Peñasquitos – San Diego
Workshop on 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan, Watersheds, and Disadvantaged Communities

Workshop Notes

Friday July 19, 2013
3:00-4:30 p.m.
Mission Valley Library
2123 Fenton Parkway
San Diego, CA 92108

Attendance

Abigail Gray, Resident
Adrianna Lewis, Project Wildlife
Alan Grant, San Diego River Park Foundation
Bob Stafford, San Diego Stream Team
Brian Olney, Helix Water District
Chuck Muse, Helix Water District
Crystal Mohr, RMC Water and Environment
Debby Knight, Friends of Rose Canyon
Goldy Thach, City of San Diego
Heidi Ball, Resident
Jan Jensen, Resident
Jay Wilson, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation
Jeff Pasek, City of San Diego
Jim Peugh, San Diego River Park Foundation
Jo Brooks, San Diego Coastkeeper
John Pilch, San Carlos Area Council
Judy Swink, Citizens Coordinate for Century 3 (C3)
Mark Stephens, City of San Diego Stormwater Division
Phil Pryde, San Diego Audubon Society
Rich Thesing, Tierrasanta Community Council
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Robyn Bottomley, San Diego River Park Foundation
Robyn Massey, San Diego River Park Foundation
Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment
Shannon Quigley-Raymond, San Diego River Park Foundation
Sheri McPherson, County of San Diego
Teresa Penunuri, County Of san Diego Water Authority

Welcome and Introductions

Teresa Penunuri, San Diego County Water Authority (facilitator), welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room. Ms. Penunuri discussed the purpose of the workshop, which was to: present and discuss contents of the draft 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan, review draft watershed characterizations for the Peñasquitos and San Diego watersheds, and discuss disadvantaged community issues within the watersheds.

IRWM Overview

Goldy Thach, City of San Diego, provided the group with an overview of the 2013 IRWM Plan. To begin the overview, Ms. Thach described IRWM planning and the statewide IRWM Program. Ms. Thach described IRWM planning as an innovative way to increase reliable water supplies, improve water quality, and protect natural resources through cooperation among public agencies with different jurisdictions and non-profit public interest organizations. Ms. Thach also explained that IRWM planning is the State's preferred method of funding local water management, and that the IRWM Program is used to disburse water bond funding from Proposition 50, 84, and 1E.

Ms. Thach described the San Diego IRWM Program, which is led by the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) consisting of the San Diego County Water Authority, City of San Diego, and County of San Diego. The primary advisory to the RWMG is the Regional Advisory Committee or RAC. RAC members represent water supply, wastewater, stormwater, natural resources and include other community members representing tribes, academia, Chamber of Commerce, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), and agriculture. In addition, we have had representation from State and Federal agencies such as Regional Water Quality Control Board staff and the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation.

The San Diego IRWM Region is comprised of 11 parallel hydrologic units that flow west from the mountains into the Pacific Ocean. Eight of the watersheds are within San Diego County and three are partially located in another county or Mexico.

IRWM planning has two primary functions: grant project funding and project planning. The benefits of IRWM planning are that it coordinates and integrates water management activities within a region, emphasizes local priority setting and control, establishes regional goals and targets, identifies and helps to fund projects to achieve goals, and fosters cooperation among agencies and non-governmental organizations.

2013 IRWM Plan

Goldy Thach then provided information about the 2013 IRWM Plan, which was updated based upon the 2007 IRWM Plan but with the addition of new planning documents and reports, planning studies, and stakeholder input. The 2013 IRWM Plan was also updated to meet new IRWM Plan requirements established by the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

With respect to the DWR requirements, the 2013 IRWM Plan includes new sections on integrated flood management and climate change, but was also tailored to reflect the Region's unique circumstances. For example, the 2013 IRWM Plan includes a separate chapter on watershed descriptions to reflect the Region's unique hydrologic structure (11 parallel watershed), and also

includes a separate chapter on tribal nations to describe the Region's diverse tribal nations. Ms. Thach then provided an overview of each of the eleven 2013 IRWM Plan Chapters:

Chapter 1, Introduction:

This chapter includes the purpose and organization of the 2013 IRWM Plan purpose and organization, the governance structure (RWMG) and IRWM Program structure, describes how the 2013 IRWM Plan is consistent with IRWM Plan Guidelines (DWR requirements), and includes an overview of challenges and conflicts in water management and how IRWM planning can help address them.

