

Southern Sierra IRWMP

Planning Meeting

July 28, 2010 1:00 - 4:30 pm

Sierra National Forest Headquarters, Clovis

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Chris Acree – Revive the San Joaquin
Carole Clum – Tulare Co. Citizens for Responsible Growth/Sierra Club
Michelle Dooley – Department of Water Resources
Sarge Green – CWI/CSU Fresno
Steve Haze - SRCD - Upper San Joaquin River Watershed Program
Brian Newton – Tulare Co. Audubon Society/TCCRG/Sierra Club
Bob Puls – Tulare Co. RCD
John Shelton – Department of Fish and Game
Robyn Smith – Yosemite/Sequoia RC&D
K. Andy Stone – U.S. Forest Service/Sierra National Forest
Gary Temple – Sierra Resource Conservation District/SAFCA
Kerri Vera – Tule River Tribe/Environmental Dept.
Julie Allen – Facilitator, Sequoia Riverlands Trust
Elissa Brown – Consultant/Project Grant Writer
Bobby Kamansky, Project Manager, Sequoia Riverlands Trust
Frances Tweed, Administration, Sequoia Riverlands Trust

Via Phone:

Jeannie Habben – Upper San Joaquin River Project/Madera Region RWMG
James May – Tulare Co. RMA

Meeting Notes by Agenda Item

1. Introductions

Julie Allen started the meeting at 1:10.

Julie introduced herself and everyone around the table did the same. Then those on the phone identified themselves.

2. Review of Minutes/Agenda

a. Standing Agenda Review

Julie asked if anyone had any additions, corrections, or suggestions for the agenda. Andy Stone said that a new Forest Hydrologist was just hired by the Forest, his name is Frank Kaebly. Steve Haze said that Robyn Smith had to take her daughter to the orthodontist and is running late. He asked if we could defer 3.a. Fiscal Agent Selection Process Status Report, until her arrival, and she will try to get to the meeting as soon as possible. It was decided to switch agenda items 3 and 4.

Julie reminded everyone that we have both a tape recorder to record our meetings, and the phone. The phones don't always work well, so everyone needs to use their "I'm mad at my kid" voices.

b. Notes from the last meeting. Bobby said that at the last meeting we decided that we would post draft meeting notes on the Sequoia Riverlands website, and they would be the unabridged version. That's taking a lot of time, so we're going to do the best that we can to abridge them and then post them and we will allow them to be deferred up to two meetings until they are automatically approved. All the previous notes should be posted on the website now, including the June meeting. Frances brought one copy of the June meeting notes, and the reason why we're getting skimpy on copies because these are ten pages of notes. If you'd like to take a look at that paper copy, go ahead. Otherwise, they're on the website to approve or comment. Julie said we need clarification of one point, that Bobby said "automatically approved". She asked that Bobby review for everyone what the "automatically" was. Bobby said that, if there are comments at the next meeting, then we can move the approval to the next meeting after that, so for two meetings we can forestall any approval of the minutes so that we have enough time to review them and comment on them as appropriate but, once the second meeting approaches, if there are no objections, we can go ahead and approve them and they go into draft, and from draft into final format. Julie said, it's all by acceptance, unless somebody has an issue with some piece of one of the minutes after two months, they simply go from draft to final. Julie asked what the proper forum or method of raising an issue was. Bobby said to just comment in the meeting or send he or Frances an email and it will be corrected. John Shelton asked that for those who don't have email, he assumed a phone call would work too? Bobby said yes, that's why we brought a hard copy too. Jim May asked if that was in relation to two meetings or two months? Bobby thought it was two meetings, and he clarified with the committee that that's how everyone would like to proceed. All agreed to two meetings.

4. Major Topics of Discussion

a. Update on planning guidelines and timeline

Bobby said that what we've been doing is proceeding to brainstorm and work on the outline of the planning grant proposal and also we've also been anticipating the release of the final guidelines and PSP, which he understands has now been released. Michelle Dooley, DWR, said she did have it. Bobby said what we wanted to do, discussed in the Coordinating Committee

meeting, was to discuss some of the differences that have come about, in terms of the timeline, the budget, and some of the nuts and bolts that relates to that budget. Elissa has been kind enough to prepare an application outline, a revised budget, and the notes on the revised budget, which Bobby passed around.

