

MEETING SUMMARY | Southern Sierra Regional Water Mgmt. Group February 14, 2013

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1. Action Items

1. **Steve Haze** by COB February 21 – to add a note about a study or a map of potential groundwater plumes – reference materials received, note requested
2. **Julie Allen** by COB February 21 – send Bobby flow revisions to IRWM Executive Summary
3. **Julie Allen** by COB February 21 – run flood page from IRWM plan by John Austin
4. **Chris Moi** by COB February 21 – send Bobby 3-tier table of project descriptions
5. **Steve Haze** to follow-up with Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter about sending a representative
6. **John Shelton** to send link to Sierra Water Work Group Summit, June 11-13, and Climate Academy Monthly Training
7. **Carole Combs** to confirm with Kathy Wood TBWP’s support of Feb. 14 resolution to adopt IRWM plan (language pasted below for easy reference)
8. **Erin Noesser** to confirm Inyo NF’s support of Feb. 14 resolution to adopt IRWM plan
9. **Chris Moi** to ensure posted charter has 2012 addendums
10. **Carolyn Hunsacker** to determine whether USFS PSW will designate a representative
11. **Bobby** via Dorian on February 21 to circulate Implementation Work Group project rankings
12. **Dane Mathis** to update the group re: requirement of adopted plan for Implementation Grant application (it may be unnecessary since the group is clearly on the path)
13. **Dorian** send around the new boundary map
14. **Dorian** to send example representation letters to Bob Robinson, Robin Galloway, and Carolyn Hunsacker
15. **Carolyn Hunsacker** to send note about workshops in Sacramento on Science Synthesis
16. **Robin Galloway** to confirm Sequoia NF’s support of Feb. 14 resolution to adopt IRWM plan

AGREEMENT: All members present supported the *Resolution to Adopt the IRWM Plan Prior to the Final Round 2 Implementation Grant Award Date.* (see page 5 below)

2. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Chris Moi, Southern Sierra Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (SSIRWMP) Project Manager, welcomed and introduced participants to the meeting. It was noted that the meeting goal was to be revised to be a resolution to adopt the IRWM plan prior to the final round two implementation grant award. Mr. Dorian Fougères, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) Facilitator, reviewed the agenda and the ground rules.

3. Project Updates and Member Announcements

General Updates

- Mr. Moi stated that Sierra Riverlands Trust (SRT) received a DWR Planning Grant commitment letter, and will prepare documents to accept the grant funds, which are due on February 22, 2012. It was noted that the grant amount was an accomplishment for the group.
- Implementation grant workshop were held February 12th and 14th, which Ms. Courtney Lewis and Mr. Allen Pierce attended. The workshop's primary focus was reviewing the PSP outline through an informative slide show.
- In regards to disadvantaged communities, it was stated that there is a burden of describing physical benefits, and there needed to be further investigation into the amount of detailed documentation.
- The Sierra Club would not continue to participate in the group because of different priorities. In regards to land use and water quality, the organization stated that they wanted more restrictive regulations.
 - A member stated that representation from another Sierra Club Chapter would be beneficial.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Steve Haze to follow-up with Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter about sending a representative

Review of Action Items

- The members reviewed the map that indicated watersheds and boundaries to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Fougères send around the new boundary map
- Regarding fractured bedrock and plumes, Mr. Haze stated that he would send information from studies in done in Prather and Auberry to the group.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Haze by COB February 21 – to add a note about a study or a map of potential groundwater plumes – reference materials received, note requested
- In regards to the Science Synthesis, Ms. Carolyn Hunsaker stated that Sierra, Inyo, and Sequoia National Forests were working on revising their forest plans. They were to synthesize the most valuable findings from the last 10 years, and water issues were among the list. The meeting was interactive with attendees, and information is available on the Forest Service website.

- **ACTION ITEM: Ms. Hunsaker** to send members the information from the Forest Service's Science Synthesis.
- Regarding last week's coordinating committee, Ms. Dooley stated that matching funds could begin on September 30, 2008 for mileage and time spent in the meetings. She added that the match for planning had different criteria but began on the same date.

Adoption of the January 16th Meeting Summary

- Members adopted the meeting summary.

Member Announcements

- Mr. Shelton stated that he is working on the agenda for the Sierra Water Work Group annual meeting on June 11-13, 2013. The California Bar Association is partnering on the event, and the cost would be approximately \$100 to register. Mr. Shelton will be participating on a panel regarding climate change in the Sierras.
- Mr. Shelton stated that the Department of Fish and Wildlife holds a monthly Climate Academy online training, free of charge. The website hosts guest speakers that pertain to issues interesting to the group.
- **ACTION ITEM: Mr. Shelton** to send link to Sierra Water Work Group Summit, June 11-13, and Climate Academy Monthly Training
- A new interested party introduced themselves to members, Michael Hickey. He noted that he was interested of gathering and mapping data in Tulare County. It was stated that since data is not synchronized, the task of mapping Tulare County had been challenging. Information had been missing from public water data and groundwater data. Mr. Kamansky noted that the group has been working with CSU Fresno on the mapping issues.

