

MEETING NOTES

PROJECT: Antelope Valley IRWM Stakeholder Meeting

MEETING DATE: 4/22/2021

LOCATION: MS Teams Conference Call

ISSUED DATE: 4/23/2021

ATTENDEES: Evelyn Ballesteros, Tom Barnes, Kari Eskridge, Bob Large, Yvonne Malikowski, Scott Rogers, Mike Shahbakhti, Brach Smith, Tommy Ta, Harut Mesropyan, James Chaisson, Jeff Hogan, Holly Jones, Mike Shahbakhti, Neal Weisenberger, Peter Thompson, Sara Samaan, Tiffany Steinert, Tom Barnes, Belal Tabannaj, Vickie Rauchs, David Rydman, Brian Dietrick, Josh Uecker

Stakeholder Meeting Notes

A. Welcome and Introductions (Kari E.)

- The Antelope Valley (AV) Integrated Regional Management (IRWM) Stakeholder Meeting was opened and led by Kari Eskridge from the Los Angeles County Public Works (LACPW), Waterworks Division. Topics related to the Proposition (Prop.) 1 Round 1 Implementation Grant Agreement and Prop. 1 Round 2 timeline were led by Josh Uecker and Brian Dietrick of Woodard & Curran (W&C).
- Bob Large provided a project concept proposal for consideration by agencies in the region and Kari Eskridge provided an overview of the need for regional water resilience and call for partnerships to help move those efforts forward.

B. Prop. 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation Grant Agreement Update

- The Prop. 1 Round 1 IRWM Grant Agreement is nearly finalized. The only remaining item is to decide what to do with the funds for the Palmdale Recycled Water Authority (PWRA) Phase 2 Distribution System Project now that the project is no longer moving forward at this time (\$881,000).
- There was a question about the ability to re-distribute funding amounts and Josh confirmed that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff indicated in the most recent grant agreement meeting that the IRWM Region could redistribute the funds across the other projects within the grant agreement.
- No agencies on the call indicated that they are ready to move forward with new projects at this time.
- General consensus was to redistribute funds within the grant agreement. This direction was confirmed at the end of the meeting. The group agreed to increase the AV Resource Conservation District project grant amount to the 75% cap and equally distribute the remaining funds among the remaining 3 projects (see table below)

75% total grant funding for RCD, equal split among remaining projects				
Project Name	Required Cost Share (Non-State Fund Source)	Grant Amount	Other Cost Share	Total Project Cost
Grant Administration		\$80,000	\$0.00	\$80,000
Antelope Valley Regional Conservation Project		\$307,986	\$102,664	\$410,650
Littlerock Dam Sediment Removal	\$7,000,000	\$1,169,203	\$7,585,226	\$15,754,429
Phase 2 Distribution System				
South North Intertie Pipeline (SNIP) Phase II		\$1,169,203	\$25,486,797	\$26,656,000
Wastewater Treatment Plan Rehabilitation and Groundwater Protection	\$ 10,080,000.00	\$1,169,203	\$3,485,911	\$14,735,114
Total	\$17,080,000	\$3,895,595	\$36,660,598	\$57,636,193

C. Prop. 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation Grant Agreement Update

- Josh Uecker provided an update on the schedule for finalizing the grant agreement.
- Peter Thompson (Palmdale Water District) presented an update on the AV IRWM funding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The group is close to completing the MOU, and Peter requested the remaining three agencies to push it forward in hopes of completing the agreement in the next week or so.

D. AV Water Resiliency Project

- Kari Eskridge presented on a Water Resiliency Project in the context of likely drought in the near term and concerns regarding water reliability in the AV area.
- Kari Eskridge asked the group to consider how to expand or otherwise bolster existing partnerships, what regional infrastructure projects might make sense, and/or should we focus more on our respective agency and customer needs (less of a regional approach).
- Jeff Hogan (City of Lancaster) expressed Lancaster's continued interest in being part of regional solutions.
- Bob Large mentioned EPA's interest and involvement in water resiliency, and to keep them in mind in the future for partnerships, funding, and other resources.
- Scott Rogers (Palmdale Water District) mentioned a project concept report on direct injection of treated water into the groundwater basin to help with regional supply. It would likely later include extraction wells.
- Mike Shahbakhti (City of Palmdale) asked about plans for recharge projects in the region.
- Kari Eskridge mentioned that there are currently shortcomings in the ability to extract recharged water. Banking surface water during wet periods is an important part of water resiliency but need access to that water to be effective.
- Bob Large asked if folks are also looking at the demand side of the equation in addition to new supplies. Kari responded that yes, the IRWM Region is looking at both sides of the equation.
- Dave Rydman asked about opportunities for regional banking programs and what ideas folks have. Dave shared the challenge of existing water extraction and the need for additional extraction (and conveyance) needs. Palmdale Water District and Rosamond are both interested (Rosamond is not sure how to overcome potential spatial challenges concerning connectivity). Dave mentioned the north/south connection project as a potential tool to leverage better connections across the region.

E. IRWM Project Proposal

- Bob Large presented information on a potential project concept of opportunity for canyon land as a potential recharge area and flood control – along with other potential benefits (wildlife corridor, social issues, etc.).
- Brian Dietrick suggested that this project get added to the IRWM Plan projects list as a concept so that it is positioned for potential planning funding in the future.
- Neil added that the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District (AVRCD) has some capacity for joint-authority with another land conservancy group for potential land acquisitions.

F. Project Updates

- Dave Rydman talked about a taskforce on illegal marijuana grow operations that are presenting a variety of issues, including major increases in rural water demands. Reach out to Dave if you (your agency) are experiencing similar issues and interested in participating in the taskforce or would like more information.

G. Next Steps

- W&C updated the cover page for the 2019 AV IRWM Plan Update. The cover page features the Upper Amargosa Creek Recharge Project as it was successfully funded by Prop. 84 under the IRWM Program and was recently completed. The cover page was distributed to the Stakeholder group in February, and no comments have been received.
 - i. W&C will redistribute the cover page to stakeholders who did not have access to the cover page.

H. Action Items

Next Stakeholder Workshop: To be determined (likely June 2021)

Responsible Party	Task	Due Date
Woodard Curran	- Submit updated Prop 1 Rd 1 Grant Agreement to DWR to reflect redistribution of funds agreed to today	4/23
RWMG and Project Sponsors	- Finalize RWMG funding MOU	4/30