



# IMPERIAL IRWMP

## Water Forum Meeting Notes

**Date:** Thursday, October 20, 2011

**Time:** 9:00–11:30 noon

**Location:** SDG&E Renewable Energy Center,

## Upcoming Meetings

Water Forum meetings:	January 19 and March 15
Projects Work Group Meeting:	November 16: 1:30-3:30 PM
Region Mitigation Banking Meeting:	November 17 or 18
Groundwater Management Plan Meeting:	November 17 or 18

## Follow-up Actions

Topic	Action	Follow-up
Project Review Criteria - Strategic Considerations points total	Correct miscalculation of points for Strategic Considerations on Project Review Criteria chart.	<b>Matt</b>
Water Supply Goal, Groundwater Rights	Change weight to 2 points	<b>Matt</b>
Water Supply Goal, Groundwater Rights, Measure 2	Change to: <i>2. Sustains and protects use of overlying groundwater users (pumpers); clearly helps to prevent or address overdraft or has no impacts on such aquifers.</i>	<b>Matt</b>
Water Supply Goal, Groundwater Rights, Measure 1	Change to: <i>1. May sustain and protect use of overlying groundwater users (pumpers); does not prevent or address overdraft or has impact on such aquifers.</i>	<b>Matt</b>
Water Supply Goal, Improve Water Supply	Change to: Does the project provide a firm, verifiable, and sustainable supply that contributes to the regional goal of 50 to 100 thousand acre-feet per year for municipal, commercial, and/or industrial demands by 2025? This supply cannot withdraw from current agricultural supplies.	<b>Matt</b>

## Summary of Decisions

Topic	Language	WF Decision
Project Ranking	Use GEI consultants not working on the Imperial IRWMP to review and rank projects.	<b>Accept</b>
Method for Ranking Projects	Review and rank projects in two steps: by	<b>Accept</b>

	readiness first; then score and rank projects second.	
How to evaluate and rank projects are presented	Projects are reviewed by a GEI consultant not working on the Imperial IRWMP first, PWG second, and WF last.	<b>Accept</b>
Imperial IRWMP Project Evaluation and Ranking Criteria	See Imperial IRWMP Project Evaluation and Ranking Criteria Handout.	<b>Adopt</b>

## Participants

See the attached sign in sheet.

## Meeting Notes

### Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

Dale Schafer called the meeting to order at 9:14am. Agenda review. Questions and/or comments can be emailed to Dale Schafer at [daleschafer@msn.com](mailto:daleschafer@msn.com) or Anisa Divine at [ajdivine@iid.com](mailto:ajdivine@iid.com).

### Current Events

#### Prop 84 Planning Grant

The Prop 84 planning grant has gone through CDWR's legal department. IID has authorized funding for this grant. There will be one minor change made to the agreement before Tina prepares and signs the agreement.

#### CDWR Statewide Flood Management Plan

Jim Minnick said the County's Department of Planning met in September to prepare a future flood report to be part of the statewide flood management program. This report determines risks, existing structures, available financing, and potential impacts. The County's report is expected to be completed by 2014. See the county website for more details, <http://www.co.imperial.ca.us/>.

#### Imperial's Aviation Day

Saturday October 22, 2011, 9:00am-3:00pm at the Imperial airport.

#### New River Project

Anisa reported that there is progress with the New River Project. Andy Horne said the New River Technical Advisory Committee is working on drafting the strategic plan. Some grant money has been made available to start that plan and a final draft can be expected by the end of the year. Dale suggested the Water Forum hear a status report at the next meeting.

### IRWMP Work Plan Status & Schedule

The IRWMP grant work plan consists of 24 tasks. Anisa reviewed the status of each task (for more information see October's handout *Grant Application Work Plan for Preparing the Imperial IRWMP*).

Mitigation and groundwater management meetings will be scheduled soon. The Apportionment Program has been placed on hold. Based on October's PMT discussion, mitigation banking will continue to be developed. Once the draft plan is developed, the Water Forum will review. The Administrative Draft IRWMP should be adopted in June or July to ensure the plan is complete by August 2012. Particular tasks were placed on hold for technical reasons.