Chapter 2, Vision and Objectives:

This chapter includes the IRWM Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives. The IRWM Vision is: an integrated, balanced, and consensus-based approach to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Region's water supply, water quality, and natural resources.

The 2013 IRWM Plan has eleven objectives, which were updated with extensive input from stakeholders. The 2013 IRWM Plan also includes new pass/fail rules for projects: 1) To be included in the San Diego IRWM Plan, all implementation projects must contribute to at least one IRWM Plan objective, 2) To be considered for IRWM funding, implementation projects must contribute to the attainment of Objective A, Objective B, and at least one other objective. The IRWM objectives are:

A. Encourage the development of integrated solutions to address water management issues and conflicts
B. Maximize stakeholder/community involvement and stewardship of water resources, emphasizing education and outreach
C. Effectively obtain, manage, and assess water resource data and information
D. Further the scientific and technical foundation of water management
E. Develop and maintain a diverse mix of water resources, encouraging their efficient use and development of local water supplies
F. Construct, operate, and maintain a reliable infrastructure system
G. Enhance natural hydrologic processes to reduce the effects of hydromodification and encourage integrated flood management
H. Effectively reduce sources of pollutants and environmental stressors to protect and enhance human health, safety, and the environment
I. Protect, restore, and maintain habitat and open space
J. Optimize water-based recreational opportunities
K. Effectively address climate change through adaptation or mitigation in water resource management

Chapter 3, Region Description:

This chapter was comprehensively updated with: new information available since 2007, planning studies conducted specifically for the IRWM Program, and input from the RAC and other stakeholders. This chapter includes a summary of regional water resources with tables that are generally organized by watershed. This chapter also includes three new sections: Stormwater Management, Flood Management, and Climate Change.

Chapter 4, Tribal Nations:

This chapter is an entirely new chapter that was created based on data review and outreach to tribal nations. Information in this chapter was vetted extensively by tribal representatives, and includes a description of tribal reservations and groups and an overview of water management issues on tribal lands.

Chapter 5, Watershed Characterizations:

This chapter is an entirely new chapter that was created based on data review and outreach through Watershed Workshops conducted in September 2012. Each watershed description contains information on hydrology, water systems, land uses, stormwater and flood, natural resources, and management issues and conflicts.

Chapter 6, Governance & Stakeholder Involvement:

This chapter describes the overall governance structure of the IRWM Program and stakeholder involvement that has taken place to-date. This chapter was updated based on extensive outreach conducted since 2007, including input from a specific ad-hoc workgroup that was convened to discuss governance and financing of the IRWM Program (Governance and Financing Workgroup). Although the workgroup did not recommend making changes to the overall governance structure, the workgroup drafted a formal charter for the RAC, which is included in this chapter.

Chapter 7, Regional Coordination:

This chapter includes information about coordination of information and planning studies across the IRWM Region. This chapter also includes a high-level summary of the planning studies that were conducted for the 2013 IRWM Plan. Those studies, which include Collaboration with Regional *Board, Salinity Nutrient Management Planning Guidelines, Integrated Flood Management, Climate Change Analysis, Water Management and Land Use* are appended to Chapter 7 of the 2013 IRWM Plan.

Chapter 8, Resource Management:

This chapter was updated based on the Resource Management Strategies (RMS) in the *2009 California Water Plan Update*. This chapter includes all of the RMS that were deemed, through stakeholder input, to be applicable to the IRWM Region. This chapter also includes additional RMS that were identified by stakeholders, and includes examples of how the RMS are being implemented in the IRWM Region.

Chapter 9, Project Evaluation and Prioritization:

This chapter outlines the general process for selecting projects for future rounds of grant funding. Information in this chapter includes updates to project scoring that were made to better-sort projects based on their value to the Region and based on the principles of IRWM planning. This chapter was updated based on input from an ad-hoc workgroup that was convened for the 2013 IRWM Plan (the Priorities and Metrics Workgroup), the workgroup that was convened to evaluate and recommend projects to be funded for Round 2 of Proposition 84 Implementation Grant funding, and the RAC.

Chapter 10, Data & Technical Analysis:

This chapter summarizes technical resources that are available in the Region for water-based planning purposes. This chapter acknowledges a future comprehensive Data Management System (DMS) that is being developed by the County, and includes a new "WaterGIS" database that is available on www.sdirwmp.org website.

