

# Sierra Water Workgroup Meeting Notes

When: September 29th 11:00 - 3:00

Where: South Tahoe Public Utility District, 1275 Meadow Crest Dr.  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Transcribed by Kaitlin Meese

## Attendance:

Debbie (Department of Water Resources)

Elizabeth B. (CABY)

Joan Clayburgh (Sierra Nevada Alliance)

Kaitlin Meese (Sierra Nevada Alliance)

Ken Bank (Madera IRWMP)

Kerri Timmer (Sierra Nevada Conservancy)

Liz Gladin (Stockholm Environmental Institute)

Liz Mansfield

Lynn Nolan (Tahoe- Sierra IRWMP)

Marie Davis (PCWA)

Mary Randall (Department of Water Resources)

Tim Nelson (Department of Water Resources)

## Agenda:

### 11:00 Welcome and Introductions

#### Announcements:

- The Center of Collaborative Policy (CCP) needs a Letter of Support for Liz Mansfield as justification for the facilitation of the workgroup. Liz Mansfield would be a special subcontracting position since she is not employed by the CCP.
- The Department of Water Resources (DWR) awarded the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) a \$10,000 grant, but they are holding the funding due to the writing process.
- Sierra Nevada Conservancy has a grant program for the fiscal year of 2011-2012 on their website. The mandatory pre-application is due on October 21, 2011. The grants will likely fund projects within the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) plans, such as forestry or water quality projects.

### 11:10 Updates on IRWMs and Planning/Implementation Grants

- **Tahoe Sierra:** They received \$1.4 million in Proposition 84 funding. The Tahoe Sierra partners are moving forward with their planning and met with DWR recently. Their Planning Grant meeting will take place in October to discuss updating the IRWM. The last Tahoe Sierra IRWM plan did not have a cost benefit analysis.
- **CABY:** They received the Regional Conservation District (RCD) planning grant to fund their revision of the IRWM plan and to conduct additional project development. CABY is

currently working on an Implementation Contract which will begin in late spring 2012 for infrastructure, efficiency and a water trust.

- **Upper Pitt:** They are a brand new IRWM group. Upper Pitt received the Planning Grant for \$500,000.
- **West Southern Sierra:** They received an RCD planning grant, a disadvantaged communities (DAC) grant and they may have some money to help with the IRWM Summit.
- **Inyo Mono:** They are in the process of planning for the IRWM.
- **Madera:** They received a RCD planning grant for \$9.4 million and are still working on IRWM Best Management Practice
- **Feather, MAC, Mariposa-** not present
- **Yosemite-** They are reapplying for a planning grant because they did not receive one from the last submission.
- **Upper King Water Forum-** They received a planning grant for \$8.4 million. The Sierra Water Workgroup (SWWG) does not have a contact with them. Liz Mansfield will be talking with them soon.

**There is still work to be done on the application process for planning grants. There will still be a cost benefit analysis required to apply for future grants which is difficult for disadvantaged communities.**

#### **Sierra Nevada Conservancy Update:**

- The SNC's main projects focus on healthy forests with water quality restoration and site improvement.
- The SNC grant pre-applications need to be turned in soon since the full application is due on January 23, 2012.

#### **Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Update:**

- The ACWA is interested in putting together a Source Water Paper which identifies the priorities and strategies of the Sierra region and its water supply. The white paper may be a great way to set the ACWA's agenda for advocacy of the Sierra water supply. Also, many other California regions have done a white paper with the ACWA.
  - o Liz Mansfield suggested she could be the mediator between the group and ACWA.
  - o It was requested that the SWWG schedule meetings that do not conflict ACWA for adequate representation.
  - o Bob has been asked to send an email to the SWWS members to provide more details on the ACWA white paper and the volunteer opportunities.
  - o Tim Quinn at the last meeting talked about connecting upstream and downstream watershed agencies. The ACWA expressed concern with the Delta Plan which may be context for their outreach to the Sierra.

11:30 Update from SNA on the Mountain Counties Overlay Report in the Water Plan.

