

DRAFT

OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

Prepared for
Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
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This is a draft and is not intended to be a final representation
of the work done or recommendations made by Brown and Caldwell.
It should not be relied upon; consult the final report.

BROWN AND CALDWELL

801 South Figueroa Street, Suite 950, Los Angeles, CA 90017

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OVERVIEW

The Greater Los Angeles Region Integrated Resources Water Management Plan (IRWMP) addresses the needs of the 2,058 square-mile region that has a population of over 10 million people. There are specific segments of the regional population that require more focused outreach to fully understand and address the water management issues of those communities. In the initial IRWMP planning process completed in 2006, an outreach strategy was written and implemented to reach out to and involve disadvantaged communities (DACs). That plan serves as a platform for a second-generation DAC outreach plan that will begin implementation in 2008. Using a phased approach over approximately five years, the implementers of this outreach plan will gradually reach more people living and working in the region's disadvantaged communities and bring about projects that help improve those neighborhoods, local economies, and local as well as region water quality.

It is important to note that funding is not presently available to implement all strategies of this DAC outreach plan. The implementers of this plan will undertake outreach activities according to the resources they do have available, and can seek additional resources to allow them to expand their reach over time.

For the purposes of this outreach plan, the accepted definition of Disadvantaged Communities will concur with the State of California's current definition:

Any community where the media household income (MHI) is below 80% of the statewide household income (SMHI)

Further, a DAC project is any project that provides a direct benefit to one or more DAC's in the region.

OBJECTIVES OF OUTREACH TO DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

- Increase the number of representatives and residents of DACs who are participating in each subregion's IRWMP Steering Committee meetings
- Involve DAC representatives in IRWMP project development, integration and prioritization.
- Inform, on a continual basis, representatives and residents of DACs about opportunities to be involved with their IRWMP sub-regional planning activities.
- Inform DACs about realistic benefits and opportunities for their communities through IRWMP collaboration.
- Assist DACs in further developing existing projects – and where needed, add new projects to the IRWMP projects list that will serve DACs as well as other IRWMP objectives.
- Improve the chances of DAC-projects being approved for grant funding through the IRWMP process.
- Develop two DAC-projects for each subregion to submit for IRWMP grant funding, and set minimum annual goals for the target number of DAC-projects to submit for funding.

TARGET AUDIENCES IN AND REPRESENTING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

- Cities and agencies that represent disadvantaged communities with proposed DAC-projects, especially smaller cities and agencies that may not have resources to pursue those projects without IRWMP support
- Residents of disadvantaged communities with proposed DAC-projects
- Residents of disadvantaged communities that do not currently have DAC-project(s) identified in the IRWMP list of projects
- Major houses of worship serving disadvantaged communities, some of which may have already organized committees around environmental and social justice issues
- Parent-Teacher Associations and Principals of large high schools in disadvantaged communities
- Economic-development agencies or organizations representing areas encompassing disadvantaged communities (e.g., FAME Renaissance, Figueroa Corridor Partners)
- Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts representing areas encompassing disadvantaged communities
- Health providers – major hospitals and clinics – serving disadvantaged communities
- Target Neighborhood Councils and Neighborhood Watch groups with DACs in their jurisdictions
- Community-based and environmental organizations that have relationships with DACs
- Councils of Governments
- Organizations that represent disadvantaged communities in the Greater Los Angeles Region

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1. INVITING PARTICIPATION

Objective

Increase the number of representatives and residents of DACs who are participating in each subregion's Steering Committees and actively getting involved in prioritizing projects.

Strategies

- Build upon existing relationships.
- Follow a phased outreach approach to increase DAC participation each year and to keep the door open to include DACs in the IRWMP process on an ongoing basis.
- Update and expand the existing database of interested residents of disadvantaged communities and their representatives.
- Conduct one-on-one interviews with key constituent leaders of disadvantaged communities.
- Include new DAC contacts on steering committee interested party distribution lists – which include meeting announcements and agendas
- Direct DACs to IRWMP website with all upcoming meeting information

Outreach Activities

- Initially, each Steering Committee will identify and select representatives to meet individually with a target of 20 representatives of DACs with whom members of the committee have existing relationships. The strategy is to build upon existing relationships and to conduct outreach in a manageable, phased approach.

