

MEETING SUMMARY

Southern Sierra Regional Water Management Group

October 10, 2013

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1. Summary of Action Items

1. **Provost & Pritchard** to date all future document revisions.
2. **Provost & Pritchard** to revise Figure 3.1 and provide two alternatives at the RWMG December meeting.
3. **Technical Team** to review the MOU signatories and ensure all organizations on the e-mail list are acknowledged in one of the three lists.
4. **Mr. Kamansky** and **Mr. Wilson** to coordinate sending the e-mail list to Mr. Kubit.
5. **Provost & Pritchard** to clearly reference a third list or organizations in a later chapter.
6. **Provost & Pritchard** to track/highlight revisions, insert date of latest version and provide both a marked up and clean version for future chapters.
7. **Provost & Pritchard** to confirm deletion of two sentences stating, “Most members signed the MOU in 2009...” and “The RWMG considers the refinements a formal revision...” (pg. 5, Governance chapter).
8. **Mr. Kamansky** and **Mr. Moi** to coordinate and forward Ms. Allen’s suggestions and any other RWMG suggested edits to Mr. Kubit.
9. **Provost & Pritchard** to clarify language for RWMG membership and transfer the list of the non-signing members to a later chapter.
10. **Provost & Pritchard** to change “fiscal agent” to “fiscal grantee” wherever it appears.
11. **Facilitation Team** to distribute the DWR review guidelines to RWMG members upon distribution of the meeting summary.

12. **Provost & Pritchard** to use the term “Work Groups” in place of “Sub-committees” and remove the sentence “Some of these Work Groups...” on page 6 in the Governance chapter. Provost & Pritchard can acknowledge this terminology change in a footnote.
13. **Provost & Pritchard** to integrate benefits for signing the MOU (page 6, Governance chapter) based upon group’s feedback.
14. **Provost & Pritchard** to explicitly list federal agencies and include tribal reservations in Subsection 3.3.2.1 Land Use Agencies
15. **Provost & Pritchard** to include mineral pollution and irrigated land regulations in Section 3.5.
16. **Provost & Pritchard** to minimize any perceived inflammatory language in Section 3.7. Additionally, Subsection 3.7.1 should address factors leading to conflicts and issues but Section 3.7 should still include resolution of conflicts.
17. **Provost & Pritchard** to consider including a paragraph/section on selected research (and potentially data gaps) at the end of each watershed discussion in Subsections 3.2.1.1-8.
18. **Provost & Pritchard** to reference California Water Plan updates to create integration/synergies with other RWMG report updates.
19. **Provost & Pritchard** to write the goals and objectives chapter without ranking. Provost & Pritchard are to further discuss ranking approaches and present 2-3 alternative approaches for ranking.
20. **Project Team** to investigate and present website alternatives to RWMG.

AGREEMENT: All members present agreed on the interpretation that the MOU three-year limit was the minimum tenure for the MOU and not the maximum; the MOU can remain in effect indefinitely until it is replaced by another agreement or additional clarifications.

AGREEMENT: All members present approved the preliminary draft Governance chapter after Provost & Pritchard integrates the group’s feedback.

AGREEMENT: All members present approved the preliminary Region Description outline after Provost & Prichard integrates the group’s feedback.

Of note, the Governance chapter and Region Description outline are draft in nature. It is expected that the group will have additional opportunities for review IRWMP chapters later in the development process. Agreement to draft material at this stage enables Provost & Prichard to further refine these sections and move forward in the development of additional IRWMP chapters.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Bobby Kamansky, Southern Sierra Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (SS IRWMP) Stakeholder Coordinator, welcomed the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) members and other participants. Mr. Kamansky introduced Mr. Rich Wilson, Center for Collaborative Policy Facilitator. Mr. Wilson reviewed the agenda and

ground rules with the group. The meeting objectives aimed to provide a project status update, review and approve the draft Governance chapter and Region Description outline, and discuss the draft outreach plan and website design options.

