

Meeting Minutes
Santa Barbara Countywide
Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Cooperating Partners Meeting

May 3, 2007
1 PM – 4 PM

Meeting Location:

City of Solvang, City Council Chambers -1644 Oak Street in Solvang

Attendees

Cooperating Partners

Robert Almy, Santa Barbara County Water Agency; Jeff Dameron, La Cumbre Mutual Water Company; Len Fleckenstein, SB County Water Agency; Gary McFarland, GWD; Autumn Malanca, City of Santa Barbara Creeks Division; Chris Dahlstrom, SYRWCD, ID #1; Kate Rees, CCRB and COMB; Susan Segovia, City of Lompoc; Bruce Wales, Santa Ynez RWCD; Joe Barget, Vandenberg Village CSD; Bill Brennan, CCWA; Teresa Reyburn, City of Santa Maria; Tully Clifford, City of Solvang; Kathleen Werner, Goleta Sanitary District; Charles Hamilton, Carpinteria Valley Water District.

On the Conference Call

Craig Murray, Carpinteria Sanitary District; Marty Wilder, Laguna Sanitation District

Others Present

Shruti Chandra, Santa Barbara County Water Agency/Dudek

Proceedings

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 by Rob Almy

There were no public comments for items not on the agenda.

The minutes of the April 12, 2007 Cooperating Partners meeting were approved with some changes.

Status of the Internal Draft of Final IRWMP

Some of the sections need to be re-written in the Internal Draft of the Final IRWMP. The Partners were asked to re-write sections that need revision and pertain directly to their interests. Page 1-3 needs to be revised and will be check with RWQCB. The consultant team needs to be careful about making changes and committing to certain language in the document since it is a final version.

We are aiming for the beginning of June for Board approvals if possible. The team needs to get feedback from the Partners on how they would like to receive the Final IRWMP.

In the initial discussion, many Partners agreed to receive limited copies each, which they would then use to make as many copies as they would need for their Board of Directors, etc.

Whether to give the Boards the Executive Summary or the entire document was discussed. Since there isn't really a clear notion in the Guidelines as to what the Boards need to see, this decision should be made on the judgment of each Partner agency.

We will continue the discussion of the expected process for approvals in the coming meetings.

Prop 50 Draft Guidelines and the State's 4/25 Informational Presentation;

Handouts were passed out for discussion. There was some misunderstanding on our parts as to what Step 1 would entail. The Step 1 scoring criteria was summarized in a hand-out which the Partners were given. We need resolutions passed from all the Boards before the Step 1 submittal. The resolutions will be attached to the back of the IRWMP.

After the Step 1 submittal, the State is proposing a call back meeting in November for Step 2 and the Step 2 submittal is currently due in January.

Rob Almy and Marty Wilder will assist the Disadvantaged Communities through these processes.

MOU principles for Prop 50 Grant Application Process

The Malcolm Pirnie report detailing the experiences of other regions in the IRWMP process was sent out to the Partners via email. This is a useful document that we can use to learn from other region's experiences. Given its focus however, the report may focus on a more complex arrangement that is necessary in the County-wide region.

We should use our existing MOU as a possible model for future MOUs. Most other regions have a very general MOU that does not contain specific tasks but commits the agencies to working together on water related issues in the region. Examples of these MOUs were passed out in the meeting to show the Partners what others had done.

Since the current MOU does not have an end date, discussion of alternative approaches led to the conclusion that the County could draft a letter agreement for additional money from the Partners for selecting projects to be included in the Step 1 process as part of the Plan preparation. We would then need additional funds for the grant application when a new MOU would be prepared for the Step 2 process. The County might be able enter into a PO with CH2M Hill for new work.

The Partners agreed to use a formula for payment that is the same as the original MOU and be based on the expected costs of the Step 1 process provided by CH2M Hill. This may be slightly arbitrary based on the agency responses to the request for additional funds and as long as everyone is comfortable with this idea, we can move forward. Funding will be more precise as we move into the Step 2 process because the Cooperating partners will know who has projects that will be submitted for funding..

