

INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

The Path to a Resilient Water Resources Future



History

In 2002, the State Legislature passed the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Planning Act (SB 1672) to encourage local entities to improve water quality and water supply reliability to meet the state's overall agricultural, domestic, industrial and environmental water needs. IRWM Regions are self-organized, geographically based groups, and the 48 regions serve 99% of California's population.

A Unique Approach With Multi-Benefit Results

IRWM is more than a grant program. It is an established structure that brings together cities, counties, water districts, community and environmental groups, Tribes and others to build diverse partnerships that write regional plans, construct infrastructure projects, and implement water conservation and water-energy savings programs on a regional scale. This approach increases regional self-reliance, reduces conflict, and manages water to achieve climate resilience.

IRWM differs from traditional approaches to water resource management by integrating all facets of water management and climate solutions to achieve multi-benefit results.



The Future of California's Resilience

IRWM Regions have created regional planning capacity that strongly positions them as the best vehicle in planning for future climate resiliency as envisioned in the Water Resilience Portfolio.

The State should continue to leverage this unique tool through investment in IRWM.



State and Local Investments

Locals invest over \$4 for every \$1 invested by the State.

Propositions 50, 84 and 1 have supported more than 1,300 multi-benefit projects. Proposition 1 has specifically targeted disadvantaged communities and Tribes.

Leveraging State Funding

\$1.45 B
State Funds

\$5.6 B
Local Match

7 Benefits of IRWM

#1 LEVERAGES funding sources

#2 PROMOTES regional governance

#3 INCENTIVIZES multi-benefit projects

#4 DISSOLVES water management silos

#5 INVOLVES Tribal governments and underrepresented communities

#6 ENCOURAGES diverse stakeholder collaboration

#7 INTEGRATES climate change in comprehensive plans

Other Resources

Roundtable of Regions:
www.roundtableofregions.org

Department of Water Resources:
water.ca.gov/Programs/Integrated-Regional-Water-Management

ACWA IRWM Policy Principles:
www.acwa.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/PP-Integrated-Regional-Water-Management-IRWM-9-11.pdf

Region At-A-Glance

Region Description

The Santa Barbara County IRWM Region includes all of Santa Barbara County and has significant geographical diversity, containing five major watersheds, 100 miles of coastline, and 215,000 acres of Los Padres National Forest. There are eight incorporated cities in the Region as well as 21 distinct unincorporated communities. This includes five designated disadvantaged communities and one federally recognized tribal community, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians.

Population Served

446,000

IRWM Funding Brought to the Region

\$35 million

Local Cost Share

\$130 million

California Senate and Assembly Districts

Senate: 19

Assembly: 35, 37



Governance Description

The Region is governed by a group of 28 Cooperating Partners (the Regional Water Management Group), including water and wastewater districts, community service districts, city departments, county divisions, two NGOs, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. The Santa Barbara County Water Agency is the contracting and coordinating agency and serves as liaison between all entities involved in the program.

Region Objectives

- Protect, conserve, and augment water supplies
- Protect, manage, and increase groundwater supplies
- Practice balanced natural resource stewardship
- Protect and improve water quality
- Improve flood management and emergency preparedness
- Maintain and enhance water and wastewater infrastructure efficiency and reliability
- Address climate change through adaptation and mitigation
- Ensure equitable distribution of benefits



Region Successes and Highlights

1. Regional collaboration among diverse stakeholders since 2005 to address the needs of urban users, agriculture, and ecosystems.
2. Development of 3 editions of the Santa Barbara County IRWM Plan, and \$35 million in funding brought to the region for projects addressing the IRWM plan objectives.
3. Disadvantaged community outreach through Proposition 1, including a needs assessment to identify underrepresented communities and increase involvement of disadvantaged communities in the IRWM process.

Region Contact

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