

Meeting Minutes

Santa Barbara Countywide Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Cooperating Partners Meeting

May 18, 2007
9:30am – 12:30 pm

Meeting Location:
Goleta Sanitary District, 1 Moffett Place, Santa Barbara

Attendees

Cooperating Partners

Robert Almy, Santa Barbara County Water Agency; Joe Barget, Vandenberg Village CSD; Tully Clifford, City of Solvang; Chris Dahlstrom, SYRWCD, ID #1;

Jeff Dameron, La Cumbre Mutual Water Company; Bill Ferguson, City of Santa Barbara; Len Fleckenstein, SB County Water Agency; Robert McDonald, Carpinteria Valley Water District; Gary McFarland, GWD; Ruben Moreno, City of Guadalupe; Craig Murray, Carpinteria Sanitary District; Kate Rees, CCRB and COMB; Teresa Reyburn, City of Santa Maria; Susan Segovia, City of Lompoc; Bruce Wales, Santa Ynez River WCD; Kathleen Werner, Goleta Sanitary District; Marty Wilder, Laguna Sanitation District (by phone).

Others Present

None

Proceedings

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 by Rob Almy

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

The minutes of the May 14th meeting were not yet available for review. They will be sent along with the draft minutes from today's meeting.

Status of Final IRWMP

Rob Almy: We expect to receive the camera-ready copy of the final Plan today or tomorrow. It will go to the County's internal Reprographics unit on Monday for printing. We hope to have paper copies and CD's available by Friday, May 25th. Meanwhile, we will post the final Plan on the IRWMP website on Monday.

Amendment to CH2MHill Contract

Rob Almy: We received a draft proposal from CH2MHill as a contract amendment to prepare the Step 1 submittal for Prop 50 grant application. The Water Agency will invoice Cooperating Partners for a pro-rata share of consultant costs, as we discussed at the last meeting.

Recap of 5/14 Meeting and project identification process

Rob Almy: At the last meeting on May 14th, we heard presentations on 18 projects. Then Shruti sent you “ballots” in which you identified how you recommend distributing approximately \$25million, which is the maximum amount of a Prop 50 grant from the State. Shruti tabulated those submittals, which came from 20 Cooperating Partners.

Len Fleckenstein handed out a list of the 20 Cooperating Partners who submitted ballots (with 1 ballot per agency) to rank the projects. They were: Cachuma CRB/OMB; Carpinteria Sanitary Dist.; Carpinteria Valley Water Dist.; Casmalia CSD; City of Guadalupe; City of Lompoc; City of Santa Barbara; City of Santa Maria; City of Solvang; County of Santa Barbara; Cuyama CSD; Goleta Sanitary Dist.; Goleta Water Dist.; Goleta West Sanitary Dist., La Cumbre Mutual Water Company; Mission Hills CSD; Montecito Sanitary Dist.; Santa Ynez River WCD; Santa Ynez River WCD ID#1; Vandenberg Village CSD.

The Partners who did not vote included: CCWA; City of Buellton; City of Carpinteria; Golden State Water Company; Los Alamos CSD; Montecito Water District; Santa Maria Valley WCD; and Summerland Sanitary District.

Before the voting results were presented, the attendees discussed various aspects of projects and ranking factors, including:

- Whether new projects could be added to the list, and they decided against adding new projects.
- How to ensure the projects adequately address the needs within each watershed;
- How to ensure the projects address the State’s “preferences” as specified in the draft Guidelines.
- Whether a project currently under construction or nearing construction can be funded by Prop 50.
- How and when to conduct an independent “audit” of project eligibility and readiness to proceed, so we can be ensured that a project is truly ripe for inclusion in a grant application. The group seemed to favor preparing a workplan for conducting such an “audit”/review, and discussed the need to further consider who might be candidates for doing this kind of work.
- Whether to address projects in disadvantaged communities separately from all of the other projects.
- The need to ensure our projects are competitive with other Regions’ projects.

Results of Initial Voting

Len Fleckenstein distributed a handout listing the 18 projects that were candidates for ranking, and the “votes” each received in the 3 categories of : (1) Support; (2) Support with a greater match; and (3) Do not support. The list also shows the amount of grant funds to be requested for each project and the percent of match to be provided by the requesting agencies.

Len also handed out 3 lists showing different ways of sorting these project rankings, based on:

- (A) Ranking by the total number of votes in the “Support” category.
- (B) Ranking by the votes in “Support” category plus a weighted vote in the “greater match” category.
- (C) Ranking using the “B” approach but subtracting the number of votes in “do not support” category.

Each of these approaches provides a slightly different order of rankings. However, the top third and the bottom third didn’t change under any of these approaches. Mainly projects in the middle that changed rank order.

Rob noted that this voting is only intended as part of the “data” being put on the table for consideration of ranking our top projects. Nevertheless, attendees offered opinions on their preferred list, with most favoring either the “A” or the “C” sorting.

Discussion of Rankings

Considerable discussion focused on issues such as:

- whether some project costs could be lowered;
- whether some match percentages could be increased;
- Whether the geographic distribution is too heavily to one area;
- Whether the top-ranked projects conveyed a “theme” consistent with the IRMWP;
- Whether the project mix is appropriate, and fits the State’s preferences;
- Are all projects really “on the ground” and “ready to go in 2008”.

Several Partners raised concern regarding the relatively large size of the grant requests for the largest projects, especially for the Guadalupe project with its \$8.2 million request. That large amount is a sizable portion of whatever grant might be available from the State, and it precludes other agencies/districts from getting their projects funded. Some people also questioned whether other funding sources might be available to help increase the City’s match.

There also was considerable discussion of whether the projects conveyed a consistent “theme”. There was general consensus on the projects demonstrating effective ways to address two overarching needs: (1) more efficient water use in the northern and central parts of the County through improved water and wastewater treatment to meet standards; and to allow effluent reuse and improved quality of surface discharges and returns to groundwater; and (2) increased reliability and efficiency through conjunctive use and system flexibility in the southern portion of the County.

Some Cooperating Partners agreed to re-visit the total cost amounts and percent match requests, and to bring new information, when possible, to the next meeting.

Rob Almy: We need to meet again to continue this discussion, especially if revised projects or revised costs and matches can be brought to the table.

Next Meeting

The group agreed to meet on Tuesday, May 29th, which was a date set in our original IRMWP workplan. However, the meeting will be in the afternoon, if possible, in order to allow people to check into their offices after the holiday weekend.

Marty Wilder offered to check on the availability of the Public Works Department's conference room on Foster Road in Santa Maria.

Susan Segovia suggested we explore the option of using "web ex" (??) as a way of sharing information electronically. {SUSAN: is this correct? CAN YOU PROVIDE MORE INFO?}

Rob Almy adjourned the meeting at 12:35pm.