

# Sierra Water Workgroup Conference Call Notes Nov. 4, 2008, 1-3 p.m.

## Action Items:

- Send comments on the Sierra Water Workgroup preamble and mission using TRACK CHANGES in Microsoft Word to marion@sierranevadaalliance.org by COB Dec. 1 [EVERYONE]
- Attend January 13 in person Sierra Water Workgroup meeting in Auburn at the SNC office 11521 Blocker Drive, Ste. 205, Auburn, CA 95603
- Contact IRWMs and Regional groups about the Sierra Water Workgroup and invite them to the Jan. 13 meeting [See notes below for who calls each group]
- Keep MCWRA and ACWA Sierra regions reps informed of the Sierra Water Workgroup [Liz Mansfield, Pete Kampa, Ed Horton]

## Participants:

John Buckley  
Kim Carr  
Brian Morris  
Ed Horton  
Keri Modrall  
Liz Mansfield  
Joan Clayburgh  
Marion Gee  
Pete Kampa  
Soapy Mulholland

## Meeting Notes:

### **Review Past meeting and notes**

- Group decided this group was necessary and efforts like the State Water Plan that we could be commenting on. From here, trying to define this group and where it is going.

### **Discuss Draft Preamble and Mission (see below for draft preamble and mission)**

- Goal: Finalize the Preamble and Mission
- Outcome: Group decided to wordsmith via email. Please send comments to marion@sierranevadaalliance.org by COB Nov. 19. After comments are incorporated and barring any major or irreconcilable differences, the preamble and mission will be sent out to the organizational representatives for adoption.
- Original Preamble and Mission:  
*Preamble:* The Sierra is a unique region that provides water, electricity and natural resources that are essential to local residents and to the state of California. Sierra watersheds supply 65% of the state's water, offer prime recreation, provide half the

animal and plant habitat of the state, and provide 55% of California's hydroelectric generation. Exponential population growth coupled with climate change is significantly impairing water supply availability, reliability, quality, and ecosystem health in the region.

*Mission:* The Sierra Water Workgroup was formed with diverse interest groups to protect Sierra water supply, water quality, public safety, and ecosystem health for local benefit and that of the state of California. The group achieves this by addressing Sierra-wide water issues of concern by:

- \*Coordinating amongst local regional water plans;
- \*Advocating Sierra water issues in state and federal legislative and administrative forums;
- \*Raising the profile of the Sierra to provide more opportunities for state and federal funding;
- \*Exchanging information and tools for water and watershed management amongst stakeholders in the region; and,
- \*Serving as a conduit for state and federal water policy issues to local governments, non-profits, and other stakeholders.

- *Discussion and comments on the Preamble*

- Concern regarding the last sentence. Exponential growth and climate change significantly impairing all those things now should not be stated as a fact. Need to better understand how climate change may affect water systems nor should climate change be ignored completely. (Pete)
- Potential changes:
  - Use DWR's climate change report or other materials as they will shape future funding. We could use their predictions on snowpack reduction or use their forecasts in the preamble. Or just say in light of DWR's recent report on climate change rather than bring in the actual numbers and figures. Suggestion: "Based on the state's climate change predictions as well as rapid population growth and other threats, there are high risks for ensuring water supply availability, reliability, quality, and ecosystem health in the region."
  - Clause should be added to end to sum up and connect to mission statement. Something like: "As a result, better coordination and investment in the region is necessary to address these issues." (Brian)
  - Potential addition to preamble: "The Sierra purifies, oxygenates, replenishes and nourishes a vast body of natural resources on a magnitude of scale that the State's health is dependant upon and whose impairment of these natural processes, beyond recovery, would lead to unimaginable economic and ecological consequences for California and the world." (Pete K.)
  - Suggested edited version from Brian Morris: The Sierra is a unique region that provides water, electricity and natural resources that are essential to local residents and to the state of California. Sierra

watersheds supply 65% of the state's water, offer prime recreation, provide half the animal and plant habitat of the state, and provide 55% of California's hydroelectric generation. Climate change is already impacting California's water resources, and it is expected that a 25% reduction in snowpack by the middle of the century will change water supply for all of California, while an increase in weather extremes will lead to both larger winter flood events and more frequent droughts. Climate change and continued population growth will significantly impair water supply availability, reliability, quality, and ecosystem health in the Sierra region and far beyond, necessitating cooperation on a regional response along with reinvestment in our watersheds and water resources by all beneficiaries.

- Suggested edited version from John Buckley: The Sierra is a unique region that provides water, electricity and natural resources that are essential to local residents and to the overall state of California. Sierra watersheds supply 65% of the state's water, offer prime recreation, provide half the wildlife and plant habitat of the state, and provide 55% of California's hydroelectric generation. The predicted long-term impacts of climate change along with rapid population growth combine to pose significant risk to water supply availability, reliability, quality, and ecosystem health in the region. Responding to that risk with coordinated, highly-informed advocacy is essential to assure an adequate, healthy water resource.

