

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background – San Diego Region Functionally Equivalent Storm Water Resource Plan

This Storm Water Resource Plan is based on the State Water Resources Control Board Guidelines adopted December 15, 2015.

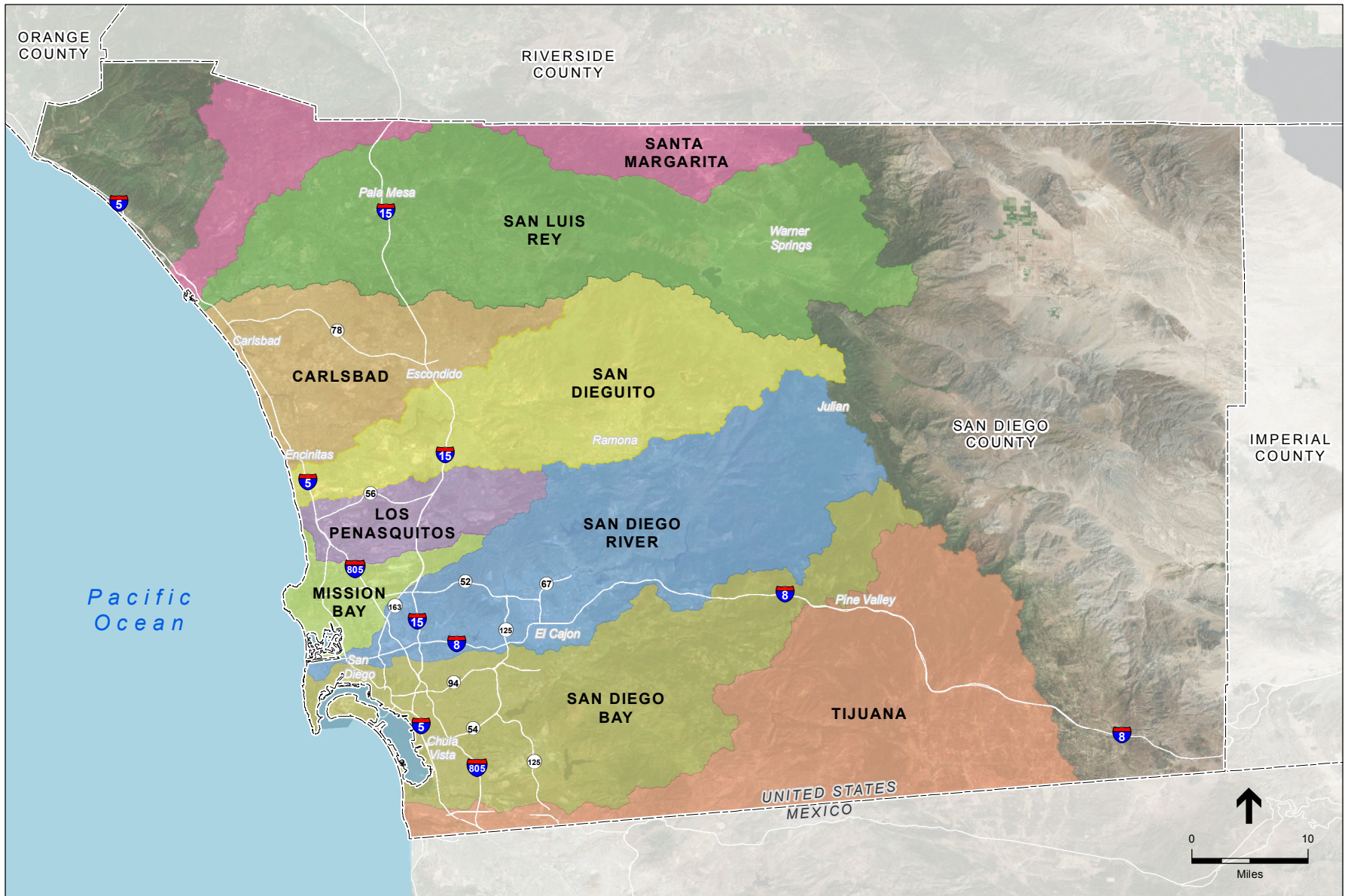
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/swgp/docs/prop1/swrp_finalguidelines_dec2015.pdf