Representatives may include elected officials, other local government representatives, local agency representatives, DAC-focused CBOs, school principals and/or ministers working in disadvantaged communities, as well as others identified in the target audiences list.

Discussions will focus on IRWMP issues, with emphasis on DAC participation and projects. A “highlights” pamphlet will be developed to help keep the focus on IRWMP.

- To be accomplished during individual meetings:

Strengthen existing relationship to work towards DAC-participation in IRWMP.

Ask representatives of DACs for the names and contact information of grass-roots level leaders of DACs (e.g., major churches serving DACs; major schools to be contacted in DACs; major health providers and clinics serving DACs; active business organizations/Chambers of Commerce; and others with strong ties to DACs and their interests).

Personally invite representatives to participate in regional IRWMP workshops for DACs.

Personally invite representatives to participate regularly in Steering Committee meetings.

Personally invite representatives to identify needs in DACs where projects may be identified and pursued jointly through the IRWMP process.

Ask representatives for their insights regarding how to best outreach to constituents; where needs are greatest; where opportunities for collaboration on projects may exist; and where there may be one or more grant funding opportunities that may become more successful with IRWMP support.

Identify “next steps” of working together towards increasing DAC-participation in the IRWMP process.

- Annually thereafter, each Steering Committee will identify and outreach up to an additional 20 representatives of DACs who are not yet involved in the IRWMP process.
- In addition, each Steering Committee will identify a list of DAC projects, with the top two highest priority projects identified.

Because time and resources are limited and the Greater Los Angeles Region is so vast, focus much of the 2008 outreach on a manageable number of projects within each subregion.

- Projects prioritized for DAC outreach in 2008 should be reasonably conceptualized and preferably already have DACs involved in or aware of the IRWMP process.
- There will be opportunities each year following to explore new and less well-defined proposed projects, and to collaborate with DACs to assess local needs, jointly define and develop projects, resolve differences and build support.

Annually thereafter, each Steering Committee will identify at least two potential DAC-projects included in the IRWMP project list and invite DACs to participate in the IRWMP process.

Identify DAC-representatives, community-based organizations (CBOs) and other non-profits, agencies who are currently involved in pursuing project development and/or grant funding for those ten (two per subregion) DAC projects.

Identify “who’s not at the table” (see target audiences above).

Meet with DAC representatives of those projects to build upon existing relationships and outreach to those DAC-representatives who are not yet at the table (see above).

- Annually, each Steering Committee will identify up to two possible new project ideas to benefit DACs – for whom projects have not yet been identified and begin discussions with local DAC-representatives.

This activity will involve meetings with DAC-representatives, one-on-one interviews with local DAC community leaders, and other grass roots outreach as appropriate.

- Update and expand the DAC-database.

Add all contact information gathered through one-on-one interviews.

Review current databases of other programs with stakeholders in common with IRWMP and add potentially interested parties.

Add all certified Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils and Neighborhood Watches countywide.

Update the database regularly to include organizations involved in emerging social and environmental justice programs in the region.

New contact information should be provided to steering committee representatives to update sub-regional databases.

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Updating and maintaining DAC-contact database – Subregional Steering Committees	Current Database
	New DAC contact information
Outreach to local governments and DAC-representatives -- Steering Committee representatives	Time to meet individually with key leaders
	IRWMP Highlights pamphlet, existing project listings, and subregion DAC maps, and DAC workshop schedule

Anticipated outcomes of outreach to increase participation:

- Increased DAC-participation in Steering Committee meetings.
- Increased participation of local governments in Steering Committee meetings.
- Direct leads to recognized and active leaders of disadvantaged communities.
- Increased understanding of how best to outreach to members of disadvantaged communities, based upon credible, local experience of the representatives that meet with Steering Committee representatives.

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2. PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Objective

Inform – on a continual basis – representatives and residents of DACs about opportunities to be involved in their IRWMP Steering Committees and planning activities.

