



IMPERIAL IRWMP

Water Forum Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, March 22, 2012

Time: 9:00–11:30 am

Location: SDG&E Renewable Energy Center,

Participants

See the attached sign in sheet.

Follow-up Actions

Topic	Action	Follow-up
Improve Water Quality RMS	Include finalized RMS in 4/19/2012 WF packet	Anisa
Improve Water Quality RMS	Include finalized RMS in 4/19/2012 WF packet	Anisa
Improve Flood Management RMS	Include finalized RMS in 4/19/2012 WF packet	Anisa
Funding to sustain WF	Discuss at April PMT meetings	PMT
Grant Management	Seek City of Imperial City Council approval for assuming responsibility for managing any Proposition 84 Implementation Grant funding.	Marlene
Grant Application Cost Distribution	Discuss grant application cost distribution at 4//18/2012 Projects Work Group meeting	Projects Work Group

Summary of Decisions

Topic	Language	WF Decision
Improve Water Quality RMS	See Improve Water Quality RMS section, below	Adopt
Improve Flood Management RMS	See Improve Flood Management RMS section, below	Adopt
Other RMS & Practice Resources Stewardship RMS	See Other RMS & Practice Resources Stewardship RMS section, below	Adopt
Governance, Grant preparation funding, & grant administration (lead agency)	See Introduce Mandatory Elements section, below	Adopt

Meeting Notes

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review, November Meeting Notes

Dale Schafer called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. Agenda review. Questions and/or comments can be emailed to Dale Schafer at daleschafer@msn.com or Anisa Divine at ajdivine@iid.com.

Current Events

- **Projects Work Group (PWG):** Project sponsors made presentations and there was a lot of good interaction. PWG members took notes and assigned readiness-to-proceed scores to the presented projects that will be used to bring grant funding recommendations to the Water Forum. At its 4/18/2012 meeting, the remaining project sponsors will make their presentations and members score the projects' readiness to proceed. At the 5/16/2012 following PWG meeting, members will discuss of how the projects can be bundled together to increase the competitiveness of the Imperial IRWMP Proposition 84 Implementation Grant application.

CDWR Grants: Anna Aljabiry, CDWR briefed the group on the anticipated schedule for the Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation Grant and the Proposition 1E Stormwater Flood Management (SWFM) Grant. Anna also noted the following:

- Colorado River Proposition 84 Funding Area Region includes the Imperial, Coachella Valley, Anza Borrego IRWM regions and a portion of the Mojave IRWM Region.
- Approximately \$21.9M in Proposition 84 funds remain for disbursement to the Colorado River planning area. This is roughly 60% of the total amount available before Round 1 and 2 planning grants the Round 2 implementation grants were awarded.
- Round 2 Proposition 84 planning grants totaling \$1.8M were awarded to the Mojave and Anza Borrego regions.
- Round 2 Proposition 84 Implementation grant funds will total \$131M statewide, of which approximately \$5.24 M will be available in Colorado River planning area. For Round 3, approximately \$472 M available statewide.
- The Local Groundwater Assistance Grants proposal solicitation package will be released in June 2012.
- CDWR will be posting preliminary dates for all programs on their web site.

QSA Update: Tina reported that the California Supreme Court denied the petition for consideration and sent the validation actions go back to the Superior Court. The Superior Court will address outstanding CEQA issues that were not addressed previously. System conservation is being worked on and on-farm conservation scheduled to commence in 2013.

IID Solar Water: Tina said the IID Board of Directors has tasked staff to develop a policy to address solar project water.

Resource Management Strategies

Improve Water Quality

Water Forum (WF) review and action on proposed changes to Improve Water Quality, as follows:

Matching Quality to Use RMS

1.1.2.1 3rd bullet

- Treat and recycle municipal wastewater to a level of quality that is legally acceptable for beneficial use in lieu of the region's Colorado River supply.

No comment.

Salt and Salinity Management RMS

1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 1st sub-bullet

- ~~Agricultural Water Use Efficiency measures through IID's Definite Plan and System Conservation Plan. Imperial Valley growers incorporate leaching, tile drainage and other salinity management practices as a part of their regular farming activity~~

Anisa noted this bullet had been struck, but she decided to put it back in. Al Kalin suggested adding "soil amendments". Rodney Williams suggested language to clarify ground that is serviced by IID water. The WF agreed to the following language:

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 1st sub-bullet

- In the IID service area, growers incorporate leaching, subsurface tile drainage, soil amendments and other salinity management practices as a part of their regular farming activity.

1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 2nd sub-bullet

- USBR Lower Colorado Region, Imperial Valley Research Center and IID cooperate to provide Imperial Valley growers with the IID-delivered Salinity Assessment Vehicle service, known as the "Salty Dawg" to determine salt levels in the soil, assist in determining leaching requirements, and contribute to effective water use.