On August 28, 2014, the California State Legislature passed SB 985, amending the Stormwater Resource Planning Act (Act). The Act requires regions to develop SWRPs in order to assist in developing multi-benefit storm water management solutions. The Act also requires public agencies to develop a SWRP in order to be eligible to receive grants for storm water and dry weather

runoff capture projects from bond acts approved by voters after January 1, 2014. SWRPs are required to quantitatively list and prioritize projects designed to capture storm water for potential future use. Eligible projects must provide multiple benefits to maximize water supply, water quality, environmental, and other community benefits, as well as reduce the pollution storm water carries to receiving water bodies to assist agencies with compliance with applicable MS4 permits and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

SB 985 required the (SWRCB to promulgate guidance for compliance with the Act by July 1, 2016. The draft SWRP Guidelines were released for public comment and review in August 2015, and were brought to SWRCB for adoption in December 2015. The Guidelines serve as a blueprint for SWRCB and other bond-fund-dispensing agencies to use in determining whether an adequate SWRP has been prepared prior to the granting of funds for storm water and dry weather runoff capture projects. SWRCB adopted the Guidelines, which are the basis for the development of this SWRP, on December 15, 2015.

The County of San Diego and the San Diego MS4 Copermittees have prepared this SWRP, which includes nine of the WMAs within the county, shown in Figure 1-1. This SWRP approach allows for consistency across the region with project evaluation criteria, prioritization, metrics, and measurement methods for success described in the Guidelines. The SWRP includes WMA-specific sections that allow for presentation of watershed-specific information, determination of priority projects using the regional criteria and methods on a WMA level, and presentation of WMA-specific partners, community outreach efforts, and plan implementation and strategies.



SOURCE: ESRI, 2016; SanGIS, 2016

SWRP . 160618

Figure 1-1

Watershed Management Areas Covered Under the San Diego Region SWRP

1.2 Purpose and Objective of the SWRP

The purpose of this SWRP is to provide the tools and guidance to support the region in developing multi-benefit storm water or dry weather runoff projects to achieve watershed and regional planning goals. This SWRP provides eligible project sponsors the tools to submit multi-benefit projects for integrated analysis, prioritization, and listing in the SWRP, which will aid in regional planning and allow the projects to be eligible for grant funding under Proposition 1. These analysis and prioritization tools are not meant to exclude projects but rather to assist in developing projects that enhance utilization of storm water as a resource to achieve regional and watershed goals more effectively and to have a greater opportunity for funding. *The objective of the SWRP is therefore to identify and prioritize projects to “bring to the top” those multi-benefit projects that can best meet the identified priorities and goals on a watershed basis, and which will also be more competitive for statewide grant funding.*