Strategies

- Provide and publicize an 800-phone number or other dedicated phone number for the program.
- Provide information about IRWMP process involvement opportunities through organizations with links to DACs.
- Provide information about IRWMP process using advertising.
- Hold Steering Committee meetings in DACs once annually.

Outreach Activities

- Establish and publicize an 800-number (or other dedicated phone number) for public inquiries and to invite residents or representatives of DACs to consider participating in the IRWMP process.
 - To accommodate multiple languages, a menu will allow callers to select a recorded message in English, Spanish, and _____. (Deliberately left blank; reviewers please recommend additional languages, if any.)
 - The 800-number will be publicized through organizations with DAC constituents (see below), press releases to community newspapers countywide, and in all applicable outreach materials.
- Expand publicity for the 800-number for public inquiries and to invite residents, businesses, or representatives of DACs to consider participating in the IRWMP process.
 - Produce small signage to post in public transportation encouraging the public to call for information about representing their communities in the IRWMP process.
 - Prepare small display ads/announcements to be included in newsletters disseminated by large houses of worship, hospitals and clinics, large high schools, senior centers, recreation centers and community centers located in disadvantaged communities.
- Annually, extend a targeted open invitation to Steering Committee meetings and planning activities to organizations with DAC constituents.
 - Develop an electronic invitation (E-vite) addressed to the Boards, Chairs, or other leaders of groups with DAC constituents asking them to encourage DAC participation (specifically) in IRWMP meetings. This networking-oriented activity particularly targets Neighborhood Councils, Neighborhood Watch groups, Councils of Government, Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Districts, and other partners that have existing relationships with, and/or represent, DACs.

Targeted invitation will briefly describe benefits and opportunities for DAC participation, a phone number to call for information, and the schedule of Steering Committee meetings.

Disseminate to the entire DAC-database.

Follow up with phone calls to up to 100 Board members, Chairs, or other leaders of organizations to underscore the importance of communicating and coordinating with DAC constituents. (Note, this recommends making approximately 20 contacts per sub-region for a total of 100.)

- Annually, each Steering Committee will publicize and hold at least one committee meeting in a disadvantaged community.

Hold the committee meeting in the evening or on a weekend.

Provide translators if needed.

Provide refreshments.

Develop agendas that allow most of the discussion to involve community participants.

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Dedicated phone and monitoring – LA Co. DPW	Dedicated phone number for public calls
Developing E-vite graphics – TBD	Graphic arts services
Distributing E-vites to DAC database - TBD	Database that is current
Follow up phone calls – Steering Committees	Time to make calls and receive responses to calls
Design and purchase advertising – TBD	Graphic arts and advertising budget
Hold Steering Committee meetings in DACs – Steering Committees	Use readily available public venues Translators

Anticipated outcomes of outreach related to providing more information about involvement opportunities:

- Increased DAC-participation in Steering Committee meetings on an ongoing basis.
- Increased participation of local governments in Steering Committee meetings on an ongoing basis.
- Involvement of leaders of disadvantaged communities learning about IRWMP for the first time, with no closure of opportunities to become involved.
- Increased understanding of how best to outreach to members of disadvantaged communities.
- Increased visibility of IRWMP Steering Committees in disadvantaged communities, phased and expanding to reach out to more of each subregion.

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3. PROVIDING BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE IRWMP

Objective

Inform – on a continual basis – DACs about realistic benefits and opportunities for their communities through IRWMP collaboration

Strategies

- Develop a printed IRWMP Highlights pamphlet to communicate opportunities and benefits as well as realistic expectations.
- Provide same information through websites for those with Internet access.
- Use media relations, particularly focusing on local community newspapers and media outlets.
- Participate in major community events.

