

**MEETING SUMMARY | Southern Sierra IRWMP Planning Committee  
December 19, 2011  
Southern Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Plan**

**Table of Contents**

Action Items ..... 1

1. Welcome and Introductions ..... 1

2. Project Updates ..... 1

3. Draft Objectives ..... 2

4. Draft Tasks and Timeline ..... 4

5. Draft Storyline ..... 5

6. Review Policies, Procedures, Structure, and Composition ..... 6

7. Member Announcements ..... 7

8. Attendees ..... 7

**Action Items**

1. **Dick Moss, Bobby Kamansky, and Tasha Newman** (CSG) to work together offline to develop the application budget.
2. **CSG** to provide a revised draft to the Coordinating Committee by COB January 11, 2012.
3. **Dorian** to schedule additional February meeting times.
4. **Michelle Dooley** to check whether DWR allows non-profit participants to bill in-kind support at for-profit rates.
5. **Dorian** to confirm the continued participation of Coordinating Committee members.
6. **Dorian** to provide a hardcopy of the Planning Committee email list at the February in-person meeting.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. Bobby Kamansky, Southern Sierra Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (IRWMP) Project Manager, welcomed and introduced participants to the meeting. Mr. Dorian Fougères, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) Facilitator, reviewed the meeting agenda and ground rules.

**2. Project Updates**

Mr. Kamansky noted concerns about the lengthy state contracting process. He noted that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) IRWMP process improvement workshop held the previous week had updated the public on the grant process and solicited feedback. Most importantly is the need to complete the planning stage to receive funds. Mr. Dick Moss inquired about the possibility to apply for round two implementation grants without a finished

plan. Ms. Michelle Dooley, DWR, confirmed that if a planning committee demonstrates progress, it can apply for grants. Mr. Kamansky noted that other planning groups had obtained round one implementation funds without a fully developed plan.

### 3. Draft Objectives

The attendees divided into small groups to review the Discussion Materials: Draft Objectives, handout. The members were to focus on three review questions when examining the document:

- 1. Are there many objectives that are unrealistic or are irrelevant to the region?**
- 2. How should the objective be measured?**
- 3. What is the appropriate timeframe for the meeting the objective?**

#### A. Water Supply Management

Mr. John Shelton suggested including the following topics: the quantity of water supplied to disadvantaged communities (gallons per minute, cubic feet per second for businesses, ranches), fire pressure regulations, management for recreation, and hydroelectric water uses.

Ms. Julie Allen noted the objectives seemed like to read as goals, and following discussion with the consultant, Ms. Tasha Newman, the group agreed that this high level of detail was okay for the planning grant application. Assuming the group is awarded a planning grant, it can revisit and clarify objectives as part of the planning process.

Mr. Bob Puls commented that there are unknown water supplies in the foothills due to immeasurable stream flows, which contributes to ambiguous data. Data gaps included minor stream flows measurements and impacts, how much water rights were adjudicated/riparian/otherwise claimed, how much was used in ranch ponds, and groundwater recharge basin locations and utilization. Management of recreational reservoirs was also noted, and linked to land use and water

Ms. Soapy Mulholland added the importance of being aware of the amount of water that is being utilized in hopes to address groundwater recharge. Both Ms. Mulholland and Mr. Steve Haze noted the concern about fractured rock and its ability to influence water recharge data.

#### B. Water Quality Management

Ms. Pam Buford noted the group was unable to address a timeframe for water quality management. Ms. Buford continued by stating numbers three and seven on the draft objectives document (regarding providing drinking water and the needs of disadvantaged communities (DACs)) could be reworded and consolidated.

Ms. Dooley suggested updating regulations for functioning septic tanks, and adding a maintenance factor.

Mr. Michael Tharp noted the opportunities for creating recycled water for the Sierra communities, including fire, irrigation, and drinking water; this was a supply issue. Mr. Shelton suggested the concept of recycled water should be broadened, and go beyond drinking water standards. An assessment of the secondary system was needed. Mr. Tharp suggested changing topic six to “develop and use recycled water.”

Mr. Haze continued to discuss the importance of identifying wastewater treatment facilities discharge, and the water quality of the downstream flow.

The group continued to discuss topic number five (regarding protection of natural streams and recharge areas), and Ms. Julie Allen suggested alternate vocabulary with the use of the word “function”.

Mr. Shelton voiced his concern with sediment, erosion control, and ultimately, climate change. Mr. Kyle Wright further noted the issue of sediments with non point source pollutants.

