

Water Forum Meeting December 9, 2010

Agenda Item 7- IRWMP Briefing- Project Submittal and Review

This briefing is to review the approach for submitting and reviewing projects to be included in the Imperial IRWMP. California Department of Water Resources (CDWR) Standards for project submittal and review state that while the specific review process is up to each RWMG to develop and document in their IRWM Plan, the process must include three components: 1) procedures for submitting a project to the IRWM Plan; 2) procedures for review of projects to implement the IRWM Plan; and 3) procedure for communicating the list(s) of selected projects.

The Water Forum and Projects Work Group are to develop and coordinate an impartial, transparent and fair process for project proponents to submit projects; establish evaluation criteria; establish the approach to updating and amending the Imperial IRWMP and for maintaining and amending a project list for accessing grant funding. The intent is to ensure the Imperial IRWMP is flexible and responsive to changing circumstances and funding opportunities. A two steps process is proposed: a *Preliminary Call for IRWMP Projects* and a subsequent *Final Call for Proposition 84 Projects*.

The first step, the *Preliminary Call for IRWMP Projects*, is to identify stakeholder sponsored projects that meet the Imperial IRWMP goals and objective. The preliminary call for projects will include information on what and how to preliminary project information; when to submit preliminary project information; and how the information will be evaluated. The purpose is not to screen or eliminate a project from being included in the Imperial IRWMP, but to develop a preliminary project list. The Water Forum will use the information provided by project proponents to identify project integration and partnership opportunities; formulate regional projects; and evaluate a projects readiness to proceed, and identify establish next steps to make projects 'grant ready', including the need for additional engineering, economic, financial, or environmental analysis. A project must be in the IRWMP to qualify for Proposition 84 funding. It is proposed that the Preliminary Call for Projects be initiated on January 15 with a due date of February 15. Project proponents will be provided forms and directions on what information to provide.

The second step will be a *Final Call for Proposition 84 Projects* to identify and prioritize projects for inclusion in Proposition 84 Implementation grant application. To qualify for grant funding the projects must be 'Grant/Shovel Ready' and have detailed information and documentation. The timing for the Final Call for Proposition 84 Projects is to be determined. There will be two more rounds for grant application, Round 2 in July 2011, and Round 3 in January 12. CDWR requires consideration of specific factors that the Water Forum must consider when developing the project evaluation criteria, including:

- How the project contributes to the IRWM Plan
- How the project is related to resource management strategies
- Project status (readiness-to-proceed
- Technical feasibility of the project
- Specific benefits to critical DAC water issues
- Costs and financing
- Strategic considerations- multiple benefits, multiple participants, etc.
- Environmental Justice Considerations
- Economic feasibility