

Sierra Water Workgroup – 8/16/12

Conference Call Notes

Meeting: August 16th, 9:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Conference Call

Participants: Gavin Feiger, (Sierra Nevada Alliance), Elizabeth Betancourt (CABY and Upper Pit IRWM), Holly Alpert (CalTrout and Inyo-Mono IRWM), Kristin Honeycutt, (DWR), Dave Eggerton (CABY IRWM), Carl Janzen (Madera IRWM)

Agenda

- Summit overview and evaluations

The conference in July was very well received by participants. The evaluations were sent to the SWWG moderators and speakers (please e-mail if you would like to see a copy). For those of you who were not able to attend the conference below is a brief summary.

The SWWG Summit was held in North Lake Tahoe, Kings Beach Event Center on July 17th and 18th. The conference addressed a number of Sierra and rural water issues.

The SWWG Coordinator opened the conference with a discussion regarding Integrated Regional Water Management challenges with fiscal security, political strategies in the Delta, and integration with the State Water Plan. On the first day the breakout 1 workshop discussed *Spatial Analysis and Map Communication Strategies in Water Planning issues*. Presentations regarding specific GIS tools that the IRWM stakeholders can use to track projects and evaluate the impacts of and benefits of other ongoing Federal projects. Breakout 2 *Tips and Pitfalls for IRWM Project Funding*, explored the various methods for addressing the challenges of application preparation of cost benefit analysis requirements. Breakout 3 *Water Rights*, was a very educational panel with top attorneys in the State discussing general water rights issues and more specifically the Area of Origin Statutes that most concern stakeholders in the Sierra region. Breakout 4 *Climate Change in Water Planning*, discussed the requirements of DWR's guidelines and the efforts of the Sierra IRWM regions to address climate adaptation.

The second Plenary on the 17th was *Engaging Disadvantaged Communities and Tribal Perspectives for IRWM in the Sierra*. Although this panel received both good and bad evaluations, the speakers were excellent and the discussion provided two very important points. Tribal stakeholders need to be more involved in IRWM planning and implementation and the strategies for engaging the Indian stakeholders need to be further developed with the tribes. Also, the discussion for disadvantaged communities needs to be separated from Tribal issues.

On July 18th, the conference opened with *Sierra IRWM Success Stories*, each IRWM had a brief five minute presentation to highlight projects or planning efforts unique to their region. It was clear that more time was needed to properly address the projects. Breakout 5 *Water and Land Nexus*, highlighted the complex issues of the Sierra region regarding the connection between land and water, specifically groundwater, forest management, water quality and growth. Breakout 6 *Alternative Investment Platform for Watershed Management*, explored the alternative and innovative methods for managing for the benefit of the watershed.

In closing session the participants of the conference regarded the Summit as informative, useful and collaborative. There was general consensus that another conference next year should be pursued and a reception hour added,

- Next year partnership with CA State Bar Association –

Thanks to the Sierra Nevada Alliance promoting the SWWG Summit, the California State Bar Association (Environmental Law Section) is interested in holding their own conference in conjunction with a Sierra Water Summit next year. They are willing to narrow the scope to water and Sierra specific legal issues. Costs may also be shared. Due to the SWWG participants on the call and via e-mails, I will go ahead and work with the State Bar Association to organize a collaborative conference next year. I think this is a great opportunity to highlight and further discuss the legal water issues regarding the Sierra.

- Works tasks for SWWG

There were a number of tasks identified for the SWWG. All of the items are listed below. They will be further discussed in detail at the face-to-face- meeting in October.

- SWWG Summit for 2013 in partnership with the State Bar Association
- Sierra lobbying tours
- Website updates/development

- Raising the profile of the Sierra
- Liz will be attending all IRWM meetings around the Sierra Region, providing a SWWG presentation if requested.
- Future Bond discussions
- Coordinate with IRWM Roundtable of regions, and other state-wide efforts

- DWR funding application

Liz will draft a proposal for further facilitation funding from the Department of Water Resources. Draft will be sent out for review.

- Next Steps

October meeting, look for Doodle Poll.