3. Project Updates

Mr. Kamansky reviewed updates since the last RWMG meeting in July.

General Updates:

- The Project Team has conducted several public outreach meetings including a recent tribal forum in Clovis.
- Mr. Kamansky recommended that if anyone wanted additional information for the project updates, they should refer to links provided in the meeting summary or contact a Project Team member.
- The SS IRWM region boundaries have been updated based upon hydrologic feature along the San Joaquin River.
- The Sierra Water Workgroup was meeting simultaneously as the RWMG, with John Shelton representing the RWMG at that meeting.
- The Project Team has been involved in two planning processes, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) strategic plan process for IRWMP South and the Tulare Lake Regional Forum. The planning funds have enabled the Project Team to begin participating in these planning processes.
- Mr. Chris Moi, SS IRWMP Project Manager, announced that Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT) had fully executed the DWR Planning Grant agreement documents. The SRT is working with the Provost & Prichard Consulting Group to fulfill the first set of requirements to move forward in developing the IWRMP. Acquisition of the grant represents a significant accomplishment for the group.
- Mr. Moi said the Round 2 Implementation Grant application submitted in March 2013 was not awarded funding; however, they plan to collaborate with DWR for feedback and recommended next steps to move forward.

Review of Action Items:

- Most action items from the July 11 meeting were preparatory steps for the public outreach meetings; other major action items were discussed during this meeting.
- Mr. Kamansky requested additional input (photograph approval) to finalize the “Thank You” card to Wednesday Aja, who created our brand.
- The Project Team is consolidating a required data list for plan development, including identification of data gaps. Mr. Kamansky thanked group members and organizations for helping with data gathering efforts.

4. Interested Party/Public Comment Period

Ms. Michelle Dooley of the DWR Fresno Office provided the following DWR updates:

- The public comment period for DWR's draft *Strategic Plan for the Future of IRWM in California* ends on October 10, 2013. A free workshop on the Round 2 IRWM strategic plan will be held on October 17 in Clovis from 10 am – 3 pm at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District.
- DWR developed an IRWM review process for inclusion as an addendum to the 2012 IRWM guidelines. DWR will run IRWM plan proposals through a matrix of questions; proposals should address DWR guidelines and standards.
- The California Water Plan Plenary will be held on October 29-30, 2013, in Sacramento. The Southern Sierra region is included as part of the Tulare Lake report; a regional forum on this report will be held on October 18, 2013. All of the draft regional reports will be released to the public on October 23, 2013.

5. Planning Grant Update

Mr. Kamansky provided a planning grant status update relative to the current RWMG work plan.

Work Plan Check In

The Project Team made substantial progress over the summer in developing materials for the overall outreach plan. The Coordinating Committee is expected to provide additional input on the draft goals and objectives and outreach plan in advance of the December RWMG meeting.

- One member requested additional opportunities to provide input on draft chapters later in the developmental process.
- Another member recommended a standardized method for tracking chapter revisions, such as a chapter title and date stamp in the footer of each page.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to date all future document revisions.

Reporting and Invoicing

The Project Team is putting together a quarterly report for the first invoice to DWR and aims to produce monthly invoices to expedite progress and quarterly reports.

- Ms. Dooley encouraged the Project Team to reach out to DWR for invoice guidance.

6. Review and Approval of the Draft Governance Chapter

Mr. Kamansky provided context for development of the draft Governance chapter, which was outlined based on IRWM standards. Mr. Owen Kubit of Provost & Pritchard reviewed the chapter contents. The conversation enabled member feedback prior to group approval for the Governance chapter. Mr. Kubit asked members to identify outstanding questions, concerns, and suggestions. Comments and clarifications included the following:

Figure 3.1 – SS RWMG Organization Chart

- Relative to stakeholder collaboration and advice, the RWMG is the only decision-making body; the Coordinating Committee advises the RWMG. The RWMG is supported by standing (ongoing) and potential work groups; work groups report to the RWMG, but may also receive guidance from the Coordinating Committee, which meets more frequently than RWMG.
- Official positions such as the Project Manager and Stakeholder Coordinator were omitted because they do not have a governance role.
- One member said the organization chart in Figure 3.1 was visually confusing and thus did not necessarily reflect the relationship described in the text narrative.
- The group considered different alternatives for displaying relationships and how the groups interact with each other. Members generally agreed a visual organization chart was useful, but Figure 3.1 needed modification.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to revise Figure 3.1 and provide two alternatives at the RWMG December meeting.