Outreach Activities

- Develop IRWMP Highlights pamphlet.
 - The pamphlet will use strong graphics and common terms to describe the IRWMP process and benefits of participation.
 - The pamphlet will give a few examples of projects that reflect reasonable goals and expectations for others interested in participating.
 - Also included will be the dedicated phone number and IRWMP webpage.
 - Initially, the pamphlet will be in the English language only; in subsequent years, Steering Committees will determine whether or not to pursue updating the pamphlet in additional languages.
 - The IRWMP Highlights pamphlet will be printed for distribution at community meetings and to interested parties.
- Make the pamphlet available through the websites managed by IRWMP Leadership Committee and Steering Committee representatives. In addition, distribute the pamphlet as a PDF to the DAC database.
 - Encourage stakeholders to use as a tool to communicate with DACs that are not yet participating
- Prepare a press release that draws information from the pamphlet, and distribute to community newspapers countywide.
 - Press releases will provide basic information about the IRWMP and publicize upcoming meetings of Steering Committees and/or other timely activities.
- Update IRWMP Highlights pamphlet as needed to remain current and relevant.
 - Steering Committees will review the use of the pamphlet, and recommend whether or not to pursue updating the pamphlet in additional languages.
 - In making this determination, Steering Committee representatives will contact DACs within their subregions to get feedback on the content as well as the question of languages.

The updated IRWMP Highlights pamphlet will be printed for distribution at community meetings and to interested parties.

- Make the updated pamphlet available through the websites managed by IRWMP Leadership Committee and Steering Committee representatives. In addition, distribute the updated pamphlet as a PDF to the DAC database.

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Developing Highlights pamphlet – Consultants	Dedicated phone number
Distributing pamphlet – LA Co. DPW	Database that is current
Media relations – LA Co. DPW	Media relations expertise
Updating Highlights pamphlet – LA Co. DPW with Steering Committees	Dedicated phone number; graphic arts; translation services as needed

Anticipated outcomes of outreach related to providing more information about IRWMP:

- Increased DAC-participation in Steering Committee meetings on an ongoing basis.
- Increased participation of local governments in Steering Committee meetings on an ongoing basis.
- Involvement of leaders of disadvantaged communities learning about IRWMP for the first time, with no closure of opportunities to become involved.
- Identification of new project opportunities.
- Increased understanding of how best to outreach to members of disadvantaged communities.

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4. PLANNING, COORDINATING, AND IMPLEMENTING DAC OUTREACH

Objectives

- Involve disadvantaged communities in developing and prioritizing projects – and where needed, add new projects to the IRWMP projects list that will serve DACs and improve the environment and water quality.
- Develop a unified message and coordinated approach for the outreach program, building upon the relationships and efforts of Steering Committee representatives already involved in the IRWMP and DACs.
- Improve the chances of DAC-projects being approved for grant funding through the IRWMP process.
- Develop two DAC-projects for each subregion to submit for grant funding in fall 2008, and set minimum goals annually for the target number of DAC-projects to submit for funding.

Strategies

- Organize a DAC-planning workshop for each Steering Committee.
- Organize one DAC-outreach planning workshop for all interested parties.
- Coordinate strategies for outreach to DACs in each subregion.
- Support existing outreach to prioritized DAC-projects.
- Hold house meetings or similar grass roots outreach in DACs.
- Hold public meetings in vicinity of proposed DAC-projects.

Outreach Activities

- Organize one subregional DAC-outreach planning workshop for each Steering Committee annually.
As mentioned earlier in this plan, each Steering Committee will identify two projects in DACs in the respective subregions to prioritize outreach for funding and draft messages that are specifically relevant to those communities. The DAC-outreach planning workshop will focus on outreach targeting the communities of these prioritized projects.
Review strategies for each subregion and coordinate outreach activities and responsibilities.
- Organize a DAC-outreach planning workshop inviting all interested Steering Committee representatives and interested parties.
Identify broad IRWMP messages for outreach to DACs in the Greater Los Angeles Region.
Identify which Steering Committee representatives (their organizations and agencies), if any, are currently involved in outreach to DACs that have projects prioritized for grant funding.
Identify opportunities to coordinate and/or support efforts and build upon these existing relationships.

Identify opportunities to involve others – including CBOs – to provide the grass roots reach and culturally appropriate messages to get DACs interested and involved in the IRWMP.

If no Steering Committee representatives, CBOs, or other organizations are already involved in outreach to the targeted DACs of prioritized DAC-projects, the Steering Committee will designate an outreach leader for the project(s).

