

10 Plan Performance, Data Management, and Ongoing Coordination

This section describes the methods that will be used to evaluate projects and plan performance, as well as adaptive management strategies that will be used to add new projects and modify the current list of projects and overall plan as needed. Methods used to manage data obtained through the plan implementation are also covered in this section as ongoing coordination with local, state, and federal agencies.

10.1 Technical Analysis and Plan Performance

Local agencies and organizations have conducted numerous studies and developed a considerable amount of information related to water management within Santa Barbara County that serves as the foundation of this IRWMP. This IRWMP incorporates an adaptive management approach intended to allow it to stay current in light of evolving needs, local and statewide priorities, management strategies, technology, and funding requirements. Adaptive management is a planning and implementation framework in which ongoing monitoring is used to evaluate implementation and change course to optimize results when necessary. It is based on an iterative feedback loop of plan adjustment, implementation, and monitoring. Resource managers learn from experience and adjust appropriately as new knowledge, priorities, and issues come to light. Through adaptive management, the IRWMP will be a dynamic document that may redefine regional objectives, priorities, water management strategies, and projects as needed to respond to changing conditions. It also will allow for the continuing development of solutions to ongoing issues.

Individual elements of the IRWMP already include adaptive management, and changes to those elements will be coordinated with the overall IRWMP adaptive management strategy. For example, several other planning procedures have regular review and re-evaluation, including the Urban Water Management Plans and Santa Barbara County's Groundwater Report, which summarizes monitoring information described in Section 3. As required by the Urban Water Management Planning Act, California Water Code, Section 10610 et seq., Urban Water Management Plans must be updated every 5 years, in years ending in zero and five. Additionally, Santa Barbara County's Groundwater Conditions Report is updated biennially. Summary reports on these activities will be coordinated with the IRWMP management process.

The IRWMP's overall adaptive management framework will be implemented in the following manner in accordance with the established governance practices described in Section 1:

1. IRWMP managers will conduct a biennial review and produce a 5-year report summarizing progress made in achieving IRWMP goals, including the tracking of funded projects, modifications to projects, and development of new projects as a result

of the plan. The results of the biennial review and the 5-year report will be posted on the IRWMP Web site (<http://www.countyofsb.org/pwd/water/irwmp.htm>). The performance of implemented projects will be compared to original project objectives to ensure objectives were met.

2. IRWMP objectives, priorities, and water management strategies will be evaluated during the biennial review and modified appropriately. The need to develop different projects to better meet the plan objectives and regional issues will be considered, as will the need to modify existing projects. Projects that may be deleted (for example, because their purpose has been met through another project or because conditions have changed) also will be considered at this time.
3. Minor adjustments to planning assumptions, operations, or actions will be adopted as necessary. If significant changes to the approved IRWMP are found to be required in the biennial review or the 5-year IRWMP report, the plan will be revised and submitted for approval by Cooperating Partners as necessary.
4. IRWMP managers will supplement the sections of the IRWMP affected by changes to Urban Water Management Plans and the Groundwater Report every 5 years.
5. Stakeholder outreach will continue on an annual basis during IRWMP implementation, both to inform local stakeholders of progress and to solicit feedback regarding plan effectiveness and evolving priorities. In addition, IRWMP managers will solicit input via the Web site and e-mail from all interested parties and distribute that information at stakeholder meetings.
6. IRWMP managers will continue to develop the adaptive management framework itself by periodically reviewing its effectiveness and adjusting accordingly. For example, should it come to light that outreach or updates occur too frequently or infrequently, the schedule will be adjusted.

10.2 Data Management

The management of data is an integral component of the IRWMP process. The Santa Barbara IRWMP has three major goals relating to data management: (1) to facilitate timely sharing of information to stakeholders as well as state and federal databases; (2) to provide for consistent monitoring techniques and data quality; and (3) to identify where data gaps exist. Available data in the Santa Barbara area is currently maintained using Geographic Information System (GIS).

Information from the Santa Barbara IRWMP will be available to stakeholders through the use of a Web site, which will be supported by the Water Agency. This will continue the existing warehousing of water resources-related data that the Water Agency has currently undertaken for the region. The Water Agency will ensure data accessibility at other relevant County Web sites through the Water Agency site. IRWMP stakeholder meetings will serve as the primary venue for information sharing. Other settings where information can be shared include quarterly project progress meetings, monthly agency coordination meetings, public workshops, e-mail subscription lists, and monthly e-mail newsletters. These forums will serve to continue to facilitate the ongoing data sharing between stakeholders as well as the expansion of the existing Water Agency data warehousing activities.

Santa Barbara County will maintain existing water resources-related and IRWMP-related data and will make it available to the public on the Santa Barbara County Water Agency Web site located at: <http://www.countyofsb.org/pwd/water/index.htm>. This site will also provide the forum for sharing of reports, public meeting dates, agendas, meeting minutes, and annual reports. All data used to support development of the IRWMP will be outlined in a database and available for review on the Web site, which also will provide links to information available on partner agency Web sites.

The County has been asked by the Cooperating Partners to act as the administrative agency for data management. In this capacity, the County would track, review, manage, and report on pertinent issues related to the IRWMP, as well as report and track project progress. The management of existing data will be incorporated into the County GIS system. The relevant data will be revised and updated as part of future IRWMP efforts. In addition, where appropriate, data management will be coordinated with state and federal databases in a format consistent with the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) and Groundwater Ambient Monitoring Assessment (GAMA). This coordination could include submission of annual reports regarding groundwater and surface water monitoring. As part of the IRWMP process, partner agencies will also work to determine specific reporting requirements and formats to facilitate more effective and efficient future data sharing.

Existing reports and data are under review as part of this effort to determine their applicability to the IRWMP and identify gaps in existing data. Identification of existing data gaps is a vital component of the IRWMP process. The process of identifying data gaps will continue throughout the IRWMP process, because new issues will arise as information is gathered and projects are formulated and refined. Once data gaps have been identified, recommendations regarding how best to address them will be developed. The Cooperating Partners also will compile and develop consistent procedures for data collection and monitoring.

10.3 Ongoing Coordination

As previously described, the County of Santa Barbara, water and wastewater entities, and all cities within Santa Barbara County, except one, are Cooperating Partners; additionally, local planning decision makers have been involved in the preparation of this IRWMP through regular communications through the Cooperating Partners and periodic reviews of the plan. Land use planning decision makers will continue to be involved, particularly through review, approval, and permitting of individual projects as they are developed and implemented.

Most Cooperating Partners have a long history of working with state and federal agencies, such as State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to address water management issues in the county. This coordination will continue as the IRWMP is implemented, particularly through the process of reviewing and permitting individual projects.