Elissa said that, because of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the South Sierra IRWMP had a grant writer that started working with you almost two years ago. There was a “freeze” and the guidelines and other things didn’t come out when they were expected to. In spite of that, we’ve been moving forward, not with a specific objective that they asked for in the IRWMP, but with a general overall approach to how we were going to formulate our Integrated Regional Water Management planning process. The overall perspective that we’re taking from this region is that, in addition to this being a plan that outlines and prioritizes projects, we’re looking at this plan specifically assisting the management of the region, so our planning process is probably to some degree less about projects and more about process. The reason for that is we have a lot of land public managers in this area and they have their own sources of funding, they also have their own policies and procedures and we felt that overall this work management in the region would be benefited as much from bringing these managers together to learn how to work more collaboratively and to share information and resources as it would from going out to DWR and asking for implementation plan dollars. The way Elissa thinks about it is that we’re probably going to be a four-step program of IRWMP implementation funding. There’s a lot of things in terms of applying for that funding, often there are barriers in having an application submitted that we may not be able to overcome very easily in terms of money to do engineering or feasibility studies. We may be able to overcome that and we may find other sources of resources. What can we do with this planning process where it will continue to benefit the region by developing relationships between the entities that manage the resources here by finding a way to share information and by building all of our capacities to move forward and do really good resource management. The reason why she started with that is because that’s really the basis of the budget and workplan that we developed and what we did is we went through a process where we identified what were the things that would most benefit the management of the area and we were looking at including those in our planning process. Remember we put out fire education processes and we also did a survey on other entities that don’t necessarily come to our meetings and we came up with two or three major items that were really the priorities. These were neglected in the last version of the budget, which was a three year planning process and it included some studies and plans that we have since modified somewhat. For one thing, in the last meeting that I wasn’t here, the idea was to move it from a three year planning process to a two year planning process, which she thinks is good. In this new budget, it’s actually a 28 month period; that’s two month to ramp up, two months to do recording of the end, and 24 months signing process. In addition, we have the benefit of listening to some of the Department of Water Resources sessions, learning sessions, feedback sessions, and see their initial draft, Proposal Solicitation Package, and what

she got from those was that the studies that we were proposing wouldn't necessarily be considered eligible costs, they aren't really DWR priorities. One of the things that rated very high when we did that prioritization process, was to have a hydrologic study of the region. We wanted to find out what was going on in terms of water resources. That was going to be a very large study and we really never thought we were going to use the IRWMP funds for that study and we going to maybe go with local groundwater assistance funding. That is an item that she kept it in as a placeholder just because everybody really liked it, but we're probably going to take it out of the budget after time. Another thing that we looked at that was a priority was disadvantage communities. Bobby has done a lot of individual outreach, in addition to these sessions, to those communities, and found that in some of those communities, they have a barrier, even before they can apply for implementation funds they have to do certain studies, engineering studies, feasibility studies, they're not large studies, they're maybe \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000 studies, but in this area, that's a really large barrier and we were looking to see if we could use some of the IRWMP planning funds to pay for those costs so that we could move these projects forward. We got the sense that that's probably also wasn't going to be considered an eligible cost. We have gently identified other sources of funds for those and Bobby will talk about that later on in this meeting. So that's also going to be taken out of this budget. Aside from that, the changes in the budget are reflected in the Notes on the Revised Budget handout. Again, this budget reflects our orientation towards collaboration, information sharing, bringing people together, fostering those relationships and that knowledge sharing so that this can build up capacity to plan successfully for the region even after we used up all the funds that we will hopefully get. There are certain tasks in the budget, the first one is to Manage Collaborative Process and Public Input. This is a process, which is what we're doing now which, with our Planning Committee, which is the Regional Water Management Group, meeting every other month; a Coordinating Committee, which is like a steering committee, meeting on the alternative months; in addition, there's specific outreach and input meetings and those are when we go out to the watersheds, to the tribes, or to counties, water districts that don't manage to get to the Planning Committee and Coordinating Committee to get feedback on specific issues. In addition we have website, which is informative about our process and we've put in some additional funding in there for the plan review and adoption process, because a lot is going out to the individual entities, making presentations to those entities and making sure they have feedback on the draft plan before it gets into the final plan. The changes in this are that we went from 36 months to 24 months; we went from 18 meetings to 12 meetings in most of these. The same amount of presentations under the plan. The outreach and input meeting, again we've scaled down from 18 meetings to 12 meetings. Otherwise, that is pretty much the same.

Elissa knows this kind of feeds into the discussion we're going to have later about a Fiscal Agent, there is money, in the third column of the chart, for 2-1/2 years, at \$10,000 a year and that's just a bottom line fixed amount. In addition to that, there is a grant administrator and this is a person who

would do the invoices, the billing, all the payments, take care of expenses, make sure that the reports got in on time, you really need a person like that to do a good job on the grants, that's an additional cost in there and that could be an employee of the Fiscal Agent or it could be a contractor for the Fiscal Agent. In addition, there is some sort of staff that works with the project and the staff that really makes this whole project up is the project manager, a facilitator, and an administrator. The way that I've written it, is they're all contract positions, it's very likely that the administrator could be an employee of the Fiscal Agent, that could be worked either way, because usually you pay more for a contractor but you don't have to pay benefits, so it kind of evens out. We've got a project manager that has quite a few hours. At the very end of the budget I totaled the project manager's hours. Basically for the project manager it's about 57 hours a month, a little bit more than half time. So that explains the overall how we're going to make this happen. Plus the fact that we have a very active process that engages the Planning Committee and the Coordinating Committee and does a lot of outreach. In fact, the way that we're thinking about this is, we have a planning firm that's writing the IRWM, they go out and write two sections, and then they come back and they review that with the Coordinating Committee and the Planning Committee and the Planning and Coordinating Committees help prioritize the recommendations. Those recommendations really become our whole project level of the plan.