- Provide support to the existing outreach efforts identified in the subregional DAC-outreach planning workshops identified above.

Support will be provided to as needed by existing outreach efforts, as resources are available.

Support may be in the form of sharing outreach responsibilities, attending and staffing meetings with DACs, providing resources ranging from bringing easels to providing technical assistance.

Outreach will strive to involve DACs with grass roots involvement methods, to discuss local needs including water management needs, questions about IRWMP process and opportunities, regional water issues, and benefits to the DAC.

- Where there are no existing outreach efforts for the prioritized project(s), organize grass roots outreach to involve DACs in proposed project needs assessment, planning, development, and grant applications.

Organize at least one house meeting (or similar meeting) in the immediate vicinity of the project proposed for each target DAC.

Use non-profit and/or other community-based organizations (CBOs) or other locally-respected groups to conduct door-to-door outreach to residents and businesses in DACs.

Invite and coordinate outreach with local government representatives of DACs (invite only with permission from host).

Coordinate outreach with other DAC-representatives, such as local houses of worship, health institutions, and schools.

Coordinate outreach with elected officials representing DACs.

Neighborhood-level discussions will focus on the proposed project and details that reflect questions, water issues, water management needs, and local benefits to the DAC.

The agendas and documentation of each house meeting will include needs, priorities, and points of disagreement indicated by participating representatives of DACs.

The agendas and documentation of each house meeting will include a discussion of potential funding for proposed DAC projects.

House Meetings

A house meeting can be held in a home, garage, church, school, or community room. A house meeting has a local host who is known to members of the local community. A house meeting provides a comfortable, familiar setting for neighbors to discuss issues relevant to their community. Typically, 20 – 30 members of a community participate in a meeting that lasts one to 1½ hours.

The outcomes of a house meeting include: information provided about IRWMP, potentially one or more local DAC-representatives willing to participate in the IRWMP process, and group discussion of local needs/potential projects/benefits/grass roots outreach strategies.

- Organize one public meeting to inform and involve DACs in proposed project needs assessment, planning, development, and grant applications.

 - Organize at least one public meeting in the vicinity of each prioritized DAC-project.
 - Use CBOs or other locally-respected groups to conduct door-to-door outreach to residents and businesses in DACs.
 - Invite and coordinate outreach with local governments and agencies representing DACs.
 - Invite and coordinate outreach with DAC-participants of house meetings.
 - Invite and coordinate outreach with other DAC-representatives, such as local houses of worship, health institutions, and schools.
 - Invite and coordinate outreach with elected officials representing DACs.

Community-wide discussions will focus on the proposed project and details that reflect questions, water issues, water management needs, and broad benefits to the DAC.

The agendas and documentation of each public meeting will include needs, priorities, and points of disagreement indicated by participating representatives of DACs.

The agendas and documentation of each public meeting will include a discussion of potential funding for proposed DAC projects.

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Organize a DAC-planning workshop for each Steering Committee -- TBD	Must have identified DAC-projects prioritized for current year's outreach
Organize one DAC-outreach planning workshop for all interested parties -- TBD	
Support existing outreach to prioritized DAC-projects -- TBD	Staffing, technical support, AV, media relations expertise, presentation materials, translation expertise
Hold house meetings or similar grass roots outreach in DACs – TBD	Staffing, technical support, translation expertise, meeting support such as refreshments, name tags, etc.
Hold public meetings in vicinity of proposed DAC-projects to maintain open dialog about IRWMP projects and opportunities – TBD	Staffing, technical support, AV, media relations expertise, presentation materials, translation expertise, meeting support such as refreshments, name tags, etc., possibly transportation

Anticipated outcomes of outreach related to providing more information about IRWMP:

- Regionally-coordinated efforts to outreach to DACs, with IRWMP supporting outreach for a manageable number of DAC-projects in each subregion annually.
- Involvement of residents, businesses, leaders and representatives of disadvantaged communities -- working with IRWMP Steering Committees to assess local needs, and to develop, prioritize, and support projects for implementation.
- Two DAC-projects per subregion successfully submitted in 2008 for grant funding; additional DAC-projects in ensuing years.
- Improved chances of DAC-projects being approved for grant funding through the IRWMP process.