Section 2.4 – Members and Interested Parties

Mr. Kubit said the Members list included organizations that signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Interested Parties were those that had not signed the MOU but consistently attended meetings. Organizations that do not regularly attend meetings but receive e-mails are listed in the Stakeholder Involvement chapter.

- It was noted that the Three Rivers Community Services District is listed as a member with statutory authority (page 4, Governance chapter), but not listed as a RWMG member or interested party.
 - The Project Team highlighted the error for correction. Mr. Kamansky said the organization has not signed the MOU yet, and additional briefing may be warranted.
- Several members noted inconsistencies in the lists of organizations.
- **ACTION ITEM: Project Team** to review the MOU signatories and ensure all organizations on the e-mail list are acknowledged in one of the three lists.
- **ACTION ITEM: Mr. Kamansky and Mr. Wilson** to coordinate in sending the e-mail list to Mr. Kubit.
- Mr. Moi noted that any organization can become a signatory by completing a form on the website and subsequently sending the form to Mr. Moi.
- One member suggested that the Project Team elaborate on what substantive materials are e-mailed (e.g., draft documents, project updates, and events). This would convey the level of ongoing communication and outreach
- Mr. Steve Haze suggested Provost & Pritchard include a clear reference and/or link in Section 2.4 to the list(s) in the Stakeholder Involvement chapter.
- Mr. Steve Haze of the Sierra Resource Conservation District suggested that, in future chapter iterations, the Project Team should highlight specific changes.

This would make it especially easier for newcomers to monitor how documents have evolved.

- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** will clearly reference a third list or organizations in a later chapter.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to track/highlight revisions and provide a clean version for all future chapters as they move forward.

Duration of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Mr. Kubit provided background for the MOU, which was originally signed in 2009 with a three-year expiration date. Refinements were drafted and accepted in 2012. Mr. Kubit asked the group for their interpretation of the MOU duration and whether the Governance chapter reflected that interpretation. The following comments and clarifications were shared:

- “The MOU states that it will remain in effect from the date of signing for 3 years, or until replaced by another agreement” (page 5, Governance chapter).
- Ms. Allen said no additional action is necessary due to the “or” qualifier.
- The MOU did not have a new expiration date (i.e., three years after 2012) because the MOU could remain in effect until it is replaced by another agreement.
- The 2012 refinements were not meant to replace the MOU, but were instead drafted and approved by the RWMG to provide additional clarity and eliminate ambiguity. The refinements are an appendix to the original MOU.
- Signatories of the original MOU remain valid.
- **AGREEMENT:** All present members agreed on the interpretation that the MOU three-year limit was the minimum tenure for the MOU and not the maximum; the MOU can remain in effect indefinitely until it is replaced by another agreement.
- Ms. Collins said the last two sentences in the first paragraph on page 5 were unnecessary and could confuse the reader. Per group consensus, Mr. Moi removed the sentences.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to confirm deletion of two sentences stating, “Most members signed the MOU in 2009...” and “The RWMG considers the refinements a formal revision...” (page 5, Governance chapter).
- **ACTION ITEM: Mr. Kamansky and Mr. Moi** to coordinate and forward Ms. Allen’s suggestions and any other RWMG suggested edits to Mr. Kubit.

Proposed Projects:

- Ms. Allen said due to the iterative nature of the RWMG planning process, it seemed premature to discuss certain MOU signing requirements, such as project proposals for DWR grant programs.