## **Update on Bulletin 160 from Kerri Timmer (SNC):**

- The Department of Water Resources floated the issue of expanding the Mountain Counties Water region overlay to the SWWG. Their particular concern was with the 2012 water bond money being diluted. If the overlay region is increased, then the Mountain Counties Water region will have diluted funds. The DWR couldn't reconcile the issues for the 2013 report but it may be included in the 2018 report. But the Regional Report, which will be drafted soon, will double the size of the region.
  - o Conservancy had various opinions on benefits and funding results.
  - o Liz Mansfield will put this issue the next Water Update agenda, give adequate time, and ensure broad participation at SWWG. She also will call for designated representatives.
  - o Kerri requested that individual SWWG members attend workshops to present their ideas/concerns and hear other folks outside SWWG.
  - o The SWWG should contact Gary Lippner for his opinion on the 2018 potential expansion.
  - o It is rumored that if the current water bond reopens or gets pulled, there may be a parallel citizens initiative which will be more likely environmental. However, there have been no conversations about this by SNC.
  - o Joan Clayburgh (SNA) will call Planning Conservation League (PCL) / The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to find out more about the citizens initiative.
- The Sierra regional plan, its workshops and its team have not materialized.
  - o The Bulletin 160 Regional Groups have not come together for the regional plan. But, the State committee and public advisory have been meeting about its behalf.
  - o By late November or early December, DWR is hoping to have a game plan modeled after the other regional forums.
    - DWR is looking at the Central Coast forum for the forum format and the California Water Plan website for the forum outreach. The first Sierra regional forum will be focused on the water plan.
    - Kerri Timmer is the lead author for the regional report and the organizer for the outreach forum. But, she will be looking to DWR as a liaison. Also, Kerri wants to involve the Kitchen Cabinet, Mountain Counties Rural Water Resources Association (MCWRA), and the SWWG with the organizing committee. She contends that there will be plenty of opportunities through meetings and consultations after the Fall forums to provide input.
  - o Mary will be sending Liz Mansfield the link to the Central Coast forum and the new schedule for Proposition 84: Stormwater and Groundwater assistance grants.

## **Disadvantage Communities (DACs)**

- Bobby from Southern Sierra IRWM submitted an application to DWR but didn't hear back due to their development of a new contracting process. So, Michelle from S. Central office contacted him to move forward in the facilitation contract.

- DWR would love to hear comments regarding the grant process and how to make it better. Please send these ideas to Tracy Billington.
- Liz Mansfield has created a group of people to assist in commenting on the application process and to develop a SWWG list of ways to assist DACs.
  - Liz will be contacting DWR to understand their timing needs and how they want the feedback/commentary.
- DWR could put together helpful hints/ways to approach it during the Summit. However, if the SWWG wants something from DWR headquarters they should give the most advance notice.
- SNC is in contact with DWR about their role in helping IRWMs. So, Kerry and Liz will try to get together to coordinate more training and support from DWR.
- CABY has a proposal on DAC assistance to address DACs in the CABY region and their critical water supply needs.
  - Developing the proposal was part of the CABY planning grant. They are also creating a manual for doing cost benefit analysis which should be done in year or so.
    - Joan raised concern for familiarity and ease of infrastructure, since soft engineering environmental projects don't have good models.
  - To achieve funding for Sierra IRWMs we need:
    - Technical assistance
    - A revised application process including a more stream lines vision and consideration of DACs in financial portions
    - Other means of help (for example, the manual that CABY is developing)
- We need to provide DWR with comments now, if possible before November.
  - Bill will have Request for Proposal (RFP) going out February or early March and needs the comments on any changes to their process/request/evaluation/scoring.
- What can we do in the long term? Have a discussion and commentary on DWR application as part of the January Planning Meeting or the IRWM Summit.
- Implementation grants:
  - By Spring, the implementation grant applications should be out and their due date should be mid-summer 2013.
  - The grants require a reviewed and cleared plan by Fall 2013 so they can be awarded.
- The SWWG needs to send an email with Anticipated Schedule of Future IRWM Grant Solicitations

## **12:15 Lunch**

## **12:45 Report Back from Members on Action Items:**

- The IRWM groups need to designate a representative and a secondary representative to SWWG; not everyone has done so.
  - Liz Mansfield and Kaitlin Meese (SNA) will be following up with the various groups
- The stream lined process of approval:
  - Two levels of action:

- Full endorsement- This requires full representation of the SWWG (100% participation)
- Sign-on support letter- Does not require 100% participation, representatives can sign for the IRWM. This is intended to be a fast-action form of coordination. Sign-on support will not have the name Sierra Water Workgroup on it but rather the individual IRWM names that have signed on.