On the second page of the Budget Outline, Task 2, the first item is workshops. Elissa said, with all these meetings, why do we need workshops as well? These workshops are planned as all day workshops, they're workshops that will bring in stakeholders that don't necessarily come on a regular basis to the meetings, they may only come to one workshop. For instance, there may be a workshop on integrated flood control. There may be a workshop on climate change, so there will be stakeholders that are really only interested in certain workshops and they'll come there. And we also have money in the workshop budget to bring in some technical expertise so people who have done work like this in other areas, people who are experts in other areas, we have plenty of money in there for planning these workshops, implementing these workshops, and following up on these workshops. And this becomes another way where we can bring together the resource managers to increase their knowledge and look at how can we work together as a collaboratively. What are some best practices that we can adopt? What are some ways that they can move forward in an integrated fashion? Previously we had two workshops a year for three years, so we had six workshops. We changed that so we actually have three workshops a year, but we only have them for two years, so we still end up with six workshops. The workshops aren't that expensive, they end up being about \$9,000 a workshop, you're only talking about somewhere between ½ million and a million dollars of the budget, and that's not a whole lot. She thinks they're going to be very effective in helping us outline our priorities, helping us figure out integrated strategies, these are all things that we really want to see in the IRWM plan.

Task 3 - There was a task in here about assess law system needs for studies and reports that were for disadvantaged communities. Elissa doesn't know if she had talked about that that had been taken out, we'll find other funding for that. We also had hydrological capacity study, as you see, it's in there in Task 6, but none of it it's in the grant request and after this, she will take it out, she didn't want to take it out without telling you about it because she didn't want anyone to be upset. She knows what a priority this was. Back to Task 3, assist stakeholder agencies and improve outreach public education and stakeholder involvement. This was one of our top priorities in improving group management within the region and we have a lot of public agencies, a lot of land managers, and making it easier for them to work with stakeholders in the communities, was a high priority. What we decided on this is the best way to do this was to establish watershed committees within these communities, because that becomes a sustainable group that can continue into the future and work with these managers to work on these issues. So we have some funding in there, not a lot, for the project manager and the administrator to work with communities and help them establish watersheds. If you'll notice, there's a \$5,000 funding match, that is match we're going to try and get other funding for that and there's a couple areas where she can think of the National Forest Foundation has funding for things like that, and also the Sierra Nevada Conservancy may have some capacity building fund.

Task 4 - This was another one of our top management priorities. Elissa asked Julie if she would want to give an assessment of what this is and why it's important for us? Not the Forest Service model, but just in general. Bobby asked Andy Stone if he would like to talk about it too, the importance of the whole CWE (Cumulative Watershed Effects) approach by watershed. Andy said that the method is imperfect and a rather crude method is to use a watershed based model on what's called an equivalent roaded acres model, basically any kind of surface disturbance that happens, like a bulldozer activity, or timber sales or something, is related back to an equivalent roaded acre and we've established watershed sensitivity levels and thresholds in the model feet, that threshold is determined from a higher level evaluation of watersheds, so in any project, if we're looking at 100 watersheds, and we're talking smaller than 9,000 acre watersheds, if we have a bunch of watersheds to look at, we have one guy look at them, this is a high grading method or a triage method that we use to identify those that are lower threshold of return. That's how they use it. Julie said we needed to clarify one point here, and that is, this particular model is a risk model, it's a probability model. There's a probability of incurring a significant effect, it's not, in an analytic sense, specifically a Cumulative Watershed. She doesn't even get any leads on this, but the point of desirability of having such a model be part of the SOP for our operation is that within any given watershed you're essentially able to keep score and keep track cumulatively of what the additive effects of various watershed management actions, as well as development. This doesn't leave out the Camp Nelson's of this world. It explicitly includes them, so this would be a way of being able to be comprehensive by watershed throughout the region, in terms of what the effect of man's activities on that landscape actually are. Elissa said, as she understands it, to some extent, it's a

database of all the activities that are or have taken place that might impact a watershed. Julie said yes. Elissa said it's a way of analyzing what an additional activity what that impact would be, based on what on things that are already there. Julie said when she talks about keeping score, she's talking about looking at the effects cumulative, additively, and what happens when you do something in a watershed. Andy has a database, and they give them a baseline on that watershed, with existing conditions. If they add in project A, how would that influence the watershed, would it take it over the threshold, if it does, than that creates other actions that are required to either have higher line evaluation, or some other mitigation that we need to employ, but again, the Forest Service model might not be the model you want to use. There are other much more scientifically based and complex that require a lot of time and dedication, and Julie said, and maintenance. Julie is always looking at the maintenance problems when looking at these enormous databases and so, once again, we don't need to get too far into the weeds, but, from her perspective, one of the real pluses of the Forest Service model, or similar one, is that you don't have to know everything. You don't have to have a giant database that someone is updating on a daily basis, because she calls it a risk model, as opposed to an effect/impact model.

Elissa wanted to back up and why we even want to look at having a model for the region. This was considered to be important and she doesn't think that the idea was that we have one model that everybody applies. I don't know if it's that the model of the database's feed into one another so that we get better information or, in some ways, this was thought that this would be a benefit to the region. Julie said because we would be able, at any given time, to develop a very comprehensive view of what is happening to those watersheds within our boundaries. We are in the business of source, it's a planning tool, it basically underlies almost everything what we would do, not to mention almost everything that the Forest Service and the Park Service, would do as well. Julie said she stepped out of role briefly because she had some specific things to say to help the group with CWE.

