**NOTES | SOUTHERN SIERRA REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING 6/9/2016|** Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District – Fresno, CA.

In attendance: Nina Hemptil, Bobby Kamansky, Chris Moi, Carole Combs, Steve Haze, Josh , Sarah Campe, Jamie, Shay, Hazel, Jarrod Takemoto

Focused on projects and getting funding for projects. Quick turnaround on 1 with a deadline at the end of June 2016.

John Shelton is not responsible for the DFW Prop 1 grant program for our region, and therefore can provide more advice on our application than he would have been able to otherwise.

Nancy Bruce is out of the state on vacation and doing Botany work in Colorado, but will be able to facilitate the RWMG meeting in September.

A lot of coordinating for our group is done offline, through emails, phone calls, etc. But there is no 1 group that is doing the coordination. Presents an opportunity for a group to step forward and take on this role.

Justine Reynolds is Yosemite/Sequoia RC & DC representative, Steve Haze is the representative for Sierra RCD.

California Water Institute at Fresno state produced the study that was funded by Bureau of Reclamation that analyzed the IRWM groups/plans within the SJ Valley and summarized their findings. Intent was to produce an integrated study. Eight counties hydrologically connected to the San Joaquin Valley. Looking at it from the point of the Central Valley Project and the water delivery aspect of the project.

Sarah asked when the next IRWM deadline is for grant apps for Prop 1. However, we do not know when individual project RFPs will be released.

Project update

RWMG has two grants - National Forest Foundation grant and Landscape Conservation Cooperative grants we have in hand help make progress on preparing our projects for funding.

Michelle Selman, who is the Climate Change rep for the DWR has offered to help our group on a couple projects including the Mill Flat Creek project. Mill Flat Creek project is a road decommissioning and riparian restoration project. Need to reassess the project in light of the Rough Fire.

RWMG is seeking sponsorships to help pay for RWMG meetings, meeting facilitation, etc. Tulare County has offered funding for every other group in the County, our group is attempting to obtain commitment from the County.

Technical assistance available from several programs, we received facilitation grants and hydrological expertise for our Group.

Mountain counties group met in May, our Group attended is seeking to get covered in the Mountain Counties Overlay. Trying to get the CA Water Plan update taking place in 2018 to cover our region. Need good, solid representation from our Region to get noticed in this process.

Dinkey Collaborative meeting next Thursday (6/16) at the forest supervisor’s office. The Group’s current charge is to try to respond to tree mortality. Sierra RCD is also cost sharing with the collaborative to do the communications/outreach.

**Action Item –** need a Forest-wide level (Sierra NF) discussion on projects to bring forward to our RWMG. The SSRWMG is not signed on to the Dinkey Collaborative charter. Talk to Julianna, at the collaborative to sign on after review of the charter.

Possible agenda item for September RWMG meeting – review charter and consider signing on to the Dinkey Collaborative charter as a member (Justine Reynolds to coordinate this). Also, consider using electronic voting as an agenda item.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy has been working with each of the forests to obtain a project list on a 5-year horizon. In theory, the SNC effort could be handed over to the RWMG with Forest approval. **Possible action item –** have Josh at Sierra NF, Sarah Campe, Steve Haze, Justine Reynolds, get on a call to get the list of projects for the Sierra NF. Andy’s WIN project on ArcGIS – Josh to contact Andy and try to obtain this data for our Group to use to identify the most needed projects.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy – update

SNC Prop 1 grant program – Yosemite Sequoia submitted a project for the last round. Next round, final round is in September. Not a lot of funding left in the final round. Talk to Sarah early to determine how competitive project will be. SNC can accept pre-proposals at any time. Then SNC can help applicants on developing competitive full applications.

Also, if SNC can’t fund the project, Elissa Brown’s work is useful to identify alternative sources of funding. Sarah can coordinate conversation with Elissa to help applicants work on additional grant apps outside of SNC. Also, Elissa has grant writing workshops that are free. **Action item – Sarah to send dates to Bobby for the grant workshops.** Next workshop likely in September in Tulare, and in Three Rivers in October.