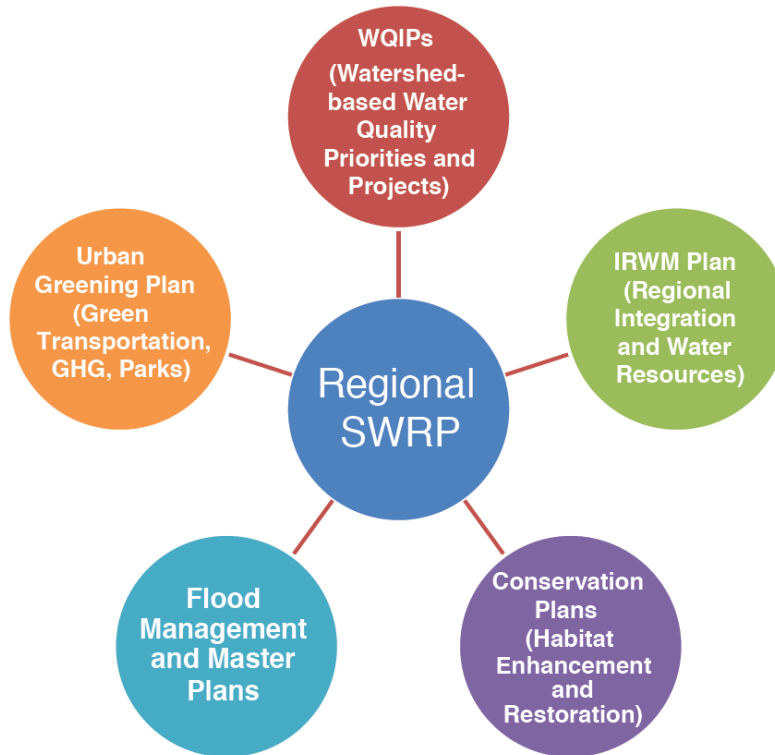
This SWRP is not a compliance plan. It is a planning document prepared in accordance with the SWRP Guidelines to be a valuable regional storm water planning document and to meet requirements for application of projects in the region for State grant funding under Proposition 1. The integrated analysis and prioritization tools (Chapter 5) follow the SWRP Guidelines.

1.3 Functional Equivalency Provided by Regional and Watershed Plans

Per the adopted Guidelines, a plan meeting the provisions of the California Water Code need not be referred to as a “Storm Water Resource Plan.” An existing planning document or a collection of existing documents and local ordinances may be utilized as a “functionally equivalent Plan”, including but not limited to watershed management plans, integrated resource plans, urban water management plans, green infrastructure plans, water quality improvement plans, salt and nutrient management plans, TMDL implementation plans, or similar plans that include storm water and dry weather runoff capture and use as a component of the watershed goals and objectives. The watershed approach is essential to integrate storm water management with other basic aspects of aquatic resource protection and overall water management, including flood control, water supply, and habitat conservation. If an individual planning document does not meet the standards of the California Water Code, a collection of local plans and ordinances and regional plans may constitute a functional equivalent, if the plans and ordinances collectively meet all of the requirements of California Water Code section 10560 et seq. (see Checklist and Self-Certification in Appendix A of the Guidelines).

Watershed and regional plans have been developed that identify opportunities, strategies, and priority conditions and goals for water quality, water resources, flood management, community, and natural resource benefits within San Diego County. These existing plans, shown in Figure 1-2, have been used to develop this functionally equivalent SWRP. Each of the regional and watershed plans addresses one or more of the five key benefits in accordance with the Guidelines: water quality, water resources, environment, flood risk, and community. Section 5.1 provides references and descriptions of these existing planning documents.

The documents used most extensively in this SWRP are the WQIPs developed by the San Diego County Copermittees for each WMA (see Reference Section for specific WMA WQIPs). The WQIPs identify the water quality priorities and strategies to meet water quality goals and compliance targets on a watershed basis. The WQIPs are used to address the SWRP Guidelines for Watershed Identification (Section VI.A) and Water Quality Compliance (Section V). Required watershed information is also based on the San Diego IRWM Plan (RWMG, 2013) and the Copermittees’ Annual Monitoring Reports (Weston, 2009, 2010). Watershed Management Plans, where applicable, have also been used to develop this document. Jurisdictional planning documents for flood management, capital improvement projects, community development and recreational opportunities, and greenhouse gas/climate action plans also provide a foundation for this SWRP in identifying goals, strategies, and opportunities that can form the basis for multi-benefit projects. Section 5.1 describes each of these types of documents in further detail. Section 4.1 and Figure 4-1 show how the different plans are related.