Steve Haze asked Sarge Green, since he has lots of experience, how useful this would be, as far as our planning would be? Sarge said that there's quite a bit of work that's been done already on, for example, public lands. His question, is whether or not the existing model integrates public lands with private lands, and he doesn't know the answer to that. And that's where the rubber meets the road. He thinks we can get a pretty good idea of what's going on in the Forest Service and National Park land, it's the private land he's concerned about, with land use changes due in the way of the effectiveness and the operability of those models, so he doesn't have an answer to the question. He hasn't looked at enough of them yet. Steve Haze asked if he sees it as a task that we should be pursuing? Julie suggested we ask Andy to comment on that private land question. Andy said that the method that Sequoia uses and the method that the Sierra uses are two different methods. Julie said that the question that Sarge had was whether private land is included as well. Julie said on the Sequoia, sometimes. Sarge said that our goal is using this as a communications tool that people can

then figure out what's happening, or they have an idea of what relative importance things might have in the watersheds. He thinks that's the more generic concept that you want to embrace is, if we do this, what happens to this, and he thinks that's of value. But you might have to rewrite the script to get that done.

Elissa said if you look at the budget, you'll see under Task 4 there's a committee that's looking at the various models and all it's got in there for the budget is a project manager to basically facilitate that committee. If you look under Task 6, they have \$26,000. Provost & Pritchard gave us an estimated budget and they did a really nice job of it. They went through our budget and determined, if they were going to write the plan for us, where would their involvement be in all of these tasks and how much money would they want to put in and who would do it. So the cumulative specs analysis that they proposed, evaluating the CWE model, developing model operational capacity and framing up the input data, which she thinks what we're going to get from this is, as it said, this plan will not always result in products. Sometimes it will resolve in proposals, and we can take those proposals further and use those proposals to apply for funding. Elissa's idea with this issue was that we really do a comprehensive analysis of what's out there, what would be valuable for us, and what way would it be valuable so that we could make proposals in the future for additional funding to link them all together or, if it's not needed, maybe it's just a matter of communication that's needed or whatever. John Shelton added that the other big contest of this model for analysis that we do will give for us is our ability to assess the positive that we do. Forest Service uses it right now, and if we do this project, how do we mitigate. One of the things we're going to want to be able to do as we go forward in this process in five or six years from now, we really want to be able to come up and say, this is what we've done to improve the watershed. We're going to do things that hopefully are on the other end of that equation. We're going to go out and do good things that hopefully improve the water and the carrying capacity of the water etc. so this analysis is something that's on the other end of it and is very important. And the other thing to keep in mind, besides the public and private, is often we have the big track lands that are tribal that we've got to be able to figure out how to incorporate those and they're very important for our downstream IRWMP, because if we can put everything together, at least in a conceptual way, we may be able to go to these people in the Kern IRWMP, the upper Kings, the valley floor of the San Joaquin, and say, if we do this and this, we may be able to improve your water throughout the year, to use this as a tool to leverage funding for some of the others. Elissa said that there are two things she's thinking right now: 1) that can actually possibly become part of our proposal project evaluation tool, and 2) this seems to relate to the last item under Task 6, Data Management Portal. She did not put this in the budget, in the original budget, but she's thinking about putting it back. The reason is, as a substitution, since this was their response. In Task 1 we have the website data management, we don't have as much in there, only about one-third of what they suggested for the entire task, they have \$115,000 in there. She has a phone meeting scheduled with Liz and Steve from the Sierra Nevada

Conservancy. They are the data management people. They are also the GIS people, so they do a lot of this data management and analysis on a large regional basis, and what Elissa wants to know is, what is already going on within this region. She believes that there is a Southern Sierra Partnership. Bobby said that there are two groups; one is a collaborative group and the other is a partnership and they are separate. Elissa said that one of them is working on having a data portal. Bobby said that is the collaborative. Elissa was wondering if we, through the IRWMP process, leverage the work that they're already doing, expand the system that they're proposing, and make that data entry information available to all the land managers and all the planners throughout the region in a way that's user friendly so you don't have to be a Forest Service GIS expert to use it. So this budget item is up in the air.

Sarge Green wanted to offer another concept. He thinks we have a really well laid out strategic process, but one of the tactical issues is the idea of crisis management or a tactical group that works on adaptive things. What if something goes wrong while we're in the strategic process and we need to react to it and deal with it and perhaps even develop a project out of it. More specifically, what if we have another three years running with a drought and some of the cracks in the Sierra run out of water and we have people without any water up there. Despite the problem with the original decision to move a number of people up in there, we do have to deal with some issues that can come up as part of the process that develops here. We might have to go ahead and do a hydrologic study in a groundwater area, that's something that these two guys have been involved in already through Fresno County and he's on the Water Advisory Committee and we did submit that and he talked to Phil Larson and they're going to get it back on the agenda. We might need a process in here someplace that's adaptive to those kind of circumstances so that there might be a pot of money that does come up for directing it to solve a problem. Steve Haze said like the fires now in Kern County. Elissa said that the processes that we already have in place, what would they lack. These are the processes: a Coordinating Committee, a Planning Committee (the Regional Water Management Group), and we have a workshop every four months. So that's a lot of resources that we can put towards that kind of a crisis, but it pulls them off the overall planning. Bobby said there isn't anything that says that those couldn't be towards the emerging issues. Sarge said that we need a placeholder for that probability or possibility. Elissa said what she needs to do is write some flexibility in the timeline. She doesn't think we need to add anymore resources, but we need to think about how we would adapt the resources if they got pulled off for something. John Shelton asked if we could also modify a workshop? Elissa and Sarge said yes. Sarge said that a specific example that might come up again fairly quickly is the effort on the part of the tribes, especially down in Springville, to get that stored reservoir that they want to get built down there for their long-term water supply. How do we advance that through this process to get them directed funds, if there's a match that they need. They've gone for federal allocation to do that. He happened to be in Washington D.C. when they gave testimony to get that going and it still hasn't happened. Elissa said that's an