- Mr. Kubit said this topic for specific project proposals would likely be deferred to a later meeting when the group could select and prioritize projects.
- Mr. Robert Robinson of the Desert Mountain RCD asked whether DWR had signing requirements or guidelines.
 - Ms. Dooley noted that participants are required to adopt the plan if the group has an implementation project that gets funded. It is up to each individual IRWMP to decide whether if only members can propose projects. In her opinion, there is a benefit in signing the MOU because it demonstrates commitment.

Processes for Reaching Consensus

- Ms. Dooley asked if there was a clear decision making process when the group cannot reach a consensus.
- Mr. Kubit referenced the voting protocol in the MOU.
- Voting by e-mail was suggested as a later topic for consideration.

Other Editing Suggestions

- Ms. Collins of Big Sandy Rancheria said the location of the Interested Parties list may be more appropriate in the Stakeholder Involvement or Outreach chapter. The title for Section 2.4 should be just “Members” since it is preceded by the governance organization section.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to clarify language for RWMG membership and transfer the list of the non-signing members to a later chapter.
- One member noted that “fiscal agent” needed to be changed to “fiscal grantee” per the 2012 MOU refinements.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to change “fiscal agent” to “fiscal grantee” wherever it appears.
- One member requested copies of the DWR review guidelines for all RWMG members.
- **ACTION ITEM: Facilitation Team** to distribute the DWR review guidelines to RWMG members.
- In the past, the terms “Sub-committees” and “Work Groups” were used interchangeably. The group agreed that “Work Groups” was more descriptive and appropriate.
- There was a suggestion that terminology changes were more appropriate as a footnote rather than in the text narrative.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to use the term “Work Groups” in place of “Sub-committees” and remove the sentence “Some of these Work Groups...” on page 6 in the Governance chapter. Provost & Pritchard can acknowledge this terminology change in a footnote.

Consensus on Approving the Draft Governance Chapter

- Under the stipulation that the group was not giving “final approval” and would have future opportunities to review this chapter, other chapters, and the

completed draft document, the group approved the draft Governance chapter in its preliminary form. As such, Provost & Pritchard can move forward to develop other chapters.

- **AGREEMENT:** All members present approved the draft Governance chapter after Provost & Pritchard integrates members' feedback.

Benefits and Deterrents for Signing the MOU

The group brainstormed reasons that might encourage or deter organizations from signing the MOU.

- Mr. Dave Norman of Provost & Pritchard inquired as to how DWR might review implementation project proposals that had proponents who did not sign the MOU.
 - Ms. Dooley said all project proponents need to adopt the IWRMP before submitting project proposals for DWR implementation grant funding. It is up to RWMG if all proponents need to sign the MOU however.
 - Mr. Wilson noted that the MOU is the RWMG's governance structure and "rules of engagement."
- The group identified benefits for signing the MOU:
 - Ability to submit projects for funding
 - Participating groups would be more prepared to put project proposals together
 - Greater collaboration, unity, and leverage for project development and funding
 - Collaboration and integration of projects that have larger public benefits (e.g., environmental justice, clean (drinking and streams) water/water quality/quantity, water supply reliability, and emergency preparedness
 - Enables input on goal prioritization
 - Right to vote on RWMG decisions
- The group then identified reasons why organizations might not sign the MOU:
 - Problems with MOU language
 - (Internal/External) Disagreements with member organizations
 - Lack of time to participate, but may still be willing to adopt
 - Lack of awareness about RWMG work
 - Concern that tribal sovereignty would be compromised
 - Limited institutional capacity
 - Limited outreach to date
 - Avoiding ownership of process/outcome
- **ACTION ITEM:** Provost & Pritchard to integrate benefits for signing the MOU (page 6, Governance chapter) based upon group's feedback.
- It was suggested that group members consider conducting future constituent briefings and outreach to address some of the reasons organizations would not sign the MOU.

