

Minutes

Santa Barbara Countywide IRWMP Cooperating Partners Meeting
Goleta Water District Conference Room
4699 Hollister Ave, Santa Barbara
October 19, 2006, 9:00 A.M. – 12:35 P.M.

Attendees

Cooperating Partners

Cynthia Allen, Vandenberg Village CSD; Robert Almy, Santa Barbara County Water Agency; Chris Dahlstrom, SYRWCD, ID #1; Jeff Dameron, La Cumbre Water District; Eric Erland, City of Lompoc; Bill Ferguson, City of Santa Barbara Water Resources Division; Colleen Lund, City of Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation; Gary McFarland, GWD; Autumn McKee, City of Santa Barbara Creeks Division; Kim Millson, representing the City of Carpinteria; Kate Rees, CCRB and COMB; Teresa Reyburn, City of Santa Maria; Bob Roebuck, Montecito Water District; Jerry Smith, Summerland SD; Matt van der Linden, GWD; Bruce Wales, Santa Ynez RWCD; Kathleen Werner, Goleta Sanitary District

Others Present

Kathy Caldwell, CH2M HILL; Shruti Chandra, Santa Barbara County Water Agency/Dudek; Natalia Deardorff, DWR; Mike Maxwell, CH2M HILL; Lorraine Woodman, CH2M HILL

Proceedings

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 A.M. by Shruti Chandra.

Public Comments

No public comments for those items not on the agenda were received.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the October 12, 2006 Cooperating Partners meeting were approved with one revision; watershed planning was called out as a separate strategy in the list of strategies.

Plans

Shruti Chandra -- no planning documents have been received from the City of Carpinteria, Cuyama, LACSD, Santa Maria Valley, Summerland Sanitary District, Casmalia CSD, GSWC, Goleta West, and Mission Hills. By Monday, they should be added to the FTP site, mailed, or Shruti will pick them up. The County's 5-year CIP includes water projects and is on the County's website.

Projects

Projects should be submitted as soon as practicable – if they are not fleshed out, submit title and brief description – projects may evolve over time.

Objectives

Natalia Deardorff -- objectives-need to meet needs for water in the region, but also need to meet State requirements. Infrastructure improvements are a major part of water planning, but that most IRWMPs haven't discussed this. The plan needs to make the case that infrastructure upgrades will deliver additional benefits.

Bob Roebuck and others -- spending money on infrastructure can reduce overall water use, minimize waste and environmental impacts and affect other important objectives.

Rob Almy -- maintenance of infrastructure should receive same priority from the State as water conservation. Systems do lose water, which has serious consequences. Many grants seem to support development of new facilities, but these facilities eventually need to be replaced.

Natalia Deardorff -- State guidelines say but do not emphasize that plans can consider O&M/replacement projects.

Rob Almy -- from the reviewers' perspective, if the plan uses an Infrastructure Objective and has projects under that heading, will they be viewed differently than other projects?

Natalia Deardorff -- the State is looking for a balanced plan that meets multiple objectives. Can include infrastructure projects if they relate to another objective.

Gary McFarland-- the Cooperating Partners should send an official request for clarification from DWR regarding whether infrastructure reliability and adequacy would be viewed differently than some of the other objectives because could be viewed as O&M as opposed to water supply or water quality.

Natalia Deardorff -- Tracy Billington would respond to such a request.

Bill Ferguson -- the IRWMP should look for opportunities to match O&M with other criteria that the State has identified --we have to sell additional benefits so it doesn't look like a Band-Aid.

Kathy Caldwell -- there is a need to keep balance between the objectives -- suggested having a meeting in person with Tracy Billington to help explain the plan.

Natalia Deardorff -- recreation is not as competitive as other objectives, but it is acceptable in a combined use. It is a required strategy.

Rob Almy -- some system reliability projects may help in emergencies.

Natalia Deardorff -- Santa Barbara's IRWMP is the only plan that has considered emergency protection other than flood control -- DWR is excited about this.

Strategies

Natalia Deardorff -- Objectives are overarching -- strategies are how you would achieve the objectives. The Cooperating Partners have the right to restate or explain why they are not implementing a strategy. Public access is a strategy to meet an objective. Restricted public access can also be a strategy. The plan shouldn't stray too much from verbiage in guidelines -- need to explain why we have taken out the words "public access."

Natalia Deardorff -- watershed planning is easier in regions that are based on watershed – if doesn't fit in the IRWMP, it's acceptable to explain why. The plan need to focus on what is important to the region. Watershed planning is not a strategy that we are required to consider. Look at the SWRCB Guidelines for a definition of watershed planning.

Project Ranking Criteria

We will use the following criteria for now. Rob Almy will combine 5, 6, and 7.

- 1) Readiness to proceed
 - a. CEQA process has been initiated or completed
 - b. Costs have been adequately estimated
 - c. Schedule, including project timeframe and milestones, has been prepared
- 2) Regional objectives are addressed
- 3) Implementable based on public, political, and stakeholder support
- 4) Critical impact if not implemented
- 5) No anticipated significant long-term adverse impact on agriculture – RA will take a stab at combining 6, 7 and 10.
- 6) No anticipated significant long-term adverse impact environmental impacts
- 7) Project is consistent with local planning

The following other criteria also were considered:

- 8) More than one water management strategy is utilized
- 9) Statewide priorities are addressed
- 10) Matching funds (local cost share) are available
- 11) A Disadvantaged Community is benefited
- 12) Methodology identified to track data, make data available to stakeholder, and measure success

Natalia Deardorff--Santa Barbara had a strong discussion of DACs in the previous plan.

Rob Almy -- These are not screening criteria, but are ranking criteria. If project doesn't meet a criterion, it is not necessarily thrown out.

Natalia Deardorff --the match starts when a bond is passed.

Rob Almy – the grant process takes too long.

Natalia Deardorff – the State wants the next PSP to have more local input from local agencies – they are trying to speed things up. The next round will emphasize the relationship to local planning and local decision makers. The stronger the connection to local planning, the more competitive the grant will be.

Kathy Caldwell – Projects need to be ranked in more detail for implementation grants – now just need top 3 or 4 criteria.

Natalia Deardorff --that is what they have been seeing. Criteria should reflect regional needs and feasibility of the projects. The implementation grants need to include what is most competitive. Some agencies use phased criteria – e.g., level 1, 2, 3.

Public Workshop

Partners to send Kathy Caldwell comments on the PowerPoint presentation.

Closing Remarks

Rob Almy -- The November Cooperating Partners meeting will be used to continue these discussions and work on issues that will go into the Preliminary Draft IRWMP. More time may be allowed to prepare the IRWMP, allowing more meetings in the interim. A Cooperating Partners meeting may be scheduled on November 16 if the overall schedule is extended to discuss the shape of the plan, objectives, strategies, etc.

Natalia Deardorff – lessons learned from reviewer:

1. Inclusion of DAC's in decision making/ planning process is important. The plan needs to discuss how they are included.
2. Discussion of the plan governance must be included – which regional entity would administer the plan if the plan needed to be updated, if a project fell out, monitoring, etc. Rob Almy –the Cooperating Partners need to talk more about what would happen if project fell out – other information is spelled out in the MOU.
3. Statewide priorities will be de-prioritized – they will still be there, but goal in the next round is to make the plans regionally important. The plan needs to include strategies to the extent that they are important.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 P.M.