

MEETING NOTES

PROJECT: Antelope Valley IRWM Stakeholder call

MEETING DATE: 9/11/2024

LOCATION: MS Teams Conference Call

ISSUED DATE: 12/6/2024

ATTENDEES: Rongchao Bi (LA County Public Works), Josephine Gutierrez (LA County Public Works), Yvonne Malikowski, Jose Ojeda (Cal Water), Mike Shahbakhti (City of Palmdale, Daria Antonova (LA County Public Works), Jennifer Aborida (LA County Public Works), Holly Jones (LACSD), Joyce Workman, Julian Juarez (LA County Public Works), Sara Samaan (LA County Public Works), Scott Rogers (Palmdale Water District), Stella Higgins (LA County Public Works), Benjamin Stewart (City of Lancaster), Candice Vander Hyde (City of Lancaster), Todd Lemen (Evergreen Mutual Water Company), Josh Uecker (Woodard & Curran), Leah Makler (Woodard & Curran)

Stakeholder Meeting Notes

Welcome and Introductions

- The Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Management (IRWM) Stakeholder Meeting was opened and led by Josh Uecker of Woodard & Curran (W&C).
- Sara Samaan will be taking over for Daniel Bradbury as LACDPW point person for AV IRWM issues.
- Representatives for AVEK or AVRCD were not present.

Ongoing Regional Funding

- Josh Uecker (W&C) gave updates regarding IRWM funding and projects:
 - Multiple projects are at or near completion for Prop 1 Round 1, 2 Round 2 projects are getting started.
 - All funds from IRWM grant have been allocated to specific projects.
- Josh Uecker (W&C) discussed upcoming ballot measure:
 - The water bond measure will be on the ballot in November. If it passes, funding will be available late next year or in 2026.
 - The bond itself is targeted towards projects related to climate change and wildfire resilience, but there are some funding categories that may be applicable to this group:
 - Stormwater management projects
 - Projects that target climate resilience on watershed level
 - Conjunctive use and groundwater recharge projects
 - Water reuse and recycling projects

- Conveyance projects (new or repairs)
 - If the measure passes, there will be more to discuss at the December 11 meeting, especially regarding whether the funding will be available for planning and implementation, or solely for implementation of projects.

Project Updates

- Josh (W&C) explained that AVRCD's project progress has been halted due to their previous director's untimely death. Their interim director is getting settled in the organization and is not yet able to help make progress on the project.
- Scott Rogers (PWD) gave updates on the District's conservation garden, explaining that the organization has made progress by removing turf and replacing it with drought tolerant plants. There is still funding remaining, and the District plans on using it for their demonstration facility.
- Scott (PWD) said the East Avenue Q project is beginning construction.

AV IRWM Memorandum of Understanding Status

- Sara Samaan (LACDPW) announced that the LA County board is on track to approve the Amended MOU soon.
- Mike Shahbakhti (City of Palmdale) explained that there has been a lot of staff turnover in the City, and thus they have not been able to approve the MOU yet. He was unsure whether the City had received the amended MOU.
 - Josh (W&C) will reach out to Peter Thompson (AVEK/AVSCWA) to ensure it gets distributed.
 - Sara (LACDPW) said Peter sent the MOU around in May.

Storm Water Resource Plan Status

- Josh Uecker (W&C) summarized the State Water Board's new policy that any projects related to stormwater management need to be included in a Stormwater Resource Plan (SWRP) to be considered for Board funding. Josh stated that SWRPs can cost \$150-300 thousand, but they will allow access to funding opportunities in the tens of millions. As discussed in the June meeting, the SWRP Task Force in the group consists of LACDPW, City of Palmdale, and City of Lancaster. Josh asked if other stakeholders should take part and also suggested that LACDPW should lead the task force.
 - Scott Rogers (PWD) stated that he is unsure if Palmdale Water District will join the task force.
 - Sara Samaan (LACDPW) suggested that LACDPW staff in the Stormwater/Flood Division should comment. Julian Juarez (LACDPW) said that there are no projects currently set aside for stormwater funding. Josephine Gutierrez (LACDPW) explained that there are some projects in the City of Palmdale on which the County could collaborate, mostly related to road maintenance and stormwater

management. Overall, there are many possible projects in the region that could use stormwater funding.

- Josh (W&C) will coordinate with Mike Shahbakhti (consultant for City of Palmdale) to identify City projects that could apply. He will also ensure that the task force meets to discuss moving forward on SWRP. He presented a possible timeline for completion of SWRP, and explained that there is some flexibility in the timeline for completing these plans. The Board requires that SWRPs are completed before grant agreements go into effect, meaning that there can be some overlap between grant application and plan completion.

Public Comments/Future Agenda Items/Announcements

- N/A

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 11, 2024