interesting question and she's not absolutely sure that it all goes under this discussion because that's really a question of, what is the role of the Regional Water Management Group in addition to developing a plan and adopting a plan. What is this group going to do, and what can it move forward to do. Julie asked, in terms of advocacy? Elissa said it could be advocacy, it could be supporting projects and grants, it could be getting additional funding. The things that she's put on the Parking Lot are disadvantaged communities, and the hydrological study, it could be getting additional grants that help with the planning process. She doesn't want to talk about them now, there will be time after we do the application. Bobby said there's also supply and reliability that comes in the plan that's a pretty big part, and it could be that we need to identify some things that need to be done, or feasibility or a project may need to come out of that. Sarge is right, eastern Fresno County has some dollars, but they're pretty low output right now. Elissa will keep that in mind.

Elissa went over what Provost & Pritchard estimated in Task 6. The first point, Collaborative Process and Public Input for \$35,000, is from their budget, when we were talking about a three year time line. The fact that we're talking about a two year timeline could reduce this somewhat.

Steve Haze had a question, related to Task 5. He said that Elissa mentioned earlier that she was talking about dropping that as a Task. What point in time in this discussion will that be addressed? Elissa said we could talk about it now. Her understanding was that this type of water study was not really what they were looking at in terms of IRWMP funding. They were looking at developing a plan. Specific studies that were absolutely essential for developing the plan we would consider, but this is a very large cost item and there are other sources of funding for these kind of studies, that would be more appropriate for groundwater assistance and that's coming out in January. Sarge said there is one out right now, that we might want to take a quick look at from the Strategic Growth Council. Elissa's impression is that the Strategic Growth Council's grants were not for that kind of thing. Sarge thought that too, but this is exactly the kind of study that it should be. He said that if we had a county that applied, it's for counties, cities, districts that can apply and have a county apply, and get it done, then the information can plug into the plan later on. Elissa said she was putting this on the Parking Lot, the group is not abandoning it, but it's for purposes of a grant budget.

Steve Haze wanted to go back to the Coordinating Committee session on Monday, that we talked about the state water plan and being in alignment with that. As we're talking about this being our plan proposal outline, should we have something that identifies that we're going through the exercise? Elissa said that that is a really good point and she was going to put that on her calendar. Steve brought up the point in our meeting on Monday that the state water plan already did quite a bit of analysis on the foothills and we were going to look at that and see to what extent that really fills the need that we have for our IRWMP plan and to what extent that may be something that we want to try to get additional funding for in the future. Bobby said the

problem with those numbers, at least the way he's looked at them, is that they're heavily weighed towards the supply side and the surface water and one of the things we've found in exploring this in our Planning Committee, especially with the work that you have done with the San Joaquin watershed, is that there's a lot of water that's not being accounted for in the fractured bedrock aquifer, and in the California water plan, it states that, but doesn't address it in any kind of quantitative fashion. Steve Haze said, in actuality, it does exist but it's at a more detailed level. There is some amount of articulation that when we submit our proposal it has taken into account state water plan, the regional report, and one other, the one that deals with foothill and mountain communities, separately, which I forgot to mention, that could be very beneficial, so it shows that we've gone through and done a check list and that what we're proposing is in alignment as relates to the hydrological condition as expressed in those three separate reports. Elissa said thanks, and that's a very valuable point for her. She was sure that as she went through the outline, that would come up, because they do ask us questions in the outline. Bobby said that it calls out for priorities specifically.

Elissa asked Michelle Dooley, DWR, if she had any feedback about what we've talked about so far. Has anything jumped out as not being appropriate, or do you think it's a great idea, or whatever. Michelle said first, the USDA, the Rural Counties Water, we have a regional coordinator in the office. Sarge Green said that Glenda Humiston was in their office on Monday and they're talking to her about some of their opportunities to help with disadvantaged communities. Sarge said that there is the Tulare Rural Water Strategy and their \$2 million, but then we're hammering on EPA and USDA Rural Development to get involved in a collective and collaborative way. They operate much differently in many respects and so they're proposing a center at Fresno State, headed up by Karl Longley, to help out with the disadvantaged communities issues, especially the rural drinking water and wastewater management. That would be one of the pieces we could bring to the table, hopefully. And we're hammering on Congress and the agencies and so far we've had pretty good support. Pete Silva at EPA is strongly behind it, as well as all our Congressional delegations that's going to work on it. He has a concept paper that Michelle asked for a copy of. In particular, the region that was added, the mountain counties region, does not reach down to Mariposa County. Bobby said that's true, it does not reach that far south. Sarge said he's often mentioned that he's talked to John Mills up at the Tuolumne, because that's the next IRWM above what Jeannie's doing. We need to keep in touch with them and they might offer some advice in that regard as they move through their process. Michelle Dooley said that the hydrologic capacity they established is perfectly fine, especially for a place that doesn't have anything. Your IRWM plan does not have to function off of that study, you can have a plan and not have it include the study. It could be now or later. Bobby said that we've gotten some mixed messages saying that it's for a plan, not for studies. We certainly think it's a worthwhile expenditure, we just want to be cautious and put our energy where we think it's most going to get funded. Michelle said she knows that there is the grant workshop at the end of August and what we can do is keep this in the budget