7. Review of Region Description Outline

Mr. Kamansky provided context for the region description chapter. Provost & Pritchard consolidated information about the region and outlined some of the key components on infrastructure, water systems and other water-related issues. Mr. Kubit described how outline titles are based on DWR guidelines, and he asked the group to identify missing topics or topics that should receive more attention. The group provided the following comments and recommendations:

3.3.2 – Internal Boundaries and Service Areas

- Ms. Allen said the federal land agencies (i.e., National Forest Service and National Park Service) are dominant figures in the Southern Sierra region, and they should be explicitly named and switched with Subsection 3.3.2.1.
- Ms. Dooley noted that Tribes should be listed as land use agencies. They have their own land, and the largest reservation in California is in this region.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to explicitly list federal agencies and include tribal reservations in Subsection 3.3.2.1 Land Use Agencies.

3.5 – Water Quality

- Ms. Bea Olsen of the Sierra Foothill Conservancy suggested inclusion of minerals that compromise water quality (e.g., uranium, selenium, arsenic, and salt).
- Ms. Mulholland suggested including information on irrigated land regulations.
- Ms. Dooley received confirmation that the Project Team would review/reference the Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to include mineral pollution and irrigated land regulations in Section 3.5.

3.7 – Major Water Related Objectives and Conflicts

- Some expressed concern that use of the word “Problems” has negative connotation. Suggested alternatives included “challenges”, “issues” or “competing interests”.
- Mr. Kamansky noted how conflicts are distinct from issues because there are, for example, water issues that are not the result of conflicts.
- Ms. Collins recommended deleting “Problems that lead to...” for each subsection heading.
- Several group members supported inclusion of an additional subsection that addresses factors that contribute to conflicts and issues. This would convey the need for developing goals, objectives, and implementation strategies.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to minimize perceived inflammatory language in Section 3.7. Additionally, Subsection 3.7.1 should address factors that contribute to conflicts and issues but Section 3.7 should still include methods for conflict resolution.

3.2.1 – Physical and Hydrological Conditions

- Mr. Haze said there has been extensive research in the region that should be incorporated in some way. Mr. Kamansky agreed that the region is unique in that

it has tremendous research capacity, and that ongoing work should be acknowledged.

- Mr. Kamansky said some research may be more appropriately placed in the Data and Data Management chapter.
- Ms. Allen suggested the Project Team review and acknowledge an MOU signed 5 years ago that studied climate change.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to consider inclusion of a paragraph/section on selected research (and potentially data gaps) at the end of each watershed discussion in Subsections 3.2.1.1-8.
- Mr. Haze said California Water Plan updates should be integrated with the region description.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to reference California Water Plan updates to create integration/synergies with other RWMG report updates.

Mr. Kamansky noted that Region Description material will be reviewed at the November Coordinating Committee meeting and subsequently available for RWMG review in December.

AGREEMENT: All members present approved the preliminary Region Description outline after integration of the group's feedback.

8. Discussion of IRWMP Goals and Objectives

Mr. Kamansky provided background information as to how the draft Goals and Objectives were originally developed. Provost & Pritchard consolidated from previous RWMG discussions. Rather than review and refine the draft goals and objectives, the conversation highlighted various approaches for refining and ranking IRWMP goals and objectives. The group provided the following comments and suggestions:

- Goals should be considered big and broad, while objectives are specific and measurable.
- The goals and objectives should maintain the large-scale watershed perspective to avoid favoring specific entities or agendas for funding.
- Goals could be considered as equally valued, and the objectives within major goal categories could be ranked.
- Multiple approaches to ranking can be considered: ordinal (e.g., 1-20) and categorical (e.g., High/Med/Low; Urgent/Important/Would be nice; 3X3 grid - Importance (1-3) v. Urgency (1-3); and the Delphi Method, which is survey-based).
- The group supported a set of criteria for how to rank proposed projects. Suggested criteria include the project's readiness, feasibility and costs, importance, urgency, range of influence, etc.
- The group did not reach consensus on whether or not to rank objectives.
- **ACTION ITEM: Provost & Pritchard** to write the goals and objectives chapter without ranking. Provost & Pritchard will further discuss ranking and present 2-3 alternative approaches.