SWRP . 160618

Figure 1-2
Functionally Equivalent SWRP –
Builds on Existing and Future Watershed and Regional Plans

1.4 Identification of Projects

Projects listed in the SWRP are developed and prioritized through existing regional and watershed-based plans that have defined water quality and water resource goals, strategies, and timelines. Key elements of these projects include storm water and dry weather flow water quality and beneficial use, as well as benefits that address flood, environmental, and community goals. A goal of the SWRP is to identify opportunities to enhance utilization of storm water as a resource. The San Diego Region has been successful in collecting and using storm water for water supply in reservoirs located in the upper elevations of several WMAs. In the lower, more urbanized portions of the WMAs, there tend to be limited groundwater aquifers and low permeability soils, which have less opportunity for beneficial use of storm water.

As this is a functionally equivalent SWRP that builds on existing regional and watershed plans, project identification and development is completed through existing and ongoing planning efforts and documents, such as WQIPs, the IRWM Plan, and others. Some related planning efforts and documents include the following:

- Regional best management practices (BMPs) and green infrastructure strategies and projects have been identified through the preparation of the WQIPs.
- The Watershed Management Area Analysis (WMAA; see Reference Section for specific WMA WMAAs) conducted for several watersheds in the region has further analyzed opportunities for multi-benefit water quality projects.
- The IRWM Plan has identified water resource goals and multi-benefit projects to address issues such as local water supply augmentation, water quality, flooding, and conservation.
- Flood risk management and master plans that have been developed in the region on a jurisdictional level provide identification of flood management projects that may also have multiple benefits.
- Regional and local conservation and restoration plans, including the Multi-Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) and Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP), have been developed to identify creek and wetland restoration and enhancement projects.
- Community planning documents, including master plans and jurisdictional Climate Action Plans, have identified opportunities for urban greening projects.

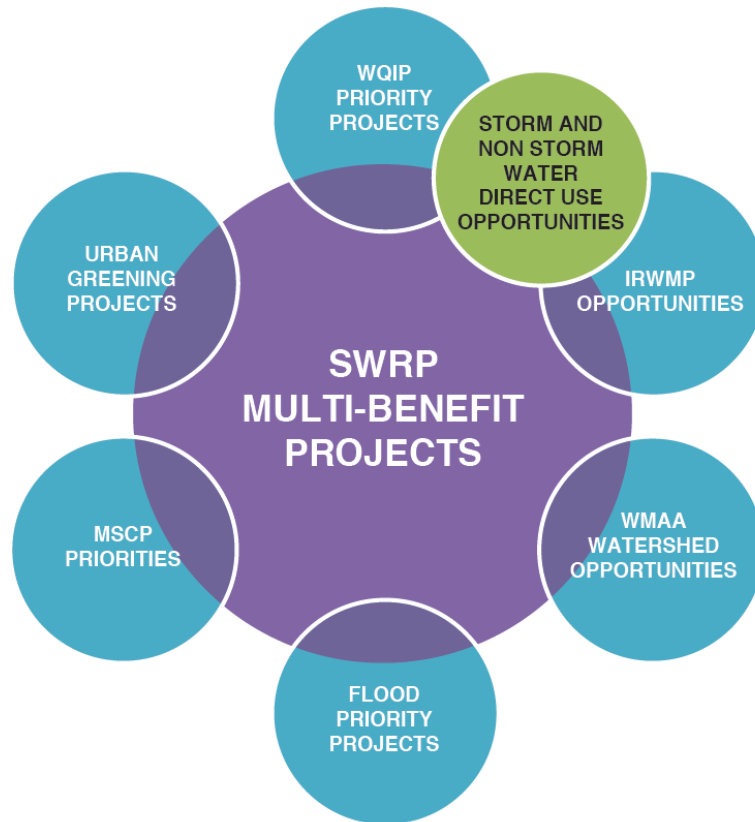
By bringing these plans together as part of this functionally equivalent SWRP, this plan provides the tools for project sponsors to work regionally and on a watershed basis to better integrate storm water projects that provide multiple benefits more effectively. This may include the integration of storm water water quality strategies with creek and wetland restoration projects to meet natural resource protection needs, flood management, and water quality goals identified in these watershed and regional plans. This integration is achieved through the project integrated analysis and prioritization tools for listing in this SWRP, presented in Chapter 5.