and then discuss it at that workshop. Michelle said we're incredibly organized and well thought out. She was wondering if we have a sense of an amount. Elissa said we were hoping that we would come in under \$1 million, we thought we would more competitive that way. Bobby said that another thing that's important to think about is that the local groundwater assistance grant, when he spoke with planning firms they're saying that when they applied, it required a groundwater management plan.

Elissa said that those groundwater studies are nationwide groundwater studies and these are not. Plus the AB 32 studies have no additional research that needs to be done to those. That is the gathering of all the information from water irrigation district the argument which should not apply to us because we do not have well irrigation district and they don't have the information on ground water levels because that is not the situation up here. I would make the argument to DWR that this is not applicable to us. We could also look at the state water plan, we could say there is nothing we could that would give more information without additional research that is already in the state plan. Michelle said she will take that back with her. Elissa would like to know when we would be eligible this would make a difference in how we approach the process. Steve noted that he thinks that would be really helpful because the state water plan at its highest level to the most detailed units, there are resources with DWR in Fresno such as, Chris Montoya and Michael, and that could include our grant proposal with that interaction. Elissa said what we could do is use our IRWMP proposal to get to the point to be eligible for the local groundwater assistance grant by filling in any blanks that we think we should get before we go toward the local groundwater assistant grant. We could use the actual water quality studies to find a way to make it satisfy DWR requirements but also add to our knowledge to design the most appropriate studies to find the most information. Elissa asks somebody to begin estimating, maybe Gary and Steve to work with Michelle to explore this a bit more, in terms of a hydrologic study to move a bit further down the road. Gary noted there have been actions taken in the past this broadening it out has been very focused in the Auberry/Prather and Eastern Fresno County and upper San Joaquin, but it could be a model applied. One other option, Michelle may be interested in taking back to her Fresno office, DWR has done different groundwater studies in the past. The DWR Fresno office could do the big part of the study themselves and subcontract out the additional help. Radon studies have been done in the past and other well sampling and put together reports. It may be a way for them to get some directed funding which has helped us in the Southern Sierra. Bobby noted that he thinks this might be really ideal, the other thing to note here, Michelle, is that there is such a large makeover here from across the region we actually have a handful of volunteer wells in each watershed that would help the study. The land trust has quite a few wells on its property that they have already been monitoring would be willing to put that forward and Gary has been working on that as well, would not have to challenge the public Gary noted that one of the issues on this, a lot of times contracting out with the DWR in the past they have gone to Fresno State and had Carl Longley to be their lead investigator go through the water again

John Suen has done the work on the ground water but that has mostly been quality, it has not been resolving the issue of quantity. That is the gap that is missing. Gary has gone to LNL and everyone else to figure out who it is that has the best technology to figure out the size of the cracks and what there long term sustainability is. Elissa noted that it would be good to take this offline and let's get a subcommittee that looks at it. Bobby, Sarge, Gary.... (Bobby says to remind y about a subcommittee relative to the hydrological capacity)

What role does climate change play in the whole hydrological management? Bobby noted that is one that I was going to add to the list and continued that it would not necessarily take the surface water capacity off the table from the hydro-electric effort either, for a couple of reasons: 1. It informs the downstream groups of the value of the upper watershed if we know more about it. Even though most of the streams are known as what is fully appropriated up here the water is dedicated to somebody nonetheless are there actions or activities to manage it better in the face of climate change is one of the issues. 2. The problem of removing brushy vegetation that eats up the water can increase the water supply by 5 or 10% based on vegetation management. There are still some issues related to surface runoff that may have some value to keep on the table also with hydrologic capacity. Elissa noted that this could be more of a water strategy. Gary noted that they could be, but thinks they are interrelated. Carol Clum noted that on National Public Radio they had a report with the National Research Council in regard to global climate change they expect a two-four fold increase in wildland fire. Julie wanted to pause here, need to understand what the action item is here Elissa noted that it was to create a hydrologic capacity study subcommittee, Bobby and Elissa will work together on this. Bobby noted that we certainly know that Gary would chair the committee. Steve noted that he thinks Caroline Hunsaker Would play a critical role. She has an ongoing study.