Chapter 11, Implementation:

This chapter includes a series of "action items" that were developed based on the planning study recommendations (described in Chapter 7), and have received implementation commitments from a stakeholder in the Region. This chapter also includes information about updating and revising the IRWM Plan, including production of a Report Card every three years. Further, this chapter includes a comprehensive table of potential financing options for the IRWM Program and for IRWM projects.

Questions/Comments

- Is the IRWM Plan available online?
  - *Yes. Please visit www.sdirwmp.org*
- Residents have serious concerns with the River Park Foundation's mission to create a park from the mountains to the ocean. What are the plans for private property owners who live in that area? There are major concerns with these types of organizations coming into private property (trespassing) to complete things like clean-ups.
  - *The San Diego IRWM Plan is an umbrella document that takes into consideration the vision and mission of organizations such as the River Park Foundation. We can amend the Watersheds Chapter (Chapter 5) to express private property owner concerns associated with habitat protection.*
- The map that you showed has the Inaja and Cosmit tribal reservations outside of the IRWM Region – these tribal lands are within the coastal-draining watershed.
  - *Thank you, we will amend this graphic.*
- In the Peñasquitos Watershed, we are hugely frustrated with impacts to Rose Canyon and Rose Creek. It seems as though there is a lack of regional perspective for this area – environmental documents (California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA]) continue to be produced, and claim that projects will have a less than significant impact to the environment. Cumulatively, these projects have a huge impact, and there is no protection for Rose Creek.
  - *The IRWM Plan can be amended to acknowledge particular issues in the Rose Creek watershed associated with urban development. The purpose of the Plan is to show where the greatest need is (for funding and projects) in the Region. The information in the Plan will help in the next round of project selection – anticipated next year.*
- How much funding is left for the San Diego Region in Round 3 of Proposition 84?
  - *Approximately $45 million.*
- Would like to commend the efforts that have been taken to-date to encourage the watershed-based approach that is being taken with the 2013 IRWM Plan. Hopefully this focus will continue forward when selecting projects for future rounds of funding.

- Why is there no environmental rubric that is used to determine environmental impacts under CEQA? Is this something that can be developed?
    - *The determination of impacts under CEQA is complicated and project-specific. This is a state law that would be very difficult to amend to have a strict rubric.*
- How are projects prioritized for IRWM Funding?
    - *Chapter 9 has this information in lengthy details. There are several steps: the first includes a general screening (does the project meet Objective A, B, and at least one other objective?) Next, there is a scoring process that takes place based on project merit. This information is given to a selection workgroup, which evaluates the projects, conducts interviews, and makes a final decision.*
- The City of San Diego has been working on a Master Stormwater System Maintenance Program. This program attempts to identify flood control channels that require maintenance, and implement the recommended maintenance. In reality, this plan creates substantial water quality and habitat issues, and will result in habitat fragmentation. The real solution would be to identify necessary stormwater infrastructure that would meet water quality and flood control needs. Will the Plan address these issues?
    - *The Plan does include this information, but can include more information about the Master Stormwater System Maintenance Program and its potential impacts. Further, the City Stormwater Department is an active participant in the IRWM program.*

Watershed Characterizations

Ms. Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment, provided an overview of the current characterizations for the Peñasquitos and San Diego River watersheds. Summary information on these watersheds is included below:

Peñasquitos:

- Peñasquitos watershed is comprised of two major water management areas (WMAs): Los Peñasquitos Creek (drains to Ocean) and Mission Bay.
- Major water bodies (receiving waters) within the Peñasquitos WMA: Los Peñasquitos Creek, Los Peñasquitos Lagoon, and Miramar Reservoir. Major water bodies in Mission Bay WMA: Rose Creek, Mission Bay, and Miramar Reservoir.
- Watershed discharges to two areas of special biological significance (ASBS): La Jolla Ecological Reserve and San Diego-Scripps
- Miramar Reservoir is owned by City of San Diego and stores imported water purchased from CWA
- Much of the wastewater in the Peñasquitos Watershed is treated at the City of San Diego's North City Water Reclamation Plant, which distributes recycled water to Mira Mesa, Scripps Ranch, Torrey Pines, Black Mountain Ranch, and Poway
- Mostly within City of San Diego jurisdiction, with portions in County, Poway, and Del Mar
- Eleven water bodies on 303(d) list for impaired water bodies, including Mission Bay shoreline