### 1:30 IRWMP Summit: Date, Location, Agenda, Funding

- The IRWMP Summit may be held in the Spring (late March or early April) due to the pre-projects, workshop building and sponsorship that needs to occur. A January Planning Meeting may occur near the first of the year to map out the SWWG agenda and goals.
- A pre-project for the IRWM Summit was proposed:
  - A map on IRWM Projects including climate change, collaboration (how many are single agency?), hydrologic models, etc.
    - There will be layers of restoration to identify the successes of IRWMs, the areas of overlap or inefficiencies, and the gaps within the Sierra region for a future comparative reference.
    - GIS coordinates for current projects are already in the implementation grants.
    - The timeline considered is the last 5 years, due to the span of implementation grants awarded.
    - Build a map team: collaboration between Kaitlin Meese from SNA, DWR, possibly SNC, Liz Gladden and Mary Randall
    - Kaitlin will contact the Sierra Nevada Conservancy about geographic maps of Northern, Central, Southern
    - DWR may already have a map; Tim is checking on this concept.
    - Liz Gladden will be contacting each IRWM about their top projects (20 total) for each layer.
    - There should be a list of all of the projects implemented in the area that may not be included on the map.
  - At the Summit there will be a follow-up session on the IRWM projects shown on the map and a brainstorming session to get a clear snapshot of various other projects that are **not** funded by implementation grants.
    - What IRWM's can leave with for the Sierra:
      - A wide, spatial understanding of what is happening in the Sierra.
      - Identification of the gaps and the regions to build on other accomplishments.
      - Stimulate discussion and conversation on region projects.
      - Good for the State to know what has been funded and where there is too little funding or holes on the map
- What people are looking to get out of the IRWMP Summit:

- Marie- The successes and benefits of IRWMs and to invite people like board members to see this translation of work occurring in the Sierra region.
- Tim: Cooperation with DWR and information on outreach and coordination.
- Liz: To find out about the collaborative relationships going on with projects and historical interactions, to develop more contacts, and to come up with future projects.
- Lynn: The biggest challenge is DWR and its processes, expectations, evaluations. The Tahoe-Sierra is the oldest IRWM yet they are having a hard time keeping up and need more transparency in the process because there seems to be disconnects on things like the cost-benefit analysis requirements.
- Kerri: To identify gaps, potential stakeholders, where investment should go.
- Mary: To foster discussions with other groups not those just involved with the IRWMs. It is an opportunity for stakeholders and IRWM to discuss with DWR.
- Ken: To understand larger scale (global) projects and coordination between other groups. Madera County wants to know how they can get these larger projects sponsored.
- Liz Mansfield: To establish a clear work plan for this group and establish a focus or concrete items for the 2012 agenda.
- A summary of what people want from the IRWM Summit:
  - A connection and communication with DWR.
  - To reach out to other stakeholders and sell/assert the value of IRWMs.
    - How do we, as the SWWG, get stakeholders to the Summit?
      - Location: Sacramento
      - Get the stakeholders peers to be presenters or panelists (maybe get Modesto Irrigation District to present the Water Banking Project; but remember the Sierra doesn't have opportunities for banking)
        - Need a lot of email participation for getting ideas for speakers and topics.
  - Practitioners want to learn from other projects and BMPs

## 2:45 Next Steps

- The SWWG needs to:
  - Find a location for the regional water meeting and come up with a work plan/discussion list
  - Get notices and agendas out for the Planning Day and Summit as soon as possible (no call in opportunity at Planning Day, approximately 30-40 to attend the Planning Day, and the Summit will be a larger event)
    - Need to outline workshops and delegate who is in charge of each workshop in the November SWWG meeting
    - The Committee needs to meet before the next SWWG meeting.
    - Try to get sponsorship for the Summit from the CCP.
  - Work on the ACWA paper through collaborative efforts
  - Create stepwise steps for map project

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2:50 Next Meeting

- Date for November, date for planning day, date for Summit