- Discussion and comments on the Mission:

- John impressed with language, clear reasons for this group's existence, has some minor suggestions but overall care and good vision evident.
- The mission/preamble works for EID and the Alliance.
- Who is the target audience of this group? Or is it just the broad general public that we want to influence? The answer may affect the writing/language of the mission. (John)
  - Response: There are multiple targets identified in the mission: local water plans, state/federal legislators and policy makers, general public, local resource managers/entities (Joan)
- To note: the Sierra Water Workgroup should treat the preamble and mission as living documents and as new people come in and other changes are made, we should acknowledge that they are not set in stone.
- Suggested edited version from John Buckley: The Sierra Water Workgroup was formed with diverse interest groups to protect Sierra water supply, water quality, public safety, and ecosystem health for local benefit and that of the state of California. The group achieves this through addressing Sierra-wide water issues of concern by: \*Coordinating amongst those working on local regional water plans; \*Advocating on behalf of Sierra water issues in state and federal legislative and administrative forums; \*Raising the profile of the Sierra to provide more opportunities for state and federal funding; \*Exchanging information and tools for water and watershed management

amongst stakeholders in the region; and, \*Serving as a conduit of information about state and federal water policy issues to local governments, non-profits, and other stakeholders

## **Discuss Issues of Geographic boundaries**

- Outcome: Consensus that we should be umbrella group and that we should include the entire Sierra region as defined by the SNC boundaries.

## **Discuss Issues of Membership**

- Goal: Decide WHO should be involved in this group
- Outcome: Consensus reached that membership/voting body should consist of representatives from IRWMPs and regional groups with an interest in water (option 1). As to the actual decision making structure and process this should be discussed and decided upon at a later time.
- Options Suggested:
  - Option 1: Membership would include representatives from each IRWMP and regional groups
  - Option 2: Wide open Membership- anyone with interest in water quality, supply and ecosystem health
  - Option 3: Named stakeholders representing water agencies, watershed groups, cities/counties, ag etc.
- Comments on Membership:
  - If the Sierra Water Workgroup decides to send in a comment letter or take a stand on an issue, would be difficult with a larger group of people. Better to start with smaller group than add more later At the same time the group needs to be balanced in terms of representation. (Soapy)
  - At the same time if the group were to send in a comment letter it would be more powerful to have a longer list of supporters, but agreed there needs to be some structure and not just anyone can walk in and have a say in the decisions.
  - Need/want to make sure this group lasts for many years in the future and how we decide membership can affect that (Ed)
  - Could have core members with interested parties, each core members representing a certain issue or stakeholder group, have to participate to vote (Keri)
  - IRWMPs could represent different regions of the Sierra, strive to invite appropriate key groups and reps from IRWMPs to get balanced representation. IRWMP coordination and conversations already happening so could be easier to tap into.
- Voting Structure/Decision-making
  - If group will vote to take positions on issues etc, or be consensus or collaborative based/consortium/education/info sharing. Needs to be balanced (John)

- Should there be one rep from each iRWMP? Or do we specify who comes from each? Or should we also make sure a person representing water agencies, all county governments?
- Could let Irwms decide who reps them- but they still have only one vote. Each should have designated person and alternate- to prevent having to get people up to speed every time to prevent wasting time.
- Still should allow an audience in order to be transparent, even if voting is just for certain groups
- Regional groups should have vote too (consensus of the groups).
- Could northern sierra and southern sierra partnership be included as regional groups? (Soapy)
- List of people to be invited to January meeting:
  - Tahoe- Sierra IRWM (to be contacted by Marion)
  - CABY IRWM
  - Tuolumne-Stanislaus IRWM
  - MAC IRWM
  - Mariposa IRWM (to be contacted by Kim)
  - South Sierra IRWM
  - Madera IRWM (to be contacted by Kim)
  - Inyo Mono IRWM (to be contacted by Marion)
  - Upper Yuba IRWM (to be contacted by Keri)
  - Upper Feather IRWM
  - Regional groups: Sierra Nevada Alliance, Sierra Business Council, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, MCWRA
- Maybe wait and see about pulling in more land managers like FS for the January meeting (John). We will still need to work eventually with those who own and operate the land (ed) but perhaps that relationship with land managers could be more one of coordination (brian).

### **Discuss Coordination with MCRWA**

- Goal: Determine the relationship of this group with MCRWA
- Outcome: ACWA and MCRWA should be kept informed of the Sierra Water Workgroup and allowed to be involved if they choose. Liz, Ed, Pete etc. will make sure they keep up to date.
- Comments:
  - Some concern at first on the behalf of MCWRA. They wanted to carry this group themselves, but at this time MCWRA is in transition. Best to just keep them informed for now. Bertha Underhill is the chair of their board, (Pete)
  - ACWA region (3 of them) should also be informed (ed)

### **State Water Plan - Is their a shared message or comment we can submit to DWR?**

- Outcome: Group is not ready at this time to comment or create a shared message.

### **Discuss the name of this group**

- Outcome: The group, in light of who the membership is and to better reflect the interested of the group, has decided to call this group, at least for the time being, the Sierra Water Workgroup

### **Next Steps**

- In person meeting scheduled for Jan. 13 in 10 to 3 at the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Office, 11521 Blocker Drive, Ste. 205, Auburn, CA 95603
- Agenda: TBD
- RSVPs include: Pete Kampa , Brian, John, Ed, Soapy, Caby, Marion, Joan