Al said the Salty Dawg is not used much in the Imperial Valley, so other services should be mentioned, such as the U.S. Cooperative Extension, Desert Research and Extension Center, NRCS EQIP Program, etc. Matt stated it is not the intent of these findings to document an entire process, but to help scope the implantation actions. It was agreed that this bullet should be replaced with another:

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 2nd sub-bullet

- *Existing programs, both private and public, support growers in managing the salt that comes in with Colorado River water supplies. The Imperial region is not recommending additional new programs or projects related to salt and salinity management as part of the IRWMP.*

1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 3rd sub-bullet

- QSA and Related Agreements include mitigation flow for the Salton Sea.

Tom Sephton said the bullet should include an end date.

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 3rd sub-bullet

- *QSA and Related Agreements include mitigation flow for the Salton Sea through 2017.*

1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 4th sub-bullet

- Desalination RMS includes removal of salts from drain water or brackish groundwater and anticipates requirements for brine disposal.

Al said this bullet seems impossible to reach. Tom said it isn't meant to say all of the salt will be taken out of water entering into the Imperial Valley, though there might be plans to remove some of the salt for beneficial use. Tom suggested the bullet be less specific. Tina Shields said to clarify "desalination projects within the RMS." The bullet was changed to read:

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 4th sub-bullet

- *Desalinization RMS includes a clause addressing removal of salts from drain water, brackish groundwater and/or other water sources and also anticipates requirements for brine disposal and other water sources.*

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, add bullet after 4th sub-bullet

- *Stakeholders have proposed desalinization projects as part of the IRMWP implementation plan.*

1.1.3.1 2nd bullet, 5th sub-bullet

- Recycled Municipal Water RMS includes projects and programs that could change drain flows or potentially affect salinity; decreased drain flow or increased salinity may require mitigation for identified impact.

No comment.

1.1.3.1 3rd bullet

- Regional stakeholders, through the Imperial Water Forum, should actively engage in efforts to restore the Salton Sea to realize benefits and avoid impacts to the region.

Al didn't like the words "through the Imperial Water Forum". The WF agreed to remove this language. Tina did not like the word "restore" because IID has a board resolution discussing realities of the Salton Sea focusing on habitat. The WF agreed to the word "address". It now reads:

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.3.1 3rd bullet

- *Regional stakeholders should actively engage in efforts to address the Salton Sea to realize benefits and avoid impacts to the region.*

Pollution Prevention RMS

1.1.4.1 1st bullet

- Existing local, state and federal programs are generally sufficient to control the sources of most contaminants.

Chris Schoneman asked for clarification of this finding's intent. Are the sources of most contaminants unknown? Charlene suggested language that the WF agreed with. Andy said the finding needed to be pertinent to this region. The bullet was changed to read:

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.4.1 1st bullet

- *Existing local, state and federal laws, ordinances, regulations and statutes are sufficient to control the sources of regulated contaminants within the Imperial region.*

1.1.4.1 3rd bullet, 1st sub-bullet

- Imperial County Farm Bureau Total Maximum Daily Load Program to meet silt discharge and other requirements consistent with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Colorado River Basin Plan is being voluntarily and successfully carried out by Imperial Valley growers, and no program expansion or changes are anticipated as part of the Imperial IRWMP.

No comment.

1.1.4.1 6th bullet

- Coordinate with New River Improvement Project efforts to remediate contaminated water flowing across the Mexican border into the United States via the New River (see Imperial IRWMP Ecosystem Enhancement Restoration RMS).

Andy said the goals and objectives of the New River Improvement project only address issues on the U.S. side of the border. Andy suggested language "and to reduce or eliminate pollution sources in Mexico". Tina suggested "improve". The bullet was changed to:

Decision: Improve Water Quality 1.1.4.1 6th bullet

- *Coordinate with New River Improvement Project efforts to remediate contaminated water and improve water quality flowing across the Mexican border into the United States via the New River (see Imperial IRWMP Ecosystem Enhancement Restoration RMS).*

Decision: The WF agreed to adopt the Improve Water Quality section with amendments. **(Adopt)**

The finalized document will be included in the April 19th Water Forum packet. **Follow Up**

Improve Flood Management

Water Forum (WF) review and action on proposed changes to Improve Flood Management RMS, as follows:

Al remarked that these RMS findings indicate that IID is not a flood control district, and noted that most drains in the valley are owned by farmers. Matt said the current hydrograph cannot be changed but maybe the capacity can be enhanced to accommodate more stormwater. Andy said that a goal is to look at creating a regional flood control program. Andy suggested adding a bullet to the recommendations section to address this.

Decision: Improve Flood Management 6.1.1.2 6th bullet, add after 5th sub-bullet

- Thorough regulatory and legal reviews should be performed to determine the implications of the existing drain system in the potential formation of a flood control district.

Decision: WF agreed to adopt the Improve Flood Management section with amendments. **(Adopt)**

The finalized document will be included in the April 19th Water Forum packet. **Follow Up**

Other Strategies & Practice Resources Stewardship

It is been proposed be set aside work on these until the Imperial IRWMP is updated in 5 years.

Anisa noted that the second entry for *Crop Idling for Water Transfers & Irrigated Land Retirement Findings* is a statement directly from the IID Board resolution 25-2005. She stated that the *Land Use Planning and Management & Economic Incentives Findings* is where IID can develop a policy for freed-up water in the valley to be used on some in-valley MCI use. Tina is currently working on this policy, which may be a topic at a future WF meeting.