Ms. Newman suggested including projects within the draft, which can be implemented in the near future. Mr. Bobby Kamansky agreed, and suggested a brainstorming session was needed to include stand-by projects.

### **C. Integrated Flood Management**

Ms. Kathy Wood noted the objectives issues were valid. Mr. Haze commented on the need to understand the sources of the flooding on the King’s River. Mr. Shelton noted infrastructure is lacking in flood areas from the mid to upper Sierra Nevada Mountains. Mr. May suggested to focus attention towards seasonal projects such as flow monitoring from watersheds, water channel maintenance, and groundwater recharge basins.

Ms. Wood noted that these projects need multiple stakeholder representation from government agencies, businesses (e.g., Southern California Edison), and the public.

### **D. Environmental Resource Management**

Ms. Wood noted linking the environmental resource management to water supply, quality, and flood issues.

Mr. Haze added the role of invasive aquatic and terrestrial species, and addressing the negative impacts. Ms. Wood suggested involving the Department of Fish and Game with management plans.

Mr. Shelton noted Tulare County has large areas of open space, and questioned if this was an issue to be addressed. Ms. Soapy Mulholland suggested that open space was an issue, especially when reviewing the connectivity of the watershed.

Mr. Kamansky commented that Mr. Kyle Wright created a watershed health assessment that should be utilized in developing the plan.

### **E. Integrated Land Use and Water Management**

The group noted the need to catalog who has land use and water-related authority within the region. Private landowners and resource conservation distributors have major influences in the area and the ability to promote stewardship (like the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service headwaters program, Forest Service and National Park Service land management plans, County general plans including low impact development). Mr. Dick Moss commented on promoting good practices, so the public will understand efficient land management.

Mr. Moss questioned whether the term Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) should be redefined or clarified.

Mr. Haze noted the importance of recreation areas and their economic importance to the local region. Ms. Newman agreed, and stated that other plans include recreation impacts on water supply and quality. Ms. Mulholland suggested including Best Management Practices (BMPs) for recreation and any public access areas.

### **F. Stakeholder Involvement and Outreach**

Mr. Kamansky noted his satisfaction with the objectives listed in the handout, but wanted to include disadvantage communities. Ms. Allen suggested adding “inter-regional” to objective 16.

Ms. Erin Lutrick noted a need for educating urban people in watershed areas. Mr. Shelton and Ms. Allen supported educating the valley residents. Mr. Haze also agreed and expressed the need for more representation and involvement in the planning stages. Ms Wood added there will be information gathered and delivered to other agencies to encourage future participation.

## **4. Draft Tasks and Timeline**

Mr. Bobby Kamansky reviewed the new format, and noted the changes in the task structure. He stated that the first task will be the bulk of the document while the second task will support the first task.

Ms. Newman noted that only including two tasks would lead to a confusing format where topics will be hard to categorize, and suggested restructuring the draft by including more tasks to divide the document into more manageable pieces. Mr. Kamansky noted the old document had many tasks listed and stated his concern for repeating the same mistakes.

The group agreed that Ms. Newman, as the lead consultant, should revise the structure as she feels appropriate, and present the document to the committee for further comments.

Ms. Pam Buford suggested the committee focus on the narrative supplement to the planning document. Ms Julie Allen and Mr. Haze agreed with focusing on a strong narrative, and also using previous approved plans from other IRWMPs as an example.

Ms. Julie Allen commented that the tasks drive the structure of the timeline, and that the group might want to examine each task individually at a later time when the plan is further developed.

Ms. Mulholland noted that the California Department of Conservation allows stakeholders who work for non-profits to account for their time at for-profit rates, for parity, and inquired whether this was possible.

**ACTION ITEM:** Michelle Dooley to check whether DWR allows non-profit participants to bill in-kind support at for-profit rates.

## 5. Draft Storyline

The facilitator summarized earlier discussions with a draft list of storyline elements, including:

- The mix of public and private land
- The statewide significance for water supply
- The need to plug major data gaps
- The significant for recreation
- The need to educate water users
- The large disadvantaged communities in the foothills
- Climate change and the threat to the snowpack and water supply
- Invasive species threats

Ms. Soapy Mulholland stated that the storyline should be catchy and move readers to action, and that the draft being reviewed should have hard-hitting content. For example, Tulare County is one of the poorest regions in California, and therefore needs funding.