### Project Review Process

Marlene overviewed the PMT's discussion on the project review process.

**Who should review/rank projects?** The PMT believes the projects should be reviewed by a consultant that is familiar with the Imperial IRWMP process, projects, and region to ensure the adopted criteria and strategies are properly evaluated. The PMT recommends GEI because they have been an integral part of the Imperial IRWMP process.

Tom Sephton questioned whether GEI has a conflict of interest, considering that IID has submitted projects and pays GEI. Tina explained that regardless of which consultant evaluates the projects, they will be paid by IID. If there is disagreement with a project's rank, the PWG and ultimately the Water Forum will have opportunities to adjust project rankings. Tom said a disagreement with the rankings would need significant PWG time and suggested GEI hire outside consultants, such as the University of Redlands, to evaluate projects. Tina said that adding extra consultants and PWG meetings will require us to readjust our IRWMP timeline. Anisa suggested that GEI use reviewers that have not been working on the implementation of the Imperial IRWMP. The Water Forum agreed with Anisa's suggestion.

**Decision:** Use GEI consultants not working on the Imperial IRWMP to review and rank projects.  
**Accept**

**What method should be used to review projects?** The PMT discussed alternative review processes which included reviewing every project in one step or in multiple steps. The PMT recommends the projects be reviewed in two steps for timeliness. Based on input from Tom Sephton and Matt, the first review will separate projects by their readiness to proceed. The second review will rank and score all projects. The Water Forum had no objections to this method.

Matt reminded the Water Forum that many projects submitted in the first Call for Projects need to resubmit their project to meet the standards of the second Call for Projects.

**Decision:** Review and rank projects in two steps, separate by readiness first, score and rank projects second. **Accept**

**How should ranked projects be presented to the Water Forum?** The PMT discussed how the ranked projects will be presented to the Water Forum. The PMT recommends the consultants first rank all projects, then the PWG review and discuss the ranked list, and lastly, the ranked list be presented to the Water Forum. *If a Water Forum member does not feel represented, please attend PWG meetings.*

Matt said the PWG will review the project rankings in January. Anisa noted that the PWG might need to meet more frequently during the review process in order to meet our timeline.

In response to Alex Meyerhoff, Matt explained that grant ready means that the project is nearly ready to construct, has final designs, has environmental documents complete or nearly complete, local financing has been secured, etc.; but a few minor activities may be outstanding (final agreements signed, final permit to be obtained, etc.). There should be a solid plan and a schedule to have all the remaining activities completed. Any Imperial IRWMP projects that is awarded funding must be shovel ready (all outstanding activities complete, ready to turn dirt) before the contract with CDWR can be signed.

Marlene asked the Water Forum what the best use for money would be: a good, integrated project; or a lesser project that is shovel ready and waiting for money. From a city's perspective, there are values in both. Sometimes it's good to see real projects, but one must recognize that there are really good plans that can't get off the ground without a little money. Marlene recommends the PWG and Water Forum look at the benefits of both types of projects.

Matt reminded the Water Forum that the strategy of applying for grants will be based on the CDWR funding cycles and schedules. Project sponsors should be aware of the timing of CDWR grants and plan accordingly. Applicants are also advised to be aware of the different types or sources of funding. Projects should be matched to the different types of funding. Example, flood control projects will rise to the top of the list for Prop 1E.

**Decision:** Projects are reviewed by a GEI consultant not working on the Imperial IRWMP first, PWG second, and Water Forum last. **Accept**

### Project Review and Evaluation Criteria

Tom Sephton reviewed the Project Evaluation and Review Criteria handout, which was first presented at June 2011's meeting. Edie Harmon suggested the Groundwater Rights, under the Water Supply Goal, should have a weight of 2 because there are communities within this region that are completely dependent on groundwater. It was also agreed to change the performance measure wording to include "has no impact on such aquifers". There were no disagreements from the Water Forum.

