

MEETING SUMMARY | Southern Sierra IRWMP Planning Committee

September 13, 2012

Provost and Prichard Consulting Visalia, 10 am to 3 pm

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1. Action Items

1. **Bobby Kamansky** to email members with Michelle Dooley’s responses about the group’s eligibility for the implementation grant.
2. **Dorian Fougères** to clarify future meeting dates with Bobby and Chris.
3. **Chris Moi** revise the from calendar days to business days for repayment of subcontractors.
4. **Julie, Soapy, and Kathy** to revise the Roles and Responsibilities handout (numbers 9, 14, and 17).
5. **Dorian Fougères** to send out the April and May meeting summaries.
6. **Dorian Fougères** to email the members with the Inyo-Mono DAC presentation.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Chris Moi, Southern Sierra Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (SSIRWMP) Project Manager, and Mr. Bobby Kamansky, SSIRWMP Stakeholder Coordinator, welcomed and introduced participants to the meeting. Mr. Dorian Fougères, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) Facilitator, reviewed and revised the agenda and the ground rules. Mr. Fougères clarified and requested that all members assume going forward that materials associated with Action Items are requested 10 days in advance of a meeting, to provide adequate time for formatting and distributing them.

3. Project Updates, Member Announcements, and Public Comment

Project Updates

- It was noted that environmental policy graduate students were contacted, and if interested, could potentially offer help to the group with the policies.
- Monache High School offered volunteers to establish a trail in the outer boundary areas of the foothills.
- Members discussed regional efforts involving stilling wells at Camp Nelson and fisher studies with rodenticide contamination in streams. Studies proved the contamination in watersheds.
- The Sierra and Sequoia National Forest have a project list database available online.

Member Announcements and Publics Comments

- The forest plan revision process is gearing up for the Sierra and Sequoia National Forest. The group would like to be involved with the forest water issues because the policies are out of date.
 - Ms. Julie Allen stated that she participates in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), which advises the planning process. It was noted that stakeholders and communities should have a major voice in the process.
- It was noted that the Sequoia National Monument Plan was sued because of an unsuccessful collaborative process.
- Members noted that water issues are not well represented in the Forest Plan, and members were interested in having a stakeholder represent water issues and global climate change.
 - The Forest Service focuses attention on headwaters through two initiatives, Forests to Faucets and Hydrology Unit Code 12.
- The climate change adaptation workshop being hosted by Sequoia National Park and other agencies that was scheduled for January will now be held in February.

4. Review of Proposed Revision to Planning Grant Budget

The members review the two budget spread sheets and the schematic diagram for the review process. Mr. Kamansky and Mr. Moi stated that the ad hoc budget committee met in August and reduced the budget by \$90,000. The diagram illustrates the thought process and the criteria for the proposal, and was endorsed by the Coordinating Committee during their August meeting. The group had to meet the group's deliverables and the DWR requirements. It was noted that the meetings have already provided the necessary matched funds.

The members reviewed the substance of the budget spreadsheets. Mr. Dick Moss and Mr. Kamansky reviewed the areas of funding cuts, such as Provost and Prichard Consulting, administration, and facilitation costs. Full meetings would be reduced to every other month, instead of the original monthly meetings. In addition, overlapping funds were cut.

AGREEMENT: All members agreed to adopt the new Planning Grant Budget for the purpose of future conversations and negotiations with DWR, should a planning grant be formally awarded.

A Q&A handout was distributed to the group displaying Ms. Dooley's responses to the Coordinating Committee's questions about ongoing obligations regardless of budget cuts. Mr. Kamansky stated that he is requesting further question about the group's eligibility status for applying for an implementation grant, see below.

ACTION ITEM: Bobby Kamansky to seek clarification from Michelle Dooley regarding specific eligibility requirements for an Implementation Grant application.

5. Review of Implementation Grant Timeline, including Inyo-Mono IRWM Experience, and Work Group Formation

Work Plan, Grant Timeline, and Prioritization

Mr. Kamansky reviewed the timeline for the next round of IRWM implementation grants. From its historical work, the group already has much of the information needed. In addition to specific project proposals, an "umbrella" application was suggested to the group in order to cover all the potential projects and link them under a common introductory narrative and background. In preparing the application, the RWMG members would rank proposed projects based both on the Southern Sierra IRWM objectives and DWR's evaluation criteria (listed on pages four and five). A single grantee would be needed for the application. The areas that were lacking content were project descriptions and the budget feasibility for the corresponding project proponents. It was emphasized that DWR will not fund projects without substantial feasibility information, and it can cost \$20,000 or more for a architectural and engineering firm to prepare such information. The members had various comments about the work plan, timeline and prioritization process:

- Individual IRWMPs develop their own criteria for ranking projects, and this will take the group time to development. Adequate time should be anticipated for this important task.
 - Other IRWMPs can serve as helpful examples.
 - While the selection process is important, it is unlikely that the region will have more than a few suitable and shovel-ready projects, so the group should not lose sight of the need to solicit and develop projects.
- There is a general lack of confidence in DWR's overall process, which affects the willingness of organizations to volunteer as a grantee.
- The group noted that Sequoia National Forest and Springville Public Utilities District may each have a suitable project.
 - It was noted that Sierra National Forest also has ranked watershed projects.

