Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting #55 and Integration Workshop

April 1, 2015
9:00 am – 11:30 am
San Diego County Water Authority Board Room
4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

NOTES

Attendance

RAC Members
Marsi Steirer, City of San Diego (chair) (and Alternate Goldy Herbon)
Albert Lau, Padre Dam
Ann Van Leer, Escondido Creek Conservancy (and Alternate Betsy Keithley)
Brian Olney, Helix Water District
Chris Trees San Elijo Joint Powers Authority for Mike Thornton
Eric Larson, San Diego County Farm Bureau
Gloria Silva, U.S. Forest Service (and Alternate Emily Fudge)
Jennifer Hazard, Alter Terra
Jennifer Sabine, Sweetwater Authority
Joey Randall for Kimberly Thorner, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
John Flores, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians
Joni Johnson, Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Kimberly O'Connell, University of California – San Diego Clean Water
Leigh Johnson, University of California Cooperative Extension (and Alternate Loretta Bates)
Ligeia Heagy for Crystal Najera, City of Encinitas
Mark Seits, Floodplain Management Association
Michael McSweeney, Building Industry Association (and Alternate S. Wayne Rosenbaum)
Phil Pryde, San Diego River Park Foundation (and Alternate James Peugh)
Robyn Badger, San Diego Zoological Society
Ronald Wootton, Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation
Toby Roy, San Diego County Water Authority (and Alternate Mark Stadler)
Kristin Kuhn, San Diego CoastKeeper for Travis Pritchard

RWMG Staff and Consultants
Lan Wiborg, City of San Diego
Loisa Burton, San Diego County Water Authority
Maria Mariscal, San Diego County Water Authority
Mark Stephens, City of San Diego
Stephanie Gaines, County of San Diego
Vicki Kalkirtz, City of San Diego
Crystal Benham, RMC Water and Environment

Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment
Sally Johnson, RMC Water and Environment

Interested Parties to the RAC
Anne Bamford, Industrial Environmental Association
Arwa Sayed, City of San Diego
Bob Leiter, University of California San Diego
Catherine Rom, City of San Diego
Christy Villa, City of Encinitas
Deanna Spehn, Assembly Member Toni Atkins
Erwin Sanvictores, Urban Corps of San Diego
George Adrian, City of San Diego
Harold Baily, Water Conservation Garden
Juli Beth Hinds, University of California San Diego
Karen Youel, City of Escondido
Kiera Schminke, Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Kipp Hefner, City of Encinitas
Kyrsten Rosenthal, City of San Diego
Lorraine Frigolet, Water Conservation Garden
Mayela Manasjan, City of Encinitas
Michele Shumate, San Diego County Water Authority
Nathan White, Agess, Inc.
Robin Reardon, Padre Dam Municipal Water District
Ryane Moss, San Diego River Park Foundation
Sandra Jacobson, California Trout
Terrell Breaux, City of San Diego
W. Kennedy, City of San Diego

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Marsi Steirer, City of San Diego, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ms. Steirer, announced that she would be retiring in April, and introduced the group to Ms. Lan Wibong, who will now be serving as co-chair of the RAC. Ms. Steirer was thanked for her wonderful service to the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program and her key role in getting the program to where it is today. Introductions were made around the room.

Final Proposition 84 Grant Solicitation

Ms. Goldy Herbon, City of San Diego, presented an overview of the final round of Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation funding, applications for which are due in August 2015. The San Diego IRWM Region has $31 million available for this final round, with approximately $30 million available for projects. The previous round of Prop 84 IRWM funding was focused on drought relief projects; this round will be open to all IRWM projects, although additional points are available for long-term drought preparedness and projects that benefit disadvantaged communities (DACs). DAC projects must directly address a water-related need of a DAC, which is more flexibility than in previous rounds that focused on drinking water related needs of DACs. Another change from previous rounds of Prop 84 funding is that each project must have two quantifiable benefits.

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Examples of quantifiable benefits include, but are not limited to, the amount of water produced by the project, the number of acres of land restored, the number of native plants planted/invasive plants removed, pollutant concentrations reduced, amount of water treated, amount of energy produced or saved, and amount of greenhouse gases avoided. Criteria for this round of funding are:

- 25% funding match, with a waiver available for DACs
- Reimbursable expenses can go back as far as January 1, 2015
- Funding match expenses can go back as far as January 1, 2011
- Project sponsors must adopt the IRWM Plan
- Construction projects are required to have a Labor Compliance Program (LCP)
- CASGEM, Groundwater Management Plan, and Urban Water Management Plan compliance is required, as applicable
- Projects should begin by April 1, 2016
- Projects should be completed by October 31, 2020, with preference given to projects that are completed by October 31, 2019