4. Final Review of the IRWM Plan

Mr. Kamansky introduced the handout of the IRWM Plan draft and reviewed each section. He asked if members had comments or questions about each section:

Regarding the Boundary

- In regards to the map, Mr. Hickey asked if there were any gaps of information on the map near borders. The members stated that they have negotiated boundaries to include the "white space", and have information for those areas.

Regarding the Executive Summary

- Ms. Allen stated that the formatting matches the document, but suggested that the summary include chapter headings and/or topic heading to make the summary easier to navigate.
- Concern was noted in regards to adding the headings in an executive summary because it is not usually written in that manner.

- A member asked for a compromise, and suggested that paragraphs start by mentioning the chapters in the document.
 - Ms Dooley stated that the mapping of the executive summary should reference the plan and the exact chapter, but that headers were not needed.
 - Ms. Allen stated that she would like to edit the summary to better reference the chapters within the next week.
- ACTION ITEM:** Ms. Allen by COB February 21 – send Bobby flow revisions to IRWM Executive Summary

Regarding Flood Events

- Mr. Kamansky stated that he had included information where there were gaps in the previous draft, for example risks with dams and landslides. He tied the information into climate change with powerful storms, which leads to the issue of erosion and risk assessment. He noted five specific factors that are in the science synthesis by John Austin, National Park service, and added that debris flows caused by storm events will be a future issue.
 - Ms. Allan asked if the information added to the draft was fact checked by the original author of the data used in the text. She offered to ask Mr. Austin to review the text.
- ACTION ITEM:** Ms. Allen by COB February 21 – run flood page from IRWM plan by John Austin

Climate Change

- The section was restructured, and included vulnerabilities of the area. Note that adaptation strategies were important to the area.
- The section was organized as closely to the climate change handbook.
- A new table created, which indicated and analyzed impacts. In addition, the text noted the strategies to deal with the impacts in the area and surrounding region.
- Note that the mitigation strategies did not deal with water, but were focused on the region.
- A member stated that there was a duplicate citation in the table.
- It was noted that the entire table of contents was updated, and the Inyo National Forest was included in the text.
- A member asked where the project list would be included in the draft with an introductory statement. Mr. Kamansky stated that the project list would be added.
- For clarity, it was recommended to sort the projects accordingly to three tiers – those that were ready to go, those that were being developed, and those that had been identified but were not yet being developed.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Moi by COB February 21 – send Bobby 3-tier table of project descriptions

Further Clarification Comments

- Review the recommendations of the implementation application.

- A member asked if there was a potential to lose the planning grant money if a plan was adopted now.
 - Ms. Dooley stated that the group needs a plan that meets DWR standards before any implementation grant could be awarded. Adopting a plan for that purpose would not in any way compromise the group's current planning grant.
 - Note that adopting the plan in September would not compromise funding.
 - Ms. Dooley confirmed that the following resolution language would be acceptable:

Resolution to Adopt the IRWM Plan Prior to the Final Round 2 Implementation Grant Award

Date: *This resolution establishes that, if recommended for round 2 Implementation award, Southern Sierra RWMG will adopt an IRWM Plan that addresses all 2012 IRWM Plan standards prior to the final award date. The plan will be adopted by official resolution and noticed appropriately beforehand.*

- Ms. Dooley emphasized that any project proponents must clearly state that they support the resolution to adopt the IRWM plan prior to the final round 2 implementation grant award date.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** **Ms. Galloway** to confirm Sequoia NF's support of Feb. 14 resolution to adopt IRWM plan
 - **ACTION ITEM:** **Ms. Noesser** to confirm Inyo NF's support of Feb. 14 resolution to adopt IRWM plan
 - **ACTION ITEM:** **Ms. Combs** to confirm with Kathy Wood TBWP's support of Feb. 14 resolution to adopt IRWM plan (language pasted below for easy reference)
- It was noted that Sierra National Forest had submitted a formal letter indicating their participation in the RWMG and their representatives, Cindy Whelan and Andy Stone.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** **Mr. Fougères** to send example representation letters to Bob Robinson, Robin Galloway, and Carolyn Hunsacker.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** **Mr. Moi** to ensure posted charter has 2012 addendums
 - **ACTION ITEM:** **Ms. Hunsacker** to determine whether USFS PSW will designate a representative

AGREEMENT: All members present supported the resolution stated above. Members present included: Ms. Nancy Bruce, Mr. Chris Moi, Mr. John Shelton, Ms. Robin Calloway, Mr. Kurt Hupp, and Mr. Steve Haze.

Additional responses:

- On February 20, Kathy Wood, Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners, affirmed that they support the resolution by way of email.
- On February 15, 2012, Supervisor Kevin Elliot, Sequoia National Forest, indicated the Sequoia National Forest's support for the resolution by way of written letter.

5. Review and Recommendations of Implementation Grant Projects

Mr. Kamansky introduced the information for the grant application. He stated that the graduate students started the grant application process. The master task list was created, and the Forest Service has been participating.