- It was noted that there is a special provision in the grant that allows a proposed project to be the planning of a project involving disadvantaged communities. It was suggested that the group apply for this kind of project.
- It was asked how members should solicit potential projects. For example, one member felt there was a significant need in Yokohl Valley, where the general plan includes development and may cause new erosion problems.
 - It was noted that members would have to approach potential organizations and discuss the possibility.
 - It was noted that the Sierra Club has filed suit against Tulare County for not having a hydrological impact study for new development.
 - Janet Hatfield and Heather Crall from the Inyo-Mono IRWM noted that their group had a non-profit organization serve as the grantee for their implementation projects.
- The group discussed the possibilities of including hydrological capacity studies.
 - Other partially completed studies could be included in the Implementation Grant Application, such as the continuing hydrological study for the Three Rivers survey. This would build on the planning grant.
 - Consider low impact garden design for riparian corridors, and development that combines water conservation and landscape design.
 - Potential for combining a Yokohl Valley project with a DAC component in the area.
- Janet Hatfield and Heather Crall confirmed that Inyo-Mono IRWM had to complete an IRWM plan before they could submit an implementation grant application. This was required to be eligible. They worked intensely for about two months during the 2011-12 holiday season to get a full draft in front of the group and approved. This general plan was for the purpose of eligibility, and is currently being revised using planning grant monies.
 - It was noted that Southern Sierra IRWM might need to do the same thing
 - As noted earlier, Mr. Kamansky stated that he is requesting further question about the group's eligibility status for applying for an implementation grant, see below.
- In terms of the group's work, it was noted that preparing an application could take significant time on the part of participating RWMG members, and require some additional meetings of the group as a whole.

Inyo-Mono Discussion

Janet reviewed lessons learned about the prioritization process, and gave a full presentation later during the meeting. The lessons were included in the copy of the presentations distributed after the meeting, and included:

- Need more time to prepare proposals!
- Project Ranking Matrix utility
- Project Bins: help eliminate ranking different types of projects against each other

- Need for improved integration of projects
- Consider points for past RWMG participation
- GORMS completed prior to ranking
- Project presentations prior to ranking
- Enforce agreed upon ranking process

Discussion followed:

- Regarding the Goals Objectives Resources Management (GORM) strategies.
 - The GORM strategies helped establish the ranking matrix.
- It was asked about how the Inyo-Mono group enforced the ranking agreement. The Inyo-Mono group learned to ask individually if members were in agreement with a decision discussed, and not to assume that someone being quiet meant they agreed.
 - It was critical to ensure everyone agreed upon the ranking process before doing the exercise.
- Phasing projects was a way to implement a bigger project over time.
- Have outreach meetings with the communities, and use free software to manage costs.
- The diversity and capacity between the communities within the Inyo-Mono boundaries varied greatly. Smaller communities seldom had significant grant writing capability.

Next Steps

The group discussed whether it made sense to develop an implementation grant application.

- One concern was the time needed to develop a quality application. March is not far away.
- It was reiterated that project proponents should develop the corresponding application materials. A written agreement would demonstrate commitment.
 - This is similar to how the group itself put up funds to write the Planning Grant application.
- It was noted that the Forest Service might be a project proponent, but could not be the grantee.
- It was noted that the state budget will always be uncertain and beyond the group's control. Any grantee must be aware of this.
- The group agreed to form a work group revise the work plan, including the tasks needed for developing an application, a timeline, and the associated number of work group and RWMG meetings.
 - Members that volunteered were a representative from SRT, Mr. Kamansky, and Mr. Shelton.
 - Ms. Wood-McLaughlin noted that the NRCS/BLM/DFG watershed team would also provide a member.
 - Mr. Moss offered to serve in an advisory capacity.
 - It was suggested that the Forest Service might also be beneficial to have in the work group. The facilitator suggested inviting any RWMG to join the group, rather than identifying members who were absent.
- The scope of the work group was agreed upon as:

- Review and refine the project prioritization process
- Review and refine project prioritization process
- Solicit grantees and draft the selection process (building on Planning Grant Selection Process)
- Solicit shovel-ready projects for consideration
- **ACTION ITEM: Dorian** to clarify proposed future meeting dates with Bobby and Chris.
- **ACTION ITEM: Bobby** to convene the Implementation Grant Work Group, **Implementation Grant Work Group** to meet as needed to accomplish tasks.