- Pollutants of concern include bacteria, toxicity, metals, nutrients, TDS, sediment, and selenium; Major impacts of pollutants are water quality degradation, beach closures, sedimentation, eutrophication, and habitat degradation
- Key threats to the ASBS are from urban and stormwater runoff
- Significant changes in the natural hydrology and geomorphology in the watershed have led to sedimentation issues; sources of sediment are canyon banks, bluffs, and stream beds; Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and Mission Bay have both been impacted
- Stormwater and flood management are the responsibility of the County and the municipalities within the watershed
- Watershed contains areas of diverse and undeveloped habitat in its protected canyons
- Mission Bay's Kendall-Frost Marsh and two ASBS are key natural resources
- Most management issues within the Peñasquitos Watershed revolve around urbanization, which has led to increased pollutants, erosion, and sedimentation
- Buildup of sediments in Los Peñasquitos Lagoon is destroying sensitive salt marsh habitats
- Mission Bay is one of the Region's principal tourist and recreational destinations, which must be balanced with protection and enhancement of Mission Bay's water quality and marsh habitats

San Diego River:

- Major water bodies include the San Diego River, El Capitan Reservoir, San Vicente Reservoir, Cuyamaca Reservoir, Lake Jennings, Lake, and Santee Lakes
- San Diego River originates near the town of Julian and discharges through the Famosa Slough to the Pacific Ocean
- San Vicente Reservoir is considered the Region's most important reservoir because it: 1) is the key terminus of the imported water aqueduct 2) will be the largest (242,000 acre-feet) following dam raise; 3) can receive supplies from Sutherland (in San Dieguito watershed) and El Capitan 4) can divert supplies to South County agencies 5) is connected to the largest filtration plant (Alvarado Water Treatment Plant)
- Surface water in the San Diego Watershed is primarily governed by precipitation, stream flow, and flow control structures (dams)
- Groundwater use in the uppermost portion of the watershed is limited to private wells
- Lowermost portion of the watershed is characterized by three large groundwater basins: Mission Valley, San Diego River Valley, and El Cajon Valley. The Santee-El Monte Sub-basin is a sub-basin of San Diego River Valley
- Recharge of the most productive one – the San Diego River Valley – is from dam releases and underflow below the dams (San Vicente and El Capitan)
- Key water supply projects include the City's Water Purification Demonstration Project which is a pilot project for indirect potable reuse with reservoir augmentation (advanced water treatment at the North City Water Reclamation Plant and studies of San Vicente Reservoir)

and Padre Dam's exploration of indirect potable reuse with groundwater recharge in the Santee-El Monte Sub-basin

- This is the second largest watershed in County. It spans five cities, the County, five water agencies, and four wastewater agencies
- Approximately 60% of watershed is undeveloped and open space – includes Cleveland National Forest, Mission Trails Regional Park, and river floodplain in Lakeside as intact habitat
- Water quality in the San Diego River is considered poor by the San Diego River Park Foundation; Low summer and fall river flows in ponded sections, combined with excess nutrients, can accelerate the growth of the aquatic plants.
- Pollutants of concern include color, manganese, pH, eutrophication, fecal coliform, DO, nutrients, and TDS
- Groundwater quality in the uppermost portion of the watershed is generally of good quality; groundwater quality in the lower portion has high TDS
- Known groundwater contamination plume in Mission Valley Basin near Qualcomm Stadium
- Stormwater and flood management are the responsibility of the County and the municipalities within the watershed
- Flooding is issue in the lower watershed due to urbanization and channel constriction; flood protection within the Mission Valley area is provided by the First San Diego River Improvement Project
- Watershed supports a diversity of biological resources; though riparian vegetation along the River is fragmented, it still provides essential habitat for reproduction, nesting, roosting and foraging.
- Famosa Slough provides 37 acres of productive wetland habitat
- Major issues consist of urbanization and its effects on water quality, hydromodification, loss of habitat, and presence of non-native species
- Effort to diversify water supplies has led to investigations into municipal groundwater extraction, associated issues of contamination and brackish desalination
- Conflicts between resource protection and flood control in lower watershed prevents vegetation control in floodplains
- Portions of river have been impacted by mining operations, but restoration efforts are underway

Questions/Comments

- Thank you for including information about Famosa Slough; this is a very important resource to the Region.
- Please add information about importation of stormwater to the San Diego River Watershed as a significant source of pollution. The City of San Diego pumps stormwater runoff from outside the watershed into the San Diego River near Old Town and I-5.
- Tecolote Creek should be mentioned as a water body that drains to Mission Bay.