Questions/Comments:
- Is the goal for the application to have a suite of projects that meets the requirements or does every individual project need to meet the requirements? Can some strong projects be used to help out weaker ones?
    o Projects are evaluated by California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and scored individually. The Region's score for the application as a whole is an average of the project scores. The San Diego Region also scores projects as part of its project selection process, which uses locally-important scoring criteria as described in the IRWM Plan and approved by the RAC. Sometimes the Region's priorities may result in including one or two low-scoring projects (using DWR's scoring) because the Region has determined that it is a locally-important project to fund.
- Do we have any information on where in the City of San Diego we have opportunities for stormwater infiltration and later withdrawal and use?
    o The concept overlaps with Alternative Compliance for stormwater permits, but there is a hurdle with how to move forward with implementing these sorts of projects. Can grant dollars by used to identify and develop a process for implementing such projects?
    o If you want to develop a project to implement stormwater infiltration, then yes. But if it is implementing a mitigation measure, then it cannot be funded by the grant.
    o The mapping exercise that will be completed later in the meeting shows the groundwater basins and can help with siting infiltration projects.
    o In San Diego County there are limited groundwater basins, with clay soils. There are limited opportunities for percolation. Stormwater agencies need to have a dialogue with water supply agencies to identify areas for greatest benefit.
    o Soil maps show infiltration mainly in creeks, rivers, and streams. Infiltration can help support habitat viability, not necessarily be used for drinking water. Are there basins

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that can be used for this? Are there opportunities to site such projects near creeks and streams where infiltration opportunities are highest?

- o Implementation projects need have some on-the-ground component/capital project. Some of the money can go to planning, but it cannot be a planning-only project.

- Can planning costs be used as funding match?
  - o Yes.

- The infiltration project(s) that have been discussed sound like what is happening in our coastal lagoons, which impound water. The lagoons capture water at the point of discharge, and at the San Elijo Lagoon, there is 100 acre-foot inflow, even when there is no precipitation. There has not been any talk about using the lagoon as a water resource because that is outside the current paradigm. Without advanced planning funds to organize a project, no project can be implemented.

Project Selection Process for San Diego Region

Ms. Crystal Benham, RMC Water and Environment, presented an overview of the Region's project selection process. She noted that the final round of funding was on a compressed schedule similar to the previous round. Project scoring would be approved at today's meeting by the RAC, and a technical workshop to provide assistance on submitting projects to the online Project Database, and to answer project-related questions, will be held on April 15, 2015 at the Alvarado Treatment Plant. Ms. Benham reminded the group that the Project Database was currently open, and that it would close on **April 22, 2015**. Tips on using the database:

- Log in to the OPTI Project Database by going to http://www.sdirwmp.org/ click on the "Project Database" tab, and either sign-in or register.
- Click the "+" button to create a new project, or "List" to revise an existing one
- You must become a Community Member to submit a project
- Recommend using Mozilla or Chrome – Internet Explorer can sometimes have bugs
- A red asterisk (*) is a required field
- It is highly recommended that users fill out the Word version of the database (available for download once you log in) before adding project information to the database
- Avoid using the "back" button
- Save often and hit "Submit" when you are done. Projects can be edited after submitting until the database closes.
- Refer to the OPTI handout available in the meeting packet or on the SDIRWM website (www.sdirwmp.org).
- Any questions contact Crystal Benham (cbenham@rmcwater.com; 858-875-7421) or Sally Johnson (sjohnson@rmcwater.com; 858-875-7427)

Projects must meet Objective A (integration), Objective B (community involvement), and at least one other objective of the IRWM Plan to be considered for funding. DAC projects are broader than in the past, and project sponsors are advised to refer to the DAC section of the IRWM Plan (Chapter 3) for more information on the water-related issues and needs of DACs in the Region.

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The Project Selection Process is:

1. Submit a project to the database
2. Projects will be reviewed to determine if they meet the screening criteria (refer to scoring criteria handout)
3. Projects are scored by a third party in accordance with the Project Selection Process in the IRWM Plan
4. Projects are grouped into two tiers, with projects in Tier 1 receiving greater consideration than those in Tier 2
5. Project Selection Workgroup reviews all projects and selects projects to include in the Region's application

Ms. Benham explained that the scoring criteria used in the Region's Project Selection process has flexible weighting in the IRWM Plan. The RAC will vote on the weighting today, but the draft weighting as presented in the handout is similar to the weighting used for the Prop 84 Round 2 funding process. Additional pass/fail criteria were added to what is in the IRWM Plan. RAC input was then solicited on the scoring criteria weighting.