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5. REMOVING BARRIERS TO DAC PARTICIPATION

Objectives

- Involve disadvantaged communities in developing projects – and where needed, add new projects to the IRWMP projects list that will serve DACs and improve the environment and water quality
- Improve the chances of DAC-projects being approved for grant funding through the IRWMP process

Strategies

- Recognize and remove barriers to participation in Steering Committee meetings
- Design local meetings to fit DAC locations, schedules, and family demands
- Use languages and communications methods culturally appropriate to DACs

Implement Routinely

- Make it easy to get attend Steering Committee meetings: Provide stipend for public transportation to Steering Committee meetings to any recognized representative of DACs requesting it (upon approval of Steering Committee).
- Make it easy to call in and avoid cross-town travel: Provide toll-free conference call access to Steering Committee meetings to any recognized representative of DACs requesting it (upon approval of Steering Committee).
- Be visible in DACs: Hold Steering Committee meetings once annually after work in disadvantaged communities.
- Hold community meetings and neighborhood (house) meetings at convenient times -- after work and/or on weekends -- at convenient venues like community facilities like schools, churches, local recreation centers and senior centers, libraries, and in the case of house meetings, in homes.
- Provide generous refreshments or full meals when holding community meetings after work.
- Encourage people to bring small children to community meetings and organize agendas to be informal .
- Collaborate with local co-sponsors: Partner with local, trusted community organizations and community leaders to co-host meetings in disadvantaged communities to encourage more stakeholders to participate.
- Use culturally appropriate language in invitations.
- Provide translation at community meetings in the appropriate languages; whenever possible, bilingual IRWMP representatives should attend and take a lead role in presentations, Q&A, and discussions.
- Cut out the use of jargon and technical terms in community meetings.
- Use CBOs or others who are seen as members of the community to outreach to residents and businesses of DACs.
- Reduce paperwork required of DACs to proceed with projects and grant funding applications.

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Transportation stipends and refreshments – TBD	Nominal budgets for each subregion
Toll-free conference call arrangements –	Toll-free conference call services
Steering Committee meetings in DACs annually – Steering Committees	Arrangements with local venues
Culturally-appropriate languages in meetings and invitations	Language translation
CBO or other grass roots outreach support	Budgets for paid support for each subregion
Reduce paperwork for DACs with technical support to local governments and other representatives of DACs pursuing grant funding and project implementation	Staffing or budgets for consultant support for each subregion

Anticipated outcomes of outreach related to providing more information about IRWMP:

- Involvement of residents, businesses, leaders and representatives of disadvantaged communities -- working with IRWMP Steering Committees to assess local needs, and to develop, prioritize, and support projects for implementation
- Two DAC-projects per subregion successfully submitted in 2008 for grant funding; additional DAC-projects in ensuing years.
- Improved chances of DAC-projects being approved for grant funding through the IRWMP process.

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6. DOCUMENTATION

Template for documenting meetings

Identify the type of meeting: (e.g., interviews, community meeting, house meeting, etc.). Attach meeting agenda to minutes.

MINUTES

Date:

Time:

Place: (Include street address)

Participants: (in cases of community meetings with larger groups, please attach a copy of the sign-in sheets)

Applicable subregion: (identify specific subregion or other applicable information)

Note taker:

Topics Discussed:

1. Topic

The main purpose of documenting meetings is to capture stakeholder input. Write one to two paragraphs summarizing the discussion of each agenda topic. Focus on documenting the discussion rather than the points of the presentation. Only a very limited summary of the IRWMP presentation will be needed -- just enough to make sense of the discussion summary.

2. Topic

One to two paragraphs summarizing discussion. As noted above, it is not necessary to summarize the IRWMP presentation; only capture the salient points needed to make sense of the summary of the discussion.

Strive to keep notes complete but concise. Notes from meetings will be submitted to the Steering Committee chair approximately two week after taking place.