The group noted other important and unique local resources that should be called out in the storyline, including:

- 80% of the water supply
- large intact landscapes and riparian corridors – high value compared with fragmented areas (a land use nexus), and importance for flood protection
- the poverty in the area – improvement will not happen without financial support
- some of the state’s best known megafauna and flora (sequoias)
- the snow pack contributes to drinking and irrigation water supplies of most of California

- food supply and national food security
- drought mitigation, fire control and fire safety
- the project area has the highest elevations in the Sierra Nevada Range, which provide the best climate change protection – the jewel of the state, future water supply, snowpack refugia for animals and ecology – these should be a statewide priority
- two National Parks, giant sequoias
- numerous Forest users and tribal communities
- these are working landscapes including ranchers

Ms. Allen suggested using the word “source”, which indicates a creation point. Ms. Allen further noted the opportunity to collaborate with the federal and state agencies, and would like the committee to be identified as a leader in state and federal collaborative efforts.

Ms. Kathy Wood and Mr. Dick Moss both commented on the importance of encouraging involvement from the local residents of the Southern Sierras, including getting upstream users to the table. Mr. Moss noted the plan should include projects geared to revitalizing sites for Southern Sierra residents, which would promote local involvement.

Mr. Shelton noted the economic need for tourism, and yet that mountain area residents are rugged individualists who complain about the negative environmental impacts produced by “flatlanders” (valley floor residents) who visit the region. The plan should assist locals in handling current and future impacts.

## **6. Review Policies, Procedures, Structure, and Composition**

After reviewing the roles of the Planning and Coordinating Committees, the Planning Committee approved Tulare County Resource Conservation District’s participation on the Coordinating Committee.

Ms. Allen suggested the group consider whether a quorum is needed at meetings to make decisions, and the group noted that the MOU had purposely not established this criterion. The facilitator noted that the Planning Committee would review the MOU once it reconvened, assuming it receives a planning grant, and that there were other topics that also might need clarification.

The committee noted the deadline for the planning grant application would be no earlier than March 6, 2012, and created a timeline for the draft review. Ms. Newman stated she could create a first draft by January 11, 2012, for review by the Coordinating Committee on January 13, 2012. Another revision would be completed by end of January, and the budget can be completed by mid February. The facilitator noted he would schedule an additional Coordinating

Committee call in early February, and a Planning Committee meeting in late February. The Planning Committee would have at least one week to review the final draft before their meeting. The latest date for a meeting was agreed to be February 27, 2012.

## 7. Member Announcements

Mr. Haze asked if past participants in the Coordinating Committee are still interested. The Planning Committee asked the facilitator to verify the continued interest of all Coordinating Committee members.

Mr. Kamansky noted there are many members who have jobs that would like to hold meetings outside of business hours. Ms. Mulholland noted the Planning Committee attempted to move locations to provide for all participants, but the members with regular attendance felt they should be accommodated first. Mr. Haze noted there should be a selected person in the committee who should be responsible for the member list, so it can be circulated and updated regularly, and suggested that this was an appropriate role for the facilitator. The facilitator agreed to maintain an updated list and bring a hard copy to the February Planning Committee meeting.

Ms. Michelle Dooley announced there will be a California Water Plan regional forum meeting for Tulare Lake, and urged members to participate as a marketing tool for the IRWMP planning committee. Ms. Dooley added there is a stake in the Tulare lake watershed and the meeting will be very San Joaquin valley oriented. Ms. Wood agreed to send out more information via the facilitator. Mr. Haze noted that he believed the California Water Plan was going to expand its “Mountain Counties” region to include the Southern Sierra; Ms. Dooley noted that she did not believe this would happen for Update 2013.

Mr. Kamansky thanked everybody for their attendance and hard work.

## 8. Attendees

- |                                  |                                     |                                      |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Julie Allen                   | 9. Steve Haze                       | 16. Soapy Mulholland                 |
| 2. Nancy Bruce                   | 10. Kurt Hupp                       | 17. Tasha Newman, CSG<br>(Telephone) |
| 3. Pam Buford                    | 11. Bobby Kamansky                  | 18. Bob Puls                         |
| 4. Carole Combs                  | 12. Erin Lutrick<br>(Telephone)     | 19. John Shelton                     |
| 5. Michelle Dooley, DWR          | 13. Dane Mathis, DWR<br>(Telephone) | 20. Michael Tharp                    |
| 6. Dorian Fougères, CCP          | 14. James May                       | 21. Kathy Wood                       |
| 7. Gabriella Golik, CCP          | 15. Dick Moss                       | 22. Kyle Wright<br>(Telephone)       |
| 8. Jeannie Habben<br>(Telephone) |                                     |                                      |