6. Governance Items

The members received handouts reporting back on loose ends involving governance issues. The topics of discussion were as follows:

- **In regards to legal liability**, the facilitator noted that he had searched for language in other IRWM MOUs that provided more than the Southern Sierra IRWM, but he and his colleagues did not find such language. The member who expressed concern over this item had acknowledged at an earlier date that the current language in the MOU, which explains that the MOU is a voluntary, non-binding agreement, is sufficient at this time. The group may revisit the issue at a future date.
- **In regards to grantee requirements**, Mr. Moss affirmed that Provost & Pritchard did not typically request a credit line from a grantor, and was not requesting one for work done on the planning grant. Additionally, Mr. Moi clarified that when invoicing and reimbursement is complete, SRT repays contractors within 15 business days, not calendar days.
 - With these clarifications, the Additional Grantee Clarifications Memorandum was considered final.
 - **ACTION ITEM: Dorian** to finalize governance supplement regarding contractor payment schedule following reimbursement (i.e., 15 business days).
- **In regards to Project Manager and Stakeholder Coordinator roles and responsibilities**, the members received a separated handout describing the roles. Numbers and specific roles were assigned to group tasks. For example, Mr. Moi (Project Manager) tracks the meeting's Action Items. Members discussed areas with need of clarification between roles and the responsibilities. They stated that numbers 9, 14, and 17 needed to be revised to clearly distinguish the responsibilities difference.
 - **ACTION ITEM: Chris, Soapy, and Bobby** to clarify Project Manager and Stakeholder Coordinator roles & responsibilities table, numbers 9, 14, and 17, per RWMG feedback.
- In addition, Mr. Fougères noted that the July and August meeting summaries would be distributed to members.
 - **ACTION ITEM: Dorian Fougères** to send out the April and May meeting summaries.

7. Inyo-Mono IRWM Work with Disadvantaged Communities

The Inyo-Mono IRWMP presented their work with Disadvantaged Communities (DAC). The main topics presented were in regards to DAC outreach:

Regarding Initial DAC Outreach Challenges

- Initial contact involved newspaper ads and flyers advertising public meetings.
- The Inyo-Mono IRWMP had trouble communicating their intent to the public, keeping contact with the members of a community, identifying a community's available resources, and trying to identify all the communities in the region.
- The Inyo-Mono IRWMP started the DAC outreach by attempting to identify all the communities after 2000.
 - The lack in census data past 2000 made it difficult to match the current conditions with the data information.
 - They found that almost all the communities in their region were classified as DAC.
- The group began exploring other criteria for classifying DAC such as education level, unemployment rate, and basic services.
- Note that individuals that have second homes are not included in the income level of a community, and do not skew the data.
 - Members stated that Tulare County consists of mostly DACs, and they have areas where the data is inaccurate as well, specifically, the areas that have second homes.
 - It was noted that both IRWMs felt that using tracts to identify the DACs were inaccurate due to the large scale.
- Native American reservations had kept their own statistical data, and in some cases were more equipped with specialized personnel.
- The outreach implementation consisted of regional meetings and constant email and phone contact to inform communities.
 - The Inyo-Mono IRWMP had it written into their grant that they received funding for DAC outreach.
 - The Inyo-Mono group stated that part of the implementation grant was to have an established grantee, which bears the financial risk. (Cal Trout was the grantee for Inyo-Mono planning grant.)
- To build the communities capacity, the Inyo-Mono IRWMP offered workshops such as CEQA, grant writing, and scholarships.
- The Inyo-Mono members stated that at each full meeting they chose an individual to share their background knowledge. They stated that it built understanding for each individual's area of expertise.
- Note that the Inyo-Mono DAC outreach intention was to build trust.
 - In regards to trust, it was noted that community members did not like to receive government stipends because of the stigma.

Regarding Current DAC Outreach Challenges

- The Inyo-Mono group found it challenging to get new individuals interested. Original community and government contacts turnover, so keeping connections are problematic.
- The challenge for DACs is that it can take a lot of time to develop a project and there is still no guarantee it will be chosen. The current approach purposely has an open door policy where anyone can submit an implementation project idea if they have an MOU signatory or development. The proponent can then seek further development of the project to get a higher ranking.
- Inyo-Mono offers digital uploading for potential projects in the area. If the internet is not available, the community members have options to mail in project ideas, and the group would give them feedback.
 - Cal Rural Water and NRCS assist communities with need for support.
 - Mr. Shelton suggested that there resources such as local writers who are willing to lend their expertise.
- In regards to Tulare County, the group should investigate if the foothill region is included in the DAC information, and if Tulare County has related information for DACs. There is the potential for pilot projects such as getting potable water to the communities.
 - Mr. Moss clarified that Provost and Prichard is mapping the DAC communities in the Tulare County, and showed the current mapping progress. They intend to list the areas for the SSIRWMP, and eventually rank the DAC projects according to the group's prioritization and DWR's requirements.
 - As part of project solicitation, the RWMG group will review this study and historical and current data.
- The Inyo-Mono presentation will be available for the members
ACTION ITEM: Dorian Fougères to email the members with the Inyo-Mono DAC presentation.

8. Attendees

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Julie Allen | 6. Dorian Fougères, CCP | 12. Soapy Mulholland |
| 2. Nancy Bruce | 7. Gabriella Golik, CCP | 13. Robert Robinson |
| 3. Pam Buford
(Telephone) | 8. Janet Hatfield, Inyo-
Mono IRWM | 14. John Shelton |
| 4. Carole Combs | 9. Kurt Hupp (Telephone) | 15. Kathy Wood
McLaughlin |
| 5. Heather Crall, Inyo-
Mono IRWM | 10. Bobby Kamansky | |
| | 11. Chris Moi | |