The Partners should pursue a separate MOU for the Step 2 grant application and a set of principles needs to be crafted. The group should aim for a July 1st date for a Draft MOU for Prop 84 positioning in addition to Step 2. The next MOU should be broad and simple as well.

We still need to provide the State with comments on the draft Prop 50, Step 1 and Step 2 guidelines. Most Partners agreed that comments would include the fact that we appreciate the State's efforts to make it so that Santa Barbara can compete for Prop 50 funds and that we require more time to prepare our submittals for Step 1. A new date of September 1st should be proposed rather than the current date of August 1st and in turn if the State shortens their review period of the Step 1 submittal, the same call back time for Step 2 in November can be kept and therefore the overall schedule would not change. The Partners agreed with these comments and comments will be prepared by Water Agency staff for review by the Partners and then sent to the State by the May 24th deadline.

Bruce Wales mentioned that he still is not sure if the Plan hangs together well. He felt that the Santa Barbara Region does not really have one big unifying issue in the document that some other regions might have.

Bill Ferguson responded that the summary documents which are the attachments as part of Step 1 will be a good chance and one of the last ones we may have to defend the Plan to the State.

Rob Almy responded that the Partners have a good sense of what needs to be done and that and the IRWMP should reflect agreements and that adjudication in the Santa Maria area is now essentially finished.

Bruce Wales also said that if we were looking at our County long back, we would be in a different place. Our issue appears to be aging infrastructure from 50 years ago.

Gary McFarland mentioned that he spent the morning discussing the IRWMP with one of his Board members and explaining to him that the whole process is driven by the State and this is how they wanted to see the IRWMPs prepared. The benefits from the IRWMPs are statewide and each individual project affects the bigger picture. We as a group have done a remarkable job.

The group then agreed that the current Plan is more a reconnaissance plan but we need to explain a unifying issue that we have in the region and Step 1 is the region's opportunity to sell the Plan to the State.

Bruce Wales responded that overall, the region is well integrated already and that we need to make sure to mention how our proposed projects compliment what we already have.

Len Fleckenstein also reminded the group that the State is looking for a well defined governance structure.

The discussion then moved on to the Step 1 process for project ranking.

Project Ranking Process and Criteria

Another meeting has been setup for May 14th to discuss as a group what projects are going to move forward as part of the Step 1 grant application.

The group realized that this may be a lengthy meeting and an earlier meeting time was proposed. Shruti Chandra was going to look into the availability of the same room for an earlier meeting time of 11 AM instead of 12 PM.

The Step 2 scoring criteria handout was passed out and the group began the discussion. As part of Step 2, an applicant needs to be in compliance with the eligibility criteria outlined in the Draft guidelines. If you expect to have a project you should expect to look closely at the guidelines and the State's scoring criteria.

It is likely that funding will come through in the fiscal year 2008-2009. In reality, it will most likely come through in September 2008 which means that the proposed project must be ready to proceed by that date.

Rob Almy reminded the group that the Partners will need information on criteria such as benefits of their project, The Scientific and Technical Merit of their project and if there is a strong economic analysis which is quantifiable.

The State will look at each project as part of the proposal.

Joe Barget had suggested a potential process for ranking the project in which each of the top tier projects would be presented to the group by the project proponent. The project proponent would then be expected to objectively explain how their project meets the agreed upon criteria. The group agreed to move forward with this approach at the next meeting on May 14th. Shruti Chandra committed to providing the Partners with an email containing guidance on how to present the projects to the group.

Each project may be scored based on the criteria and then group will get a chance to consider the issues and then vote on the project. One obligation of the group is to look at the group of projects as a whole. Some projects will be very large and some are small. As part of the process, each partner will need to prioritize their respective projects to decide which to propose to the group first.

Bruce Wales asked to get some clarification on the eligibility criteria for Groundwater Management Plans to be in place for any groundwater related project.

Chris Dahlstrom also responded that his agency had a filtration project dealing with an existing well and whether that would require a Groundwater Management Plan to be in place.

Rob Almy replied that he would get clarification from the State on this.

The logistics of the voting process were further discussed and then the meeting was adjourned by Rob Almy at 4:05 pm.