The goal of this SWRP is to provide tools and guidance for improved collaboration and integration between existing regional planning efforts and multi-benefit storm water and dry

weather flow water quality and beneficial use projects that are competitive for statewide funding. Figure 1-3 illustrates the regional and watershed plans that provide the project identification and prioritization process for the SWRP. For example, a storm water water quality project prioritized in a WQIP could provide greater watershed benefits by incorporating a prioritized community benefit that was identified in a community greening plan. As highlighted in the graphic, the main benefit area that is not fully addressed in existing plans is water supply provided by storm water and dry weather flow capture and beneficial use. The project identification and prioritization process for this main benefit is addressed in Section 5.2 through an assessment of public parcels and identification of storm water and dry weather flow capture and beneficial use opportunities.

The identification and analysis of projects under this SWRP are not driven by specific grant solicitations and calls for projects. Projects are identified through existing, updated, and future planning documents that have specific goals and timelines to meet watershed-based goals and implementation strategies. Projects that are assessed and listed on the SWRP online database (OPTI) can be updated to improve ranking through collaborative efforts between these plans to achieve additional and greater benefits. As projects are further developed through planning and design activities, updates to the projects can be made online to increase the project's ranking through the determination of project metrics that quantify the benefits achieved.

The SWRP Guidelines allow for submittal and listing of programmatic projects related to storm water and dry weather runoff. Programmatic projects may include multiple individual projects that have similar goals, elements, and benefits. Examples of programmatic projects include the implementation of a set of green street projects over several years within a high priority hydrologic area, which achieve similar water quality, flood management, and community benefits, and are identified in watershed management area WQIP implementation strategies. This type of green infrastructure project can be submitted as one programmatic project for inclusion on the SWRP list. Another example of a programmatic project is the implementation of a dry weather diversion for beneficial use to address water quality and habitat impact in a coastal lagoon along with measures in the watershed to reduce dry weather flows such as incentivizing turf replacement, installation of drip irrigation, and drought-tolerant landscaping for residential and commercial properties. This programmatic project has water quality and water resources as key elements, but also has multiple benefits that include water conservation and habitat restoration. A programmatic water quality and conservation project can be submitted though a single checklist for inclusion and scoring as a programmatic project on the SWRP project list.



SWRP . 160618

Figure 1-3

Project Identification: Existing Watershed and Regional Plans for Storm Water and Dry Weather Flow Capture and Beneficial Use Opportunities

1.5 SWRP Project Listing and Grant Funding Opportunities

This SWRP has been structured to ensure it remains current and functions as an ongoing planning tool for the identification and development of multi-benefit projects. This is achieved by a process to identify, assess, prioritize, and list multi-benefit projects that can be updated through an online tool. This process is outlined in Figure 1-4, which shows that the current list of projects that have been assessed and prioritized in this SWRP is focused on projects for Rounds 1 and 2 of SWRCB storm water grant funding. (The Round 2 solicitation is expected in Spring 2018.) The project list will be continually updated using the online regional project integrated analysis and prioritization tool that is presented in more detail in Chapter 5.

As grant solicitations through Proposition 1 are announced, project sponsors will need to check specific project eligibility and grant application requirements. The SWRP project checklist specifically addresses the SWRP Guidelines, which covers storm water capture projects, IRWM projects, and conservation projects with water quality elements. Additional project information is

generally required in grant-specific applications. Submission of grant applications is the responsibility of the grant sponsor. The County of San Diego and Copermittees are not responsible for preparing specific grant applications or completing the online checklist for a project unless they are the project sponsor. The County of San Diego and Copermittees are also not responsible for selecting projects for inclusion on the SWRP list. Announcements for new grant solicitations and calls for projects will be done through the existing IRWM stakeholder process. Instructions will be provided in the calls for projects to complete the online SWRP project checklist that will score and list projects in the online project database¹. The submittal of projects under this SWRP should not be driven by specific grant solicitations and calls for projects, rather through the existing, updated, and future planning documents, which have specific goals and timelines to meet watershed-based goals and implementation strategies. Projects can be entered or updated in the SWRP online database at any time.

