

**Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management
Leadership Committee Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2014
Los Angeles Department of Public Works
900 South Fremont, Alhambra, CA**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Massood Eftekhari (Los Angeles County Flood Control District), Chair
Rich Nagel (West Basin MWD), Chair, South Bay Sub-region
Randal Orton (Las Virgenes MWD), Chair, NSMB Sub-region
Barbara Cameron (City of Malibu), Vice Chair, NSMB Sub-region
Nancy Steele (Council for Watershed Health), Vice-Chair, Upper Los Angeles River
Sub-region
Kelly Gardner (Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster) Chair, Upper San Gabriel River
Sub-region
Randy Schoellerman (Water Quality Authority) Vice-Chair, Upper San Gabriel River
Sub-region
Jason Weeks for Robb Whitakker (WRD), Chair, Lower San Gabriel & Los Angeles
Rivers Sub-region
Marybeth Vergara for Mark Stanley (Rivers and Mountains Conservancy), Vice-Chair,
Lower San Gabriel & Los Angeles Rivers Sub-region
Grace Chan (Metropolitan Water District), Water Supply WMA
Andrea Gullo (Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority) for Shelly Luce (Santa
Monica Bay Restoration Commission), Open Space WMA
Tony Zampielo (Raymond Basin), Groundwater WMA

OTHERS PRESENT:

Alva, Paul (Los Angeles County Department of Public Works)
Bryden, Russ (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Caldwell, E.J. (West Basin MWD)
Dougall, Jan (Las Virgenes MWD)
Fowler, Virginia (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Grant, Terri (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Hierling, Tammy (Central Basin MWD)
Hildebrand, Gary (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Horne, Mark
Kirk, Leighanne (West Basin MWD)
Kennedy, Maria Elena (Kennedy Communications – DAC Coordinator)
Lilley, Keith (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Maloney, Heather (City of Monrovia)
Paras, Rochelle (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Trejo, Raymundo (Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District)
Villegas, Rafael (Los Angeles Department of Water and Power)

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Wang, Guangyu (Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission)
Zauner, Mary (County Sanitation Districts)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES

Motion to approve the January 22, 2014 meeting summary passed unanimously.

3. STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRS' AND WMA REPORTS

North Santa Monica Bay – Randal Orton reported that this steering committee passed a motion to approve a letter of support for a \$1.2 million project sponsored by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District. Other discussion included progress on projects and increased attendance.

South Bay – Leighanne Kirk reported that this steering committee discussed process and timeline for the Round 3 grant solicitation, including scheduling a call for projects, establishing project criteria, and updating information in the project database.

Upper San Gabriel River – Kelly Gardner reported that this steering committee also discussed process and timeline for the Round 3 grant solicitation, including scheduling a call for projects, establishing project criteria, and updating information in the project database.

Upper Los Angeles River – Rafael Villegas reported that this steering committee received status updates on the Round 1 and Round 2 grants in addition discussions on how to competitively package projects for Round 3.

Lower San Gabriel and Los Angeles River – Jason Weeks reported that this steering committee discussed process and timeline for the Round 3 grant solicitation, including scheduling a call for projects, establishing project criteria, and updating information in the project database. Jason also reported that Mark Stanley intends to outreach to the Gateway IRWM on behalf of the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for non-IRWM funding.

Open Space – No report provided.

Sanitation – No report provided.

Surface Water – No report provided.

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Groundwater – Tony Zampielo reported that the San Gabriel Basin is approximately 10 feet above its historic low point. Efforts are underway to pre-purchase additional supply and implement a 20% voluntary reduction.

Surface Water – Grace Chan reported that the State Water Project allocation is at zero and that conservation campaigns have been initiated. Mandatory rationing is not anticipated at this time.

4. PRESENTATION: E/WMP COORDINATION OPPORTUNITIES

Heather Maloney, City of Monrovia and Co-Chair for the MS4 Permittees Workgroup, did a presentation on Coordination Opportunities with the Enhanced Watershed Management Plans (E/WMP) currently being developed by MS4 Permittees. A copy of the presentation is attached.

Discussion ensued on E/WMP project identification, cost sharing opportunities for projects of mutual interest, grant funding through IRWM Round 3 and project prioritization, and possible partnership opportunities between the W/WMP groups and the IRWM group.

5. DROUGHT DISCUSSION

Russ Bryden reported that a drought subcommittee was formed to strategize about the recent drought declaration, as decided at the last meeting. The subcommittee had a conference call on February 19, 2014, to discuss expected outcomes, target audience for deliverables, topics of interest, and opportunities to influence water related policy, legislation, and funding opportunities. Russ also shared that several agencies have been having similar discussions regarding opportunities related to the current drought.

Recommendations were made to develop a slide deck and consistent talking points on short and long-term drought preparedness efforts, as well as other communication tools aimed to assist legislators in providing informed support to water resource management issues. A suggestion was made to have each agency's Public Information/Public Relations staff meet to develop consistent messaging strategy.

6. ADDITIONAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Russ Bryden shared that a recommendation was made by the NSMB subregion to utilize the Region's current IRWM structure and organization as a platform to pursue other non-IRWM grant opportunities.

A recommendation was made to look into the Regional Board's list of grant opportunities, which Shirley Birosik has previously shared with the subregions, and explore the possibility of creating a similar list.

A more detailed discussion was deferred to a later date.

7. LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

E.J. Caldwell reported on current legislation and budget bills impacting IRWM funding. A total of \$472.5 million was recently appropriated for IRWM projects. This includes \$21.8 million for conditional awards in Round 2 and the \$450 million for the Round 3 solicitation. It was noted that of the appropriated amount, \$200 million is meant to be dispersed in an expedited solicitation to promote regional drought preparedness.

8. IRWM PLAN UPDATE

Leighanne Kirk reported that the final draft plan was submitted to DWR in January 2014. DWR has recently indicated that they are on track with their review, and that at this time, they have found no major issues with the Plan. The review process is expected to take 60 days.

9. PROPOSITION 84 IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS – Russ Bryden provided the following updates:

- Round 1 –Grant administration and invoicing process is underway. An invoice including Covina Irrigating Co's request for reimbursement was submitted to DWR earlier this month.
- Round 2 – Final awards have been announced and the Region is receiving 100% of its request (\$23.4 million). District staff have been reaching out to each project sponsor to walk them through the administration process and describe next steps and expectations. More detailed instructions with specific timelines will be emailed out upon receipt of the Commitment Letter from DWR.
- Round 3 – Official schedule has not been released by DWR yet, but it is anticipated that a greater emphasis will be put on “drought-buster” projects during this funding cycle.

Russ also reminded the group that the IRWM Process Improvement Workshop is scheduled for February 27, 2014, in Irvine. Discussion topics will include adopted plan requirements, Round 3 appropriation and solicitation schedule, and drought mitigation.

Discussion ensued on the best approach and timeline for Round 3 grant application, revisiting the existing policy on funding for grant applications and summarizing lessons learned from the previous experiences.

10. DAC ITEMS

Marybeth Vergara reported that the DAC Subcommittee is preparing a letter to DWR containing feedback from the previous rounds of grant solicitation. The letter will be circulated to the Leadership Committee for review and approval once available.

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Maria Elena Kennedy reported Local Project Sponsors are being reminded to update information on their DAC projects in the OPTI database in anticipation of the Round 3 Grant solicitation.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

12. FUTURE AGENDA/OTHER ITEMS

The following topics were recommended as future agenda items:

- Round 3 Grant Application - Project Prioritization, Schedule, Funding
- Legislative Strategy
- Operating Guidelines

13. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2014 at the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Headquarters.