- Mr. Kamansky introduced the three projects listed for the implementation grant, Springville project, Long Meadow project, and Mill Flat Creek watershed improvement. He briefly described each project noting unique aspects of each. In regards to the Long Meadow project, the scoping work has been completed, and would be included into the grant application. The NEPA process was started for the Mill Flat Creek watershed improvement. Mr. Kamansky stated that they could apply for CEQA and NEPA funding for the implementation project. He added that they are working with the Sequoia National Forest Hume Lake District.
- Mr. Kamansky stated that the timeline begins in October and the milestones could be listed monthly or quarterly. He stated that they would add a large map with all three projects represented and the projects timing.
- Mr. Kamansky stated that he would like the group to approve the implementation grant application during the next meeting on March 7, 2013.

Regarding the projects:

- A member suggested a consultant for the hydrological studies, Kelley Wegly (SP?). She had done work with water rights and offered to help with writing for American Rivers.
 - The SPUD project would allow land to be given to the river, and would focus on owners upstream.
 - It was stated that the group wanted to give information to American Rivers to help with projects and grant applications.
- It was stated that the SRT would submit the application.
- A member asked if the projects had a ranking matrix. It was stated that the Implementation Work Group will provide written rankings and recommendations for the projects, which follow the DWR standards.
 - The 12 factors were noted in the flow chart in chapter 7, and each criteria would be scored.
 - Ms. Dooley suggested that if a project meets statewide priorities and program references, this information should be highlighted in the document.
 - **ACTION ITEM: Mr. Kamansky** via Dorian on February 21 to circulate Implementation Work Group project rankings
- It was noted that the Long Meadow project is ready for implementation now.
- Ms. Hunsaker stated that she would like more clarity in the timeline/timeframe for submitting projects for the future. She had noted that because of her uncertainty with deadlines, she was unable to submit potential projects for implementation.
 - Ms. Dooley stated that once the procedures are complete, the future operations of the group should run more smoothly.

- Mr. Shelton noted that having projects ready to start for the IRWMP can be difficult, but there is potential to submit for round three implementation grants, which would allow for more time.
- There was interest in having more projects included in round three, and members wanted to be kept informed when materials are due.
- It was stated that the tribes were separated from the disadvantaged communities in the text.
- It was noted that the Tulare County has the largest tribal area in California, the Tule River Reservation.
- Ms. Dooley stated that, going forward, it would be a good idea for the RWMG documents to refer to all levels of participation in IRWM, such as “federal, state, tribal, and local.”
 - With respect to natural resource management, she hopes that eventually Tribes will be considered equal partners to the state and federal government.
 - It was noted that it has been difficult to fully involve Tribes in the IRWM program because they are not currently considered eligible to be a grantee. Additionally, tribal sovereignty – with respect to state grant agreement requirements – has contributed to a reluctance on the part of a Tribe to be a project proponent.
 - Mr. Bob Robinson noted that in the Kern IRWM this was problematic because tribal entities are not eligible grant or project partners. This issue is not new and remains a challenge to tribal participation.

Regarding other questions about the Implementation Grant:

- Ms. Hunsaker stated that, despite her interest and historical involvement in the group’s earlier work, given her current workload and the short timeframe she could not add a project to the implementation grant, but was interested in future rounds.
- Mr. Kamansky stated that some of the projects include suggestions from Ms. Hunsaker, such as doing work with watersheds and hydrological studies.
- Ms. Hunsaker stated she was interested in included a project, which had a modeling exercise with fuel reductions and potentials.
- Members asked how much preparation is done with the projects included in the implementation grant. It was stated that the SPUD project was simple because preparation work was completed. The other projects were more difficult to gather information, and the process was labor-intensive
 - Ms. Hunsaker stated that a template be created for future submissions of projects.
 - Mr. Shelton suggested pre-submittal workshops for projects, even before funding is approved. He added that having grant writers and agency members involved to aid in the workshops would be beneficial to the group.
- A member asked about the procedure for adopting the plan.
 - Ms. Dooley stated that the group may not have to adopt a final plan prior to the award date. Mr. Dane Mathis called in and offered to help clarify the requirements.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Mathis to update the group re: requirement of adopted plan for Implementation Grant application

- It was stated that there is a meeting on February 27, 2013 for the DWR Groundwater Grant review panel, and the group needs a perfect score given that 100 applications had been received. This was possible but also a very high bar and unlikely.

6. Attendees

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Julie Allen | 8. Gabriella Golik, CCP | 14. Courtney Lewis |
| 2. Nancy Bruce | 9. Michael Hickey | (Telephone) |
| 3. Pam Buford
(Telephone) | 10. Steve Haze
(Telephone) | 15. Dane Mathis |
| 4. Robin Calloway | 11. Carolyn Hunsaker | 16. Larry Otter |
| 5. Carole Combs | 12. Kurt Hupp (Telephone) | 17. Allan Pierce
(Telephone) |
| 6. Joshua Courter | 13. Bobby Kamansky | 18. Bob Robinson |
| 7. Dorian Fougères, CCP | | 19. John Shelton |