to have a system where we do not tier the projects, then that should be decided before the Call for Projects. Historically, projects have been tiered. Now, everyone is biased while making this decision. Tier 2 projects have the option to comment to the RAC and say that they believe their project has been mis-scored.
- Previous questions revealed that a few of the projects will be ultimately funded. It is an interesting point that applicants will take less than what their grant request. Do you need to know how much money each applicant is willing to accept in order to determine how many projects you can fund? Or do you do that in the reverse order?
 - It is an organic process. The PSW discusses each of the projects at length to ensure that their claims are valid. Then they begin informal lists about which projects should be recommended for funding and analyze the grant requests. Upon a decision, the project sponsor is contacted to let them know their project is being considered for funding but we may offer them \$3 million instead of \$8 million, for example. Project sponsors in the past have very rarely said no.
- What was causing the need for the Tier 1 and the Tier 2 process. Was it the number of projects?
 - Yes, typically we have more project submit for consideration. However, in Round 3 all submitted projects were considered, as well as in the DACI round, which had 22 projects submitted.
 - We want to respect the process. In some past rounds we have chosen to consider all of the projects. The RWMG recommendation to look at all 15 projects was just a recommendation. If the RAC wants to tier projects, then we can do that. The RWMG also requested a range of projects to consider for funding because it helps the PSW understand the approximate number of projects to put in the suite.
- Are we unwittingly creating bias in this suite of projects due to the water or offsets potable demand scoring criteria? The projects that scored low in Tier 2 received 0-1 points in this category.
 - We will vet the scores in the PSW.
- Will there be any changes to the scoring presented to this group?
 - We don't change the scoring. Vetting the scores is part of the process and why the PSW has reserved 6 full-day meetings to finalize a suite of projects.

- The PSW will enter the workshop with draft guidelines. Final guidelines won't be received until early March. The RWMG will be tasked to make sure that the PSW will be in full alignment with the project guidelines.

Motion to maintain the process for 2 tiers. Tier 1 contains 8 projects, Tier 2 contains 7 projects. The tiering will be conducted on the scores without the proofing. There is an allowance that any project that feels they were not ranked properly should be resurrected. The PSW should consider a range of 4-7 projects to fund.

Yes votes: 24

Public Comments on Scoring Sheet:

- City of Vista: South Santa Fe Green Street Project
 - “Creates new or applied water or offsets potable demand” – offsets potable demand and irrigation systems through a vessel system.
 - “Enhance infrastructure” – South Santa Fe corridor is adjacent to surrounding communities and will create a reputable model that can be reviewed throughout the region.
- City of San Diego: North City Pure Water Facility and Pump Station
 - “Spans multiple watersheds” – Project will provide water to the Penasquitos and San Dieguito watersheds.
 - “Investment in DAC” – Program provides significant education and outreach to DAC communities and has been doing so since 2011. Project would be constructed in 2023.
- Pauma Valley Water Company: Annexation to Yuima MWD
 - 100% DAC community consisting of retirees and Hispanic/Latino community. Their project will benefit the community water project.
 - “Enhance infrastructure” score is low – entire infrastructure will be renovated if they are able to annex to Yuima MWD.
 - Completed phase 1 of the planning grant and NV5 looked at alternatives. This project is alternative #1
 - No other source of water in their community. The health department has threatened to close down the only restaurant in their community. They are getting their water from contaminated reservoirs and inadequate wells. This project is needed.
 - Concern that due to inexperience as a grant writer the project scored very low.
 - PVWC is a small water company with an inexperienced board. They need to be turned over to a municipal water district that can provide the community safe, potable water.
- Pauma Valley Water Company was an approved project in Round 2 of Prop 84. They had many work plan changes and although the project was approved, they were not ready to complete a project by June 2019.
- How are the projects scored?
 - This is an initial first stab. The third-party scorer only took the words written in the OPTI database into consideration and did not do any additional research. She works in Upper Santa Margarita Watershed IRWM Region and is familiar with the process. She takes the information provided in the database entries and looks at scoring criteria, and

does a basic level of vetting but relies mostly on the information submitted to the database. PSW ground truths the scores with a deeper understanding of the region.

- Speaking on behalf of National City: Paradise Valley Creek Water Quality and Community project as they could not attend
 - “Creates new or applied water or offsets potable demand”– Project will have a stormwater retention basin where a certain amount of water is expected to infiltrate into the Sweetwater basin.
 - This project was funded in the DAC 1 Planning Phase. With this grant the city has completed most of the tasks. CEQA is complete and environmental permits are in process of being negotiated. The drawing and specifications have been complete. This project is shovel ready. It is 100% located in a DAC community. Will affect 16 properties in a FEMA hazard area saving them approximately \$20,000/year in having to purchase flood insurance where combined household income is less than \$40,000/year.
 - Community is completely involved in this project. One of the few undeveloped properties in the City of National City and they’ve been making sure to restore it as a flood mitigation project. The city has been engaged with IRWM in the past and would like to continue the engagement in the future.
 - Have not seen participation from many of these entities on the scoring list before. We should be funding projects like this instead where we see immediate benefits to the community.
- Zoological Society of San Diego: Safari Park Water Reuse Sustainability and Watershed Protection Project
 - “Creates new or applied water or offsets potable demand”– Uses stormwater as a resource.

Grant Administration

Ms. Loisa Burton, SDCWA, presented updates on grant administration. In total, the San Diego IRWM Region has received \$96.4 million dollars and 60% of that has been billed to DWR. A significant milestone for the statewide workgroup that Ms. Burton has been participating in on behalf of the San Diego IRWM Region was the changed project completion reporting requirement. Rather than submitting reports to DWR for 10 years after the completion of a project, the State only requires 3 years. This is something that the statewide workgroup has been advocating for and is the first accomplishment out of the workgroup. This requirement change is retroactive. All projects that have already met the 3-year reporting requirement are now complete. Ms. Burton encouraged everyone to keep submitting comments that she can advocate for in the state workgroup.

Public Comments

- No additional comments

Summary and Next Steps

Ms. Sally Johnson, Woodard & Curran, presented a list of upcoming funding opportunities. They have been included in the table below. Round 2 of the Stormwater Grant Program is now expected to be released in late summer of 2019. The USBR program has experienced delays due to the federal government shutdown, but the Drought Resiliency grant program was just released. Be sure to check your emails for additional funding opportunities.

Project Types	Deadline	Website
SWRCB Prop 1 Storm Water Grant Program		
Stormwater Grant Program	Summer 2019 (anticipated)	https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/swgp/prop1/
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation		
Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant	January 31	https://www.nfwf.org/fivestar/Pages/2019rfp.aspx
US Bureau of Reclamation		
Drought Resiliency Projects	March 27	https://www.usbr.gov/drought/projects.html
Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects Grant	April 24	https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/swep/index.html
Title XVI/WIIN Grants	TBD – Winter 2019	https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/title/
Water and Energy Efficiency Grants		https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/index.html
Water Marketing Strategy Grants		https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/watermarketing/index.html
Desalination Construction		https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/desalination/index.html
State Coastal Conservancy		
Proposition 1 Grant	April 30	http://scc.ca.gov/grants/proposition-1-grants/
California Ocean Protection Council		
Proposition 1, Round 3 Grant	March 18	http://www.opc.ca.gov/2015/05/prop1/

Next RAC Meeting:

- April 3, 2019 – 9:00-11:30 a.m. at SDCWA's Board Room