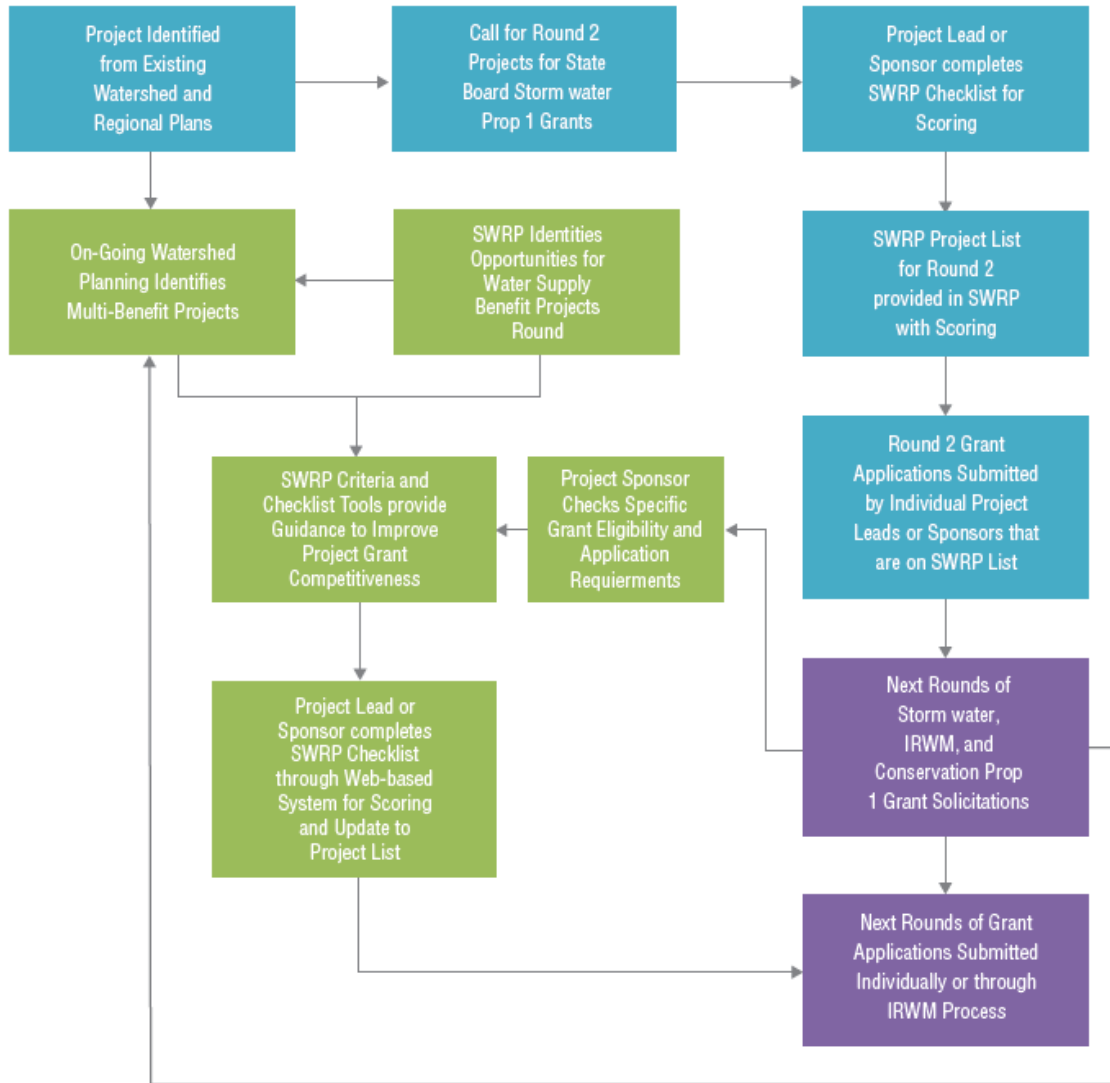
Proposition 1 funds for multi-benefit storm water projects will be available through two solicitations or “rounds” of funding. Approximately \$80 million of Proposition 1 funds were available to fund implementation projects during the first solicitation (Round 1) and were awarded in December 2016. An additional approximately \$86 million will be available to fund implementation projects during the second solicitation (Round 2) and will likely be solicited in Spring 2018. Preparation of this SWRP was initiated to identify and prioritize projects within the region for Rounds 1 and 2.