Elissa wanted to want to move forward because of the time frame. She went going to go over the application outline. I have done work on the outline of the application and we have to understand this is what they ask for; a budget, a work-plan, information that was already in on that document, and a little something on our approach, so this is basically there a few things that need to be added but I feel very confident about where we are since we have been working on this for a long time. I just started outlining the grant application, which is the way that I work, what questions do they ask you, what are the requirements. I want to go through it really quickly except for the areas where there are questions. The authorizing documentation is paperwork, the eligible applicant documentation is paperwork, and then the workplan. First, the background: what is the regional water management group? What are the responsibilities, we have this it was already in our draft. Region, description of the region, how the region was selected, we have that, Information about existing RWOP plans, no RWOP plans exist, summary of plans for the region, we already have this. The public process used to identify stakeholders that are included, we have all that. The process to identify the regions communities, how they have been engaged, we have that. That is the

background. Then the proposed IRWM plan approach. Our overall approach is that the planning process should result in a plan, that it should also improve integrated resource management in the region with stakeholder education collaboration and build the capacity to implement and apply. Stakeholder involvement, we have the regional management group which is the planning committee and the Coordinating Committee. We are going to planning as part of our approach we plan to develop watershed based committees to increase the involvement of community stakeholders. We are going to have outreach and input sessions provide involvement agency government staff and communities and we are encouraging disadvantaged communities and tribal involvement. Our budget includes travel funds for disadvantaged community representatives too. Next: The proper use to identify the use of water related objectives and content. We have done initial outreach surveys. We have done some divisions at our coordinating and planning committee meetings. In addition it was suggested that we look at the California water plan that identifies the specific regional issues. Bobby has had a lot of meetings with individual stakeholder meetings these came out as individual stakeholder meetings. (Next: Process used to determine criteria for developing regional priorities. This is where we start getting into what we have done and what we plan to do. We have not done everything with relation to the water-related objectives and concepts, but a lot has been done. We want to start moving toward developing criteria for regional priorities. Again we have done a little bit in that area but we could do more.) So the question is when do we do that? It could be when we start our planning process, but after we have approval from the dept. of water resources to have facilitated sessions by the center of collaborative policy. We have talked a bit about how we are going to use that. These are the people who facilitated the water plan. Bobby noted that he has not brought that entirely home yet, need update at committee. Elissa (Needs to be addressed.) If we can get CCP, we are hoping we might be able to get them to work on our criteria, our objectives, our contracts, and get the fluff out before we start our planning process. We will have to work on developing criteria for recommending projects for funding - that may be the subject of one of the workups. Stakeholder workshops explore practices involve innovative strategies to enhance the water management portfolio of the region. Next: Data and Technical Analysis...we are still working on that. We have collected the plans and studies that exist for the region. The question is - How do we do this integrated data management within the region and as I said I will be talking with Liz and Steve, from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy about that. Bobby said that he thinks your idea of the technical advisory committee is a good one. Elissa: I would like to see if we could set up a technical advisory committee around the data management and integration. Bobby: I think Steve and Liz would be great. Elissa: This is again just part of the proposal. Gary Temple: If I can [add]....one of the things that is part of our small \$50,000 grant is these things can limit geographic areas mapping and GIS positioning and ties in to local planning. What we want to try and do is have that information GIS compatible with the county of Fresno. [How usable are these different systems.] Elissa: Do you have people you are working with on that already? Gary: Only with consultants the County of Fresno is in preliminary

discussions regarding that. Elissa: My other hat is consultant/contract conservancy and one of their questions is, How can they further good management and resources in our region? I think data management is one of the areas so they have something that is consistent throughout the entire region. Would like to see them advising the different groups that are doing it so there is some sort of consistency even if they can't put funding into it. Next: Development of Integrated Resource Management Strategies: Partly a review of the chapters and part from the workshops. RWOP plan implementation, impact and benefits. Overall goal for the plan implementation is public effort, data management and collaboration. Ongoing water management and planning activities, which is prioritizing the project, recommending them for funding and taking action to address issues. Improving regional resource management including impact and benefits. Im not sure how to approach this yet. John Shelton: On the overall goal for planning and implementation, capacity and collaboration there is another concept that I just came across called Social Capital, related to capacity building, one of the big parts of it is trust building. The ability to get different organizations, stakeholders and development groups to work with environmental groups. Something that could be put in there. Elissa: Detail description of the tasks and the budget: These are all of the notes from the previous version of the proposal plan. Explain the applicants planned proposed efforts and approach to environmental compliance including a reference library. Explain how the proposed task will include and support the involvement of the managed communities in a planning effort to _____ and support involvement of native American tribal communities. We have this to some extent if anyone wants to add to it. [Next:] Program Preferences: **Girl_1_** Does the plan itself have to run through the legal process? Elissa: I understand that plans are exempt. They are an exempt activity. **Girl_2_** Specifically IRWMP plans are exempt. **Girl_1_**, management plans are not. Elissa: this is a voluntary plan so it is not like a general plan. **Bobby?_** it is a good point because there is a **secwa?** portion to the project out there we cannot underestimate the time and effort needed. **Man_** one of the things may have in our plan _____ Bobby? I think that is a good idea. Push that hard or adjust that or deal with that up front in some way. **Man_** we need to always make sure that we put people and legal together because there are very few things we can do in our area that does not have a Federal component. Elissa: Now the program preferences. I want to schedule a time to talk about this later, but we get penalized depending on how much we need their program preferences and these are in the publicly _____ I think we need a lot of these. I will schedule this for September after I have written a lot of it. We can talk about how our proposal includes regional projects for programs, effectively integrated water management programs and projects applied, effectively resolve water concepts **etc_** We do not have to do all of these. Some may not be applicable to us. **Man_** does that change to the **delta_council_** program? Elissa: I do not know I have not read recent **delta_** program. **Man_** just to add a little bit, there are still questions of what part of **cal_delta_** program the stewardship council takes over. Stewardship council is bay delta focused so watershed portion of **cal_** went to statewide process My program