- DWR recommended the group minimize ambiguity in their ranking system. DWR has general mandates for improving water management in California, but also wants local regions to take ownership over specific IRWMPs and associated priorities. Future proposals should explicitly address which goals and objectives the project meets.

9. Discussion of Website and Future Outreach Strategy

Mr. Kamansky provided an outreach strategy update. Many outreach materials have been recently developed, and the Project Team will have a draft outreach plan for RWMG review in December. Currently SRT is housing the website, but it remains an open question as to whether to keep the same website or create a new one. The Project Team also asked the group to consider appropriate website content as part of the overall outreach strategy. The discussion helped secure input on the next steps for outreach and how to develop the website:

- Mr. Kubit recommended a new website since the current one is somewhat confusing.
- Mr. Moi said the ideal would be to have a separate domain for SS IRWMP. Domain name registration is approximately \$15 per year.
- The group recommended the Project Team further examine the costs for building and sustaining a separate website.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Project Team to investigate and present website alternatives to RWMG.

10. Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Mr. Wilson reviewed action items. Mr. Kamansky thanked participants for their feedback and input.

Next Coordinating Committee Meetings:

- Thursday, November 14, 2013, 1 to 3 pm, teleconference
- Thursday, January 14, 2014, 1 to 3 pm, teleconference

Next RWMG Meetings:

- Thursday, December 10, 2013, 1 to 5 pm, Visalia
- Thursday, February 13, 2014, 1 to 5 pm, Fresno

11. Related Project Information

Several announcements highlighted related project gatherings, including the following:

Tulare Lake Regional Forum

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR), in cooperation with local entities and organizations, is holding a Regional Forum to gather and share information relating to the

California Water Plan and statewide/local Integrated Water Management. The Forum will also evaluate DWR's regional approach, asking for feedback on ways to improve outreach.

Why Participate?

- The Forum agenda will provide an overview of the Public Review Draft for Update 2013 of the Water Plan. Information will focus on new and revised content, with details on how to submit comments on the document.
- Extra time will be spent discussing the Tulare Lake regional report, which describes regional water conditions and the water management planning context.
- Hear updates on related programs: Integrated Flood Management efforts, water studies and outreach involving disadvantaged communities, the Governor's Drinking Water Task Force, Irrigated Ag Lands program, CV Salts and more.
- Influence DWR's future outreach efforts.

Representatives of water agencies and regional groups; local, state, Tribal and federal government; watershed and community groups; conservancies; and the public are welcome and needed for successful dialog.

Forum Agenda, Materials and Webinar Information:

Please go to www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials/index.cfm?subject=oct1813 to download the agenda, webinar link and conference call number. Both the webpage and agenda provide the webinar and conference call information for remote participation.

DWR IRWM Strategic Planning Meeting

The Strategic Plan Development Team just released an "advance materials" package to IRWM Strategic Plan Workshop registrants. The purpose of the package is to help registrants prepare for workshop discussions on alignment needs and solutions, and objectives and strategies for the future of IRWM in California. This package will be available to all new workshops registrants.

If you haven't done so already, please register for the upcoming workshops, which are free. You can learn more about the workshops and register at: <http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/stratplan/workshops.cfm>

12. Attendees

1. Julie Allen
2. Miles Baty
3. Sarah Campe (telephone)
4. Jaime Collins
5. Michael Corcoran (telephone)
6. Michelle Dooley
7. Steve Haze
8. Stephanie Horii (Assistant Facilitator)
9. Bobby Kamansky
10. Owen Kubit
11. Chris Moi
12. Soapy Mulholland
13. David Norman
14. Bea Olsen

15. Robert Robinson
16. Jarrod Takemoto

17. Rich Wilson (Facilitator)