Other future funding opportunities include future rounds of SWRP funding for individual applicants, funding through the IRWM, and conservation agency funding for projects that have water quality or storm water capture elements.

As future projects (those not included in the Rounds 1 and 2 project list) are identified and developed through existing, updated, and new watershed and regional planning documents, the project sponsors will complete the project checklist using the online system. The projects will then undergo assessment, scoring, and inclusion in an updated project list. This SWRP is, therefore, adaptive to updates and modifications to watershed and regional goals in existing and new planning documents through the online process established for this SWRP.

This SWRP is integrated into the IRWM Plan through the adoption of the SWRP by the IRWM governing body (the RWMG). The online SWRP project checklist and listing tool is part of the IRWM regional project database. Calls for projects for future grant SWRP-related solicitations will be done through IRWM outreach efforts.

¹ The database is available at <http://irwm.rmcwater.com/sd/login.php>.



SWRP . 160618

Figure 1-4
 Process for Current and Future Project Submittal for SWRP Listing and SWRP Checklist Updates

1.6 Consistency with other Plans and Policies (Section V: Standard Provisions)

Beyond the criteria and metrics of the prioritization process, project sponsors are responsible for ensuring that the projects submitted, assessed, scored, and listed in the SWRP using the online checklist comply with the applicable requirements of the following:

- Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act,
- Consistency with applicable permits (e.g., National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, waste discharge requirements, Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) Compliance Plans),
- Consistency with California Health and Safety Code regarding pest and mosquito abatement,
- Consistency with the Clean Water Act sections 401 and 404 and any other federal or state laws, regulations, and permits regarding modification of a river or stream channel, and
- Project monitoring per the SWRP Guidelines.

As discussed in Chapter 4, this SWRP is consistent with water quality control plans, applicable water quality control policies, and water rights. Chapter 2 discusses the process for submission and incorporation of the SWRP into the IRWM Plan.

1.7 SWRP Sections, Checklist, and Certification

The SWRP chapters and corresponding sections of the SWRP Guidelines are as follows:

SWRP Chapter	SWRP Guideline Section
Chapter 1: Introduction	Section V
Chapter 2: Coordination and Outreach	Section VI.B and Section VI.F
Chapter 3: Watershed Identification	Section VI.A
Chapter 4: Water Quality Compliance	Section V
Chapter 5: Quantitative Methods and Identification of Prioritization of Projects	Section VI.C and Section VI.D
Chapter 6: Implementation Strategy and Schedule	Section VI.E
Chapter 7: Process for Plan Updates, Program Assessment and Adaptive Management	Section VI.E

Information on where specific elements of the SWRP Guidelines are presented in this document, or in plans that compose this functionally equivalent SWRP, is provided in the plan checklist in Appendix A. The Appendix A checklist lists each of the elements in the SWRP per the California Water Code and the sections of the applicable plan that address each element. The Appendix A checklist has been certified by the County of San Diego for the San Diego Copermittees, which means that the County of San Diego certifies that the SWRP is complete, accurate, and addresses the elements presented in the SWRP Guidelines.