Crop Idling for Water Transfers & Irrigated Land Retirement Findings

OS-2, 4th bullet

- It is important for the IID Board of Directors to communicate in clear and unmistakable terms, and in a public fashion, that IID and the Imperial Valley community are not interested in entering into new agreements, or other arrangements, that would require the development of additional conserved water, either through fallowing or any other means, for use by others outside of the Imperial Valley.

Rodney stated this bullet should not be included in the Imperial IRWMP. He reaffirmed that the IRWMP should not exclude groundwater opportunities. Anisa suggested eliminating the entire O-2 portion of this finding. Andy suggested adding an opener explaining that this is an IID resolution, and that their jurisdiction is with Colorado River water. Tina suggested only including O-2, number 2. The WF agreed to use Andy and Tina's suggestions. This section will read:

Decision: Improve Other Strategies O-2

OS-2 The IID Board voted unanimously to strongly confirm its commitment to prohibition of fallowing for out-of-valley transfers in resolution 25-2005 in part: IID fully intends to move away from fallowing as a means of developing conserved water for temporary transfer to others outside of the Imperial Valley and instead intends to utilize efficiency conservation measures so as to allow for the farming of the same amount of land with less water.

Decision: The WF agreed to adopt the Other Strategies and Practice Resources Stewardship section with amendments. **(Adopt)**

Introduce Mandatory Elements

Marlene presented the Program Management Team recommendations to the Water Forum. Discussion followed about how the Region would pay for the ongoing program to sustain the Water Forum and implement the plan. It was agreed noted that would be this was a topic for further discussion.

At present the WF is to discuss and decide on the governance structure for implementation of the IRWMP, including the lead agency to contract with CDWR and how the costs to prepare a Proposition 84 IRWM implementation grant should be distributed. It was asked whether the proposed governance structure, which is the governance structure adopted in the Imperial IRWMP Charter, would meet the CDWR standards. Anna Aljabiry, CDWR representative, stated that CDWR does not dictate a structure and that this is a decision of the local stakeholders.

It was noted that the Imperial IRWMP governance structure includes the required two water management entities (IID, County), the Cities, farming, industry, environmental and other stakeholder representation; and that the representation and decision process had been working well. If a more formal structure were needed in the future, the WF could change the structure as necessary, The PMT recommended that the governance structure in the Imperial IRWMP Water Forum and Regional Water Management Group Charter should be adopted and used in the Proposition 84 Implementation Grant application.

Imperial County (Andy Horne) and IID (Tina Shields) expressed support for the City of Imperial acting as the fiscal/contracting agent (grantee) for the Proposition 84 Implementation Grant. It was remarked that the City of Imperial would be more nimble in decision making and had good contract and program management support services.

Based on the PMT recommendations as presented by Marlene Best and following WF discussion, the WF agreed by consensus to the following:

- **Decision: Governance.** Maintain existing governance structure as defined in the *Imperial IRWMP Water Forum and Regional Water Management Group Charter* during implementation of the Imperial IRWMP.
 - IID staff will provide ongoing coordination and logistical support to the Water Forum and RWMG.**(Adopt)**
- **Decision: Proposition 84 Implementation Grant preparation costs.** Agencies with projects included in the Imperial Region Proposition 84 Implementation Grant (Round 2) will determine the method for distributing among themselves any costs to prepare the grant application (e.g., grant writer, consulting services).
 - The City of Imperial will coordinate the agencies and prepare the grant application package.**(Adopt)**
- **Decision: Proposition 84 Implementation Grant administration.** The City of Imperial will provide program management support and serve as fiscal/contracting agent (grantee) for any Proposition 84 Implementation Grant contract that may be awarded by the California Department of Water Resources (CDWR).
 - Separate contractual agreements will be developed between the City of Imperial and each agency that has a project that is awarded funding. Requirements of the CDWR-City of

Imperial contract will be the requirements in the contract between City of Imperial and each other agency.

- A percentage of the total grant will be provided to the City of Imperial to cover administrative costs.
- Each project awarded funding will include an administration cost line item in the budget for that project.

(Adopt)

- **Funding to sustain the Water Forum/RWVG and to implement the IRWMP.** Ongoing funding by the Water Forum will be a future agenda item. **Follow up.**

Projects Work Group Report

Tom Sephton reported that several projects were presented, including one El Centro project that was not ranked, because it did not score well in the preliminary ranking. Other El Centro projects were not reentered into the updated call for projects format. The WF agreed to add the El Centro projects to the ranked list. The PWG will rank the projects that are presented according to readiness to proceed and report the results to the WF.

Anisa reported that three opportunities for bundling projects that had become apparent during the PWG presentations:

- Reliability (catastrophic events) and supply interruption (inter-ties, multiple connections to IID supply, and raw/treated water storage facilities),
- Recycled water as secondary use of Colorado River supply, and
- Groundwater storage, banking and conjunctive use.

Next Steps

The next Projects Work Group will be April 18, 2012, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

The next WF meeting will be April 19, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Adjourn 11:28 a.m.