New Projects

Sierra Water Work Group Data Management Tool – one of our greatest challenges is that the data is not accessible. Kate Gladstein at SNA/SWWG presented on the two pilot/demonstration portals for CABY and Mariposa regions. The more regions that sign on to the portal, the cheaper it becomes. Bobby proposing that the Group fundraise to sign on to this data management portal tool. Also, our SS RWMG website can store data and there is a possibility that our website can sync with this portal and become accessible. Possible agenda item for September – have Kate Gladstein come to our meeting and present on the demos.

School water system upgrade – Steve Haze, submitted a grant app a while ago - SCADA (system control and data acquisition) – was a project to support the Tollhouse High School, and Auberry Schools that consolidated – to upgrade the drinking water system for the high school. ~$115,000 project cost.

New Auberry Water Association – wastewater ponds – are upstream in the Big Sandy watershed – leaking underground storage tanks.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation and State Water Quality Control Board – looking to use the UC system to help rural communities with technical assistance and strategic planning. Prop 1 grant program – go in for technical assistance, scope of work, and then capital fund improvement fund for project implementation.

Big Sandy Project update – wastewater project – community leachfield with sand filter system currently – looking for a better filter so they can use it for greywater (watering crops, etc.). The biggest expense would be piping to all the homes. Big Sandy just started surface water testing through EPA to test runoff. Directly upstream from SJ River. Big Sandy as a DAC, qualifies for 100% grant, no cost-share needed.

Water supply project – what is the water situation on the Rancheria? Precipitation capture projects, other projects to help identify water supply improvements.

Big Sandy Rancheria hydrological capacity study has been developed. **Action item –** Jamie to confirm with Council to determine whether the study can be shared with the Group.

SPUD – purple pipe project (no landscape watering currently from cease and desist order). Flume blew out recently from a landslide. Project is to create a way to dispose of their effluent.

Nina – Sequoia National Forest update –

A lot of partners – are interested in the work being done at the forest. Interested in a Sierra-wide strategy for meadow restoration. Test ideas on the Sequoia NF. Issue that the State Water Plan has 10,000 meadows in it planned for restoration. Question that the forest service has – 20,000 acre of meadows to restore. The Sierra Meadow partnership – increase the pace and scale of meadow restoration in CA. The Long Meadow – was restored in 2013, partnered with Cal Trout. NFWF funding for Osa Meadow. Leveraged those funds for Prop 1 funds to do more permitting work for other meadows in about 5 other locations. NEPA is a burden on the forest to do NEPA. Difficult to get the leadership of the forest to agree that meadow restoration is a priority. Partnered with Trout Unlimited in 2015, meadow restoration Prop 1 funds – looking at how to streamline permitting and design and all the studies that have to be done for NEPA and CEQA to reduce the costs. Meadow by meadow is too expensive. Hoping to get the cost down by looking at clusters of meadows in a watershed, etc. Restoration crews can be more cost effective if clusters of meadows can be restored all at once. Ultimate goal with meadow restoration is to provide better, cooler water to streams to support native trouts and eventually downstream users. Cal Trout just received a grant from NFWF, is going to evaluate 54 meadows across the forest – within the range of native trout. American Rivers, Point Blue – looking at biodiversity – plants, birds, fish, butterflies. UC Davis has a great meadows database and pisces database for fish distribution. The forest and its partners has a lot of data to determine where the most vital needs are for restoration. Narrow down the suite of meadows based on data analysis to 20 to 30 and do the detailed site specific analysis for permitting at these sites. Sequoia NF looking to lead others by example with this process.

**Action Item** possibility – Nina and Mark Drew of Cal Trout – come to our September RWMG meeting and present on the Sequoia NF projects

Little Big Dry Creek project update – submitted a planning project proposal under Prop 84, 3 or 4 years ago, but was unsuccessful. Only unimpeded tributary under Friant Dam that flows to the SJ River. Project looking at about 100,000 acres of land in the watershed, looking at changing land uses and its impacts.

Bobby asked the Group could live with the Sierra RCD submitting a grant proposal for the Little Big Dry Creek project by June 24. **The RWMG did not object to this proposal.**

Knowledge to Action Proposal – Funding source DWR Prop 1 program. Safeeq at UC Merced is the project proponent. Grant application likely due in September 2016. Can call an additional meeting prior to September if we need to approve submitting the application as part on behalf of the Group. **Action Item** – get John Austin’s comments on Safeeq’s proposal sent out to the Group.

Next RWMG meeting is September 8 in Tulare at SCE energy center.

Friday, August 19, next CC meeting/phone call.