Questions/Comments:

- Is there an existing definition of a DAC and/or Environmental Justice (EJ) community?
  - DWR defines a DAC as a community that has a Median Household Income (MHI) of 80% or less than the statewide MHI. There is no clear definition of an EJ community, and the San Diego Region generally focuses on DACs.
- The creation of new water criteria has the greatest weight, but it seemed like there was not that strong of an emphasis on it when the grant criteria were discussed earlier.
  - As a reminder, there are two separate scoring criteria we must meet: DWR's scoring criteria and the local scoring criteria. DWR's scoring criteria consider drought preparedness (3/22 total points), while the local scoring criteria has a much stronger weighting for creation of new water.
- Can we add a column to the scoring criteria that shows how the State ranks the criteria?
  - The State uses different categories, so while there is overlap, there is not always a direct correspondence between the categories.
- There is a difference between the State's priorities and the Region's priorities. Are there any differences that should be highlighted that would affect the scores?
  - The State's priorities are fairly broad. Generally they fall within the objectives in the San Diego IRWM Plan.
- Suggested changes to scoring criteria weighting:
  - Reduce the new water criteria from 25% to 20%, increase Multiple Objectives from 20% to 25%
  - Suggest leaving the new water/water supply criteria at 25%
  - Agree that new water should remain at 25% but reduce multiple watersheds to 0% and increase multiple objectives to 25%

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- o Increase multiple beneficial uses to 10% to help projects integrate more closely with the Regional Board.
  - o DAC projects get an extra 2 points (out of 22), so increase DAC from 5% to 10%. Because Objective A is a screening criteria and already required, could reduce or remove Multiple Objectives to avoid double counting.
  - o Do not remove multiple watersheds criteria – would like to see projects with watershed-based solutions.
  - o Keep the multiple entities criteria, but reduce it from 10% to 5%
- Following this discussion recommended scores were over by 10% - a motion was made and seconded to multiply each score by 0.9. The motion did not pass (8-yes, 9-no).
- Some of the criteria have a range of points available (1-4), while others are a yes/no and receive either 0 points or 4 points. Why? Should we consider a different point system?
  - o This was developed in the IRWM Plan, and has not been an issue in past rounds.
- What about projects that buy land – would that count as freeing up potable use?
  - o Have not used that approach in the past. Land acquisition has typically been a source protection project. Because it is not offsetting existing potable use, we would need to consult DWR to determine if it would meet that criteria.
- Additional discussion on scoring continued:
  - o UCSD has been identifying opportunities for DAC projects on a neighborhood scale, and supports increasing the DAC criteria to 10%.
  - o What would Mark Stadler (San Diego County Water Authority) recommend, as the Program Manager for the IRWM Program?
    - ▪ Would prefer to keep weighting in multiples of 5. Would increase Multiple Objectives and New Water to 25%, increase DACs to 10%, decrease Implementation of IRWM Plan to 15%, and have the rest at 5%.
- Isn't this a lot of detailed work for something that ultimately is a subjective process?
  - o Yes but the scoring is used for tiering the projects, and the tiering is important for the Project Selection Workgroup.

A motion was made and seconded to use the scoring criteria weighting described by Mr. Stadler. The motion passed.

The RAC was asked to provide input on the changes to the Project Selection Workgroup's Scoring Guidelines (refer to handout). No changes were suggested and the Guidelines as presented were approved by the RAC.

The RAC was asked to break into their respective caucuses and nominate a primary and an alternate representative to the Project Selection Workgroup. The Project Selection Workgroup will meet five times in May, with a tentative sixth meeting possible in early June. Members are expected to attend every meeting. The RAC approved the following people for the Project Selection Workgroup (primary/alternate):

- Regional Water Management Group: Jeff Pasek/Goldy Herbon; JoAnn Weber/Stephanie Gaines; Mark Stadler/Dana Friehauf
- Water Supply: Brian Olney/Greg Thomas
- Water Quality: Mike Thornton/Travis Pritchard
- Natural Resources: Al Lau/Sandy Jacobson
- DAC/EJ: Joni Johnson/Dave Harvey
- Other: Robyn Badger/Anne Bamford

What is Integration?

Mr. Stadler gave a brief introduction to project integration and the ideal IRWM project. An IRWM Project is a multi-benefit project that achieves one or more IRWM goal: 1) optimize water supply reliability, 2) protect and enhance water quality, 3) provide stewardship of our natural resources, and 4) coordinate and integrate water resource management. The San Diego Region has defined five types of integration: partnerships, resource management, beneficial uses, geography, and hydrology.

The meeting then moved into the Integration Workshop portion of the agenda. The purpose of the workshop was to learn about potential projects and available resources, and to help identify real integration opportunities such as synergies between projects and potential partnerships. Participants were asked to write project information and their contact information on post-it notes that were color-coded by project type, and to place the post-it on the approximate location of the proposed project on one of the corresponding posters at the front of the room. These posters showed the watersheds in the Region, along with details such as water bodies, streams, treatment plants, recycling facilities, and groundwater basins. Following this exercise, participants divided into breakout groups by caucus to discuss their proposed projects and meet other people proposing related projects. A second round of breakout groups was then held, this time by watershed, to again discuss proposed projects and meet other people who may be proposing geographically related projects.

Summary and Next Steps

The RAC was asked to approve minor changes to the Project Selection Workgroup (addition of JoAnn Weber and Jeff Pasek as the primary representatives for the County of San Diego and the City of San Diego, respectively under the RWMG).

Next RAC Meeting:

- May 6, 2015 – 9-11:30am (Joint RAC Meeting and Scoring Workshop)

2015 Meeting Schedule:

- June 3, 2015
- August 5, 2015
- October 7, 2015
- December 2, 2015

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