**Action:** Change Groundwater Rights weight, under the Water Supply Goal, to two (2). **Matt**

**Action:** Change Groundwater Rights Performance Measure to:

*2. Sustains and protects use of overlying groundwater users (pumpers); clearly helps to prevent or address overdraft or has no impact on such aquifers.*

*1. May sustain and protect use of overlying groundwater users (pumpers); does not prevent or address overdraft or has impact on such aquifers.* **Matt**

The Water Forum discussed the possibility of raising the weight on Water Supply Goals, 1 and/or 2, Effect on Agricultural Users of Water and Improve Water Supply, respectively, to protect the availability of agricultural water. Alex argued that the amount of available points for projects improving agricultural water supply penalizes a small water company that can't provide large amounts of water. Tom

countered that the big water producing projects are nowhere near shovel ready. It was decided to leave the weight as is, but add a caveat stating that “this supply cannot withdraw from current agricultural supplies.

**Action:** Add caveat to Improve Water Supply, under the Water Supply Goal: Does the project provide a firm, verifiable, and sustainable supply that contributes to the regional goal of 50 to 100 thousand acre-feet per year for municipal, commercial, and/or industrial demands by 2025? *This supply cannot reduce or be drawn from current agricultural supplies.* **Matt**

Matt explained that the intent of the IRWMP is to create additional water supplies, take advantage of current water supplies, meet water quality standards, and support DACs. The IRWMP is to look at all structural and non-structural solutions to better manage local resources.

Tom asked if the Support DACs – Wastewater goal, under Water Quality Goals includes communities working together. Matt said that it does. Anisa wondered whether the Water Forum if DAC support were weighted low; the cities were ok with the current weight.

Michael Cox noticed that the Strategic Considerations to Implement IRWMP points are miscalculated. The Water Forum agreed with the revised point structure.

**Action:** Correct miscalculation of points for Strategic Considerations on the Project Review Criteria chart. **Matt**

Abraham Campos questioned the low ranking of stormwater and flood protection. Dale explained that it was prioritized by the Water Forum as the fourth goal. These projects will rank higher for specific funding sources for flood purposes such as Prop 1E. Matt encouraged revisiting the flood conversation. Edie added that she doesn’t feel comfortable with the county being the local flood manager based on their history of approving development in areas affected by flooding, particularly in Ocotillo.

The Water Forum unanimously agreed to adopt the Project Evaluation and Ranking Criteria with revisions noted in the October minutes.

**Decision:** Adopt the Imperial IRWMP Project Evaluation and Ranking Criteria with October Water Forum revisions. **Adopt**

### Stakeholder Projects

Rodney Williams believes Imperial IRWMP projects are not for Salton Sea remediation, but to create additional supply and maintain and conserve Colorado River water. Matt said the goals and objectives were broad, but after ranking goals, the Water Forum decided to focus on water supply. CDWR has stated that integrated projects are more apt to get grant funds.

Rodney noted that some groundwater projects submitted are outside the region, and asked why the Imperial IRWMP is looking at potentially funding these projects. Matt said that groundwater storage is an Imperial IRWMP objective. Groundwater storage would increase the Imperial region’s water supply

by allowing storage of the region's unused Colorado River allotment as groundwater in other basins. Matt encouraged the Water Forum to look at more opportunities to store water. Rodney suggested IID work with the County to review and study potential groundwater locations. Tom noted that any agency can submit storage projects, and remarked that requiring groundwater storage to remain inside the region could be detrimental in the case of a major earthquake. He suggested that perhaps weight should be given to water security (storing water away from our region). Matt noted that nothing restricts private sponsorship from developing concepts. Edie added that wells are also susceptible to earthquake damage.

Matt asked the Water Forum to look at the projects list and look for opportunities for integrating projects or packaging project to meet Imperial Region goals and CDWR priorities.

Edie remarked that other areas use composting toilets and that perhaps this region can look into this option. Matt added that anything that reduces demand, improves water quality or helps the region meet water quality standards would be a good thing.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25am.