_____ has a lot of areas outside the delta, so we still have that program. It really has not been defined. The stewardship council is very delta centered although there are some implementing languages that could also look [at a watershed base but **calstead** has specific things they do with watershed] Elissa: Effectively Litigating Water Management and _____ Planning: this is important to bring up, not sure how we are going to be doing that, but we need to reflect it. It is one of the issues and we are going to need to reflect on how we see that. We are not looking at _____ funding, so we do need to address statewide priorities and/ or _____ which are _____ use water more efficiently, climate change, and _____ environmental stewardship _____ surface water and ground water quality, improved _____ I do not think we are going to have a problem Next: Budget _____ next step is the final guidelines and start drafting by September 2, a **foredating** committee meeting on September 2 and next meeting for this group proposed for September 8. You will have a draft by early September.

Further questions for Elissa: Keri Vera: Tribal participation and improved water and natural resources, how many tribal communities are in the southern Sierra? Bobby: 23 or 26, we did assemble a list but is a serious challenge, tribes need funds to participate. Dirk Charlie is tribal liaison Bob Robinson is another contact.

Keri Vera noted that Tribes may not have a water resource person.

Criteria for membership?

Robyn: Representatives from all three organizations, each can bring forth comments today

Not enough representation present today, should there be an interview process, but this is not desirable. Steve: I withdraw the idea of the interview but want to determine what is the process, was it noted in the meeting minutes or outlined how to put forth a recommendation and officially gain consensus. Steve: suggestion invite stakeholders of the groups to make comments then present them verbally next month. Julie: the coordinating committee basically will refine that and figure out the details of the process will work. Bobby: the process from day one is the subcommittee often the coordinating committee brings a recommendation to the planning committee which is the official decision making authority then planning committee has a discussion then the decision point is when everybody is good with the recommendation. Someone asked: How many people do you need for consensus? Gary: not been set, does anybody object?

The discussion continues that the interviews are valuable but time consuming. The subcommittee can meet, get it out electronically, schedule the next meeting, ask-can we live with this recommendation? Have a discussion in front of that or anyone can respond. No sensitive material in this soJohn: speaking says he will send out the full spreadsheet with a lot of

information to the planning committee. Then bring this up at the next meeting. Robyn: you will get this out in the next few days?

John Shelton: I have not received an email from you. John: the planning committee is bigger than the group here today. So will have to send it to Frances or Bobby to be forwarded to that group.

Robyn: Next meeting will be September 8, will that be soon enough? Answer: that is the Coordinating Committee's recommendation.

What do we need in our application for non-fiscal year? I think it is the board of the fiscal agent that pasts the resolution. The application due September 28th.

John: We have enough representatives from our three groups can our three groups have a board meeting scheduled after the meeting September 8 before the 28th? Gary: Resolution says need authorization, documentation, including copy of a resolution from the fiscal agent authorizing the application. John: we need to get the information to your board so it can be put into the application.....

Julie: SRT can get a board resolution even though they meet quarterly by email. Bobby: probably will not a problem. John: let us know if you cannot do it.

Robyn: Which resolution? John: pick a fiscal agent for our application, need to get this done by the 28th by so have everything ready to go.

Julie: are you not available on that day? Robyn: I am at a conference. Soapy or Hilary will need to be present at the next IRWMP meeting on the September 8th.

5. OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION d. Adjacent Regions – Update on Poso Boundary

Bobby: Poso sent us a map and a proposed letter describing the potential shared regional boundary. Poso creek area is just north of the Kern County line. They drew a map to try and encompass all the irrigated lands into the downstream, but the aerial photos shows some sections that fall into our boundary. Sent a letter saying, Do you mind if I make a counter-proposal stating the all the irrigated lands Program? Next meeting Bobby will have a revised map and letter for approval. Julie: changes are small at this point. Is it fair to say that basically all our boundary issues are resolved. Bobby: this particular situation is not even in the DWR RAP.

Carol added: Nine days ago there was a meeting in Fresno, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Michelle was there and some from the dept. of water resources. Groundwater Quality Protection Strategy map for the central valley region which is 80 informative pages. On page 60 it says,

“With the passage of proposition 84 and 1E, dept of water resources depends on administrator of a program that provides funding for projects to meet long term water needs of the state improving the delivery of state’s drinking water and the protection of water quality environment. “ This is \$150,000. Should we go for that? Resources support the central valley water board in becoming more informative, engaged as an active stakeholder with all the IRWM group within the central valley region anticipated to be \$150,000 only. Certainly the Springville Public Utilities District would qualify.

Thank you, we are past time anymore to say?

Next meeting is in Visalia September 8

The next Planning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, September 8, 2010 from 1:00 to 4:30, in Visalia, at the Tulare Co. RMA office.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40.