- With regards to Famosa Slough – can you mention the success of detention basins? These have been highly effective in managing stormwater and flood flows, and should be replicated throughout the watershed. Information can be found in the Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan.
- Please mention that in Rose Canyon there is a huge issue with wet weather flows scouring out the creek. This issue is magnified, because the City will not allow mitigation projects to take place in the canyon. They are saving this riparian (wetland) mitigation for themselves, and therefore exporting compensatory mitigation outside of the watershed. This is a huge issue, and is resulting in habitat degradation.
- Please mention the cold water streams in the upper reaches of the San Diego River Watershed – these are very imported.
- Lake Cuyamaca only holds precipitation and stormwater flows. No imported water is stored in this water body.
- There are also many small mutual water companies within the upper portion of the watershed.
- Trash in San Diego River is a huge issue – not just for pollution, but also for flooding. Trash can cause blockages.
- Surprised to hear Mission Valley outlined as a flood control facility. It would be much more appropriate to highlight the Army Corps of Engineers' flood control channel.
- Please mention the estuary and its susceptibility to high rain flows – the estuary was basically demolished in the last huge rain storm (about 2003).
- Please mention that the huge rush of fresh water from storm flows to the estuary impacts the intertidal zone.
- Please use the City of San Diego's nomenclature regarding the Mission Bay Park Plan – there is nomenclature for north and south areas, and it should be consistent.
- Please mention issues with the Mission Bay Landfill Study. Although this study found that this landfill is not toxic and does not have seepage, many residents and stakeholders feel otherwise.

Disadvantaged Community Issues in Watershed

Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority, provided information about disadvantaged community (DAC) issues. Mr. Stadler explained that according to DWR, DACs are defined as geographic areas with a combined Median Household Income (MHI) of less than 80% of the Statewide MHI ($48,706 in 2010). To-date, the IRWM Program has gathered information about DAC issues pertaining to water management. The program has found that urban and rural DAC issues are distinct, and are generalized as follows:

- Urban DACs
    - Poor surface water quality, including San Diego Bay
    - Flooding due to creek constrictions
    - Public perception – education and outreach
- Rural DACs
    - Unreliable water supply

- Contamination of drinking water supply
- Deteriorating infrastructure – water and septic
- Technical/Managerial/Financial capacity

Mr. Stadler then invited the group to provide additional comments about DAC issues either within the Region or pertaining to DACs in particular watersheds. Mr. Stadler noted that any additional comments pertaining to the IRWM Plan or watershed characterizations were also welcome at this time. Below is an overview of additional input received:

Question/comments

- Is the DAC map in the 2013 IRWM Plan?
  - *Yes, it is in Chapter 3, Region Description.*
- Please mention the homeless population in the San Diego River Watershed. About 20% of the unsheltered homeless population is along Mission Valley River.
- Homelessness presents implications for water quality and trash.
- Would like to mention that Ramona has both Urban DAC and Rural DAC issues. This is generally considered a rural area, but also has a large homeless population. This community also has a well-organized water company, even though it lies outside of the Water Authority's Service Area.
- Ramona also has issues with flooding – many are concerned with potentially catastrophic (loss of life) floods. Ramona also faces severe invasive species issues, and is concerned with groundwater reliance.
- There should not be DACs around Fiesta Island – nobody lives there!
- Both UCSD and Miramar should not be considered as DACs. It seems like this map is wrong – is another methodology possible?
  - *DWR is stringent about the definition of DACs. It is possible to use additional household income data to show that an area is a DAC; however, there is no guarantee that DWR will accept this additional data.*
- Would projects receive DAC points if they themselves are not within a DAC, but would benefit DACs?
  - *Yes, this is just something that would have to be demonstrated in the grant proposal.*

Summary and Thanks

Teresa Penunuri thanked everyone for attending, and noted to please submit comments by July 31st:

Email: Rosalyn Prickett: sdirwmp@rmcwater.com
Web Forum: http://sdirwmp.org
Hard Copy: Mark Stadler, IRWM Program Manager
4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

Ms. Penunuri also invited stakeholders to attend the August 7th RAC meeting, which will be held from 9 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at the San Diego County Water Authority (address above).