

Inyo-Mono IRWM Region Disadvantaged Communities Program

DAC Workshop – South Lake Tahoe
May 20, 2016
Holly Alpert

Inyo-Mono RWMG Governance

- Memorandum of Understanding; decision-making based on 100% consensus
- Any entity can have seat at the table
- All stakeholders encouraged to participate
- General philosophy: the more, the better
- Led us to do outreach from Day 1



Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Grants

- \$2.5 million from Prop. 84 IRWM inter-regional funding
- Goal: assist DWR in developing methods to improve DAC participation throughout the State
- Initially given to 5 regions; later 7
 - Inyo-Mono
 - North Coast
 - Imperial
 - Coachella
 - Greater LA
 - Upper Kings
 - Santa Cruz

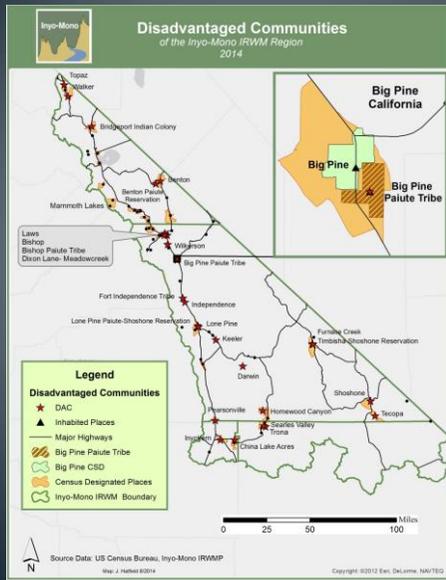


Inyo-Mono DAC Grant

- Objectives:
 - How to define DACs other than median household income
 - How to most effectively engage DACs in IRWM process
 - What are constraints and challenges associated with being involved in the IRWM process
- Tasks:
 - Identifying DACs
 - Outreach
 - Needs Assessments
 - Capacity Building
 - Synthesis Report
 - Findings Dissemination
 - Alternative Metrics
 - Documentary



DACs in Inyo-Mono



- ~ 1/2 of population centers are DACs
- 15 severely-DACs
 - 6 out of 10 tribes
- But...
 - Census/ACS data incomplete
 - Census geographies do not always match up with service areas
 - Community-specific income surveys are expensive

Take-homes from metrics exercise

- Data gaps particularly prevalent & challenging in rural communities
- Find metrics that can fill in incomplete data sets
- Collect data right in the community – create a rapid-assessment approach
- Our exercise useful for rural, headwaters, sparsely-populated regions
- Exercise not complete; needs more investigation & analysis

Outreach

- Formal meetings in region
 - With individual entities
 - Generic public meetings
- Lessons Learned – outreach
 - Several meetings may be required to engage new communities and involve them in the IRWM process. IRWM is a complex concept to explain to new stakeholders.
 - Don't "lump" tribes with all other DAC stakeholders. Use appropriate outreach techniques.
- Common water-related concerns
 - Outdated infrastructure
 - Complying with regulations
 - Natural groundwater contamination
 - Volunteer boards
 - Limited technical expertise, limited resources



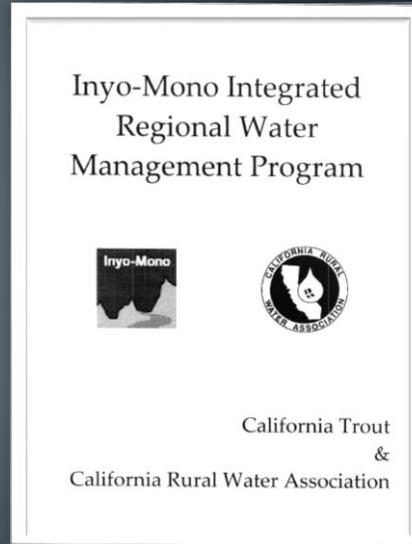
Outreach

- Formal meetings outside of region
 - Other IRWM groups with high % DACs
 - Upper Pit, South Sierra, Yosemite-Mariposa (incl. Merced & Madera), Tuolumne-Stanislaus
- Looking for commonalities and differences among regions/communities
 - Can share if interested



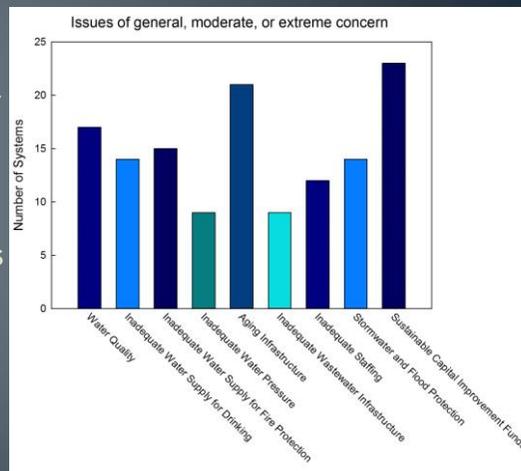
Needs Assessments

- Performed by Cal Rural Water Association
 - 17 DAC water systems
 - 2 tribes, 6 public systems, 9 private systems
- Common identified needs:
 - Operating plans
 - Aging infrastructure – tanks, transmission lines, generators
 - Water meters, SCADA
 - Water conservation plans
 - Five-year budgets
 - Capital Improvement Plans
 - Emergency preparedness



Needs Assessment Surveys

- In-house survey
- Assess water system technical/managerial/financial (TMF) capacity
- Water system concerns
- Project needs
- Climate change needs



Building Capacity



- Trainings followed from needs assessments, surveys, and outreach
- Targeted to DACs
- Performed by CRWA, Program Office, and other contractors
- Topics:
 - Grantwriting/finding grants
 - Economic analysis
 - Mapping water systems
 - Utility Management
 - TMF Tune-up
 - Water Conservation
 - Budget Planning
 - Regulatory Update
 - Basic Hydrogeology
 - Rate Structures
 - Emergency Planning
 - Sampling Procedures
 - Drought Preparedness

Living in the Rain Shadow

The Eastern Sierra is a special but little-known part of California. The beautiful scenery and diverse landscapes make it a prime recreation destination for people from all over the world. Water is the lifeblood of the region. It supports local economy, local livelihoods, and diverse plants and animals. The region is also unique because it is a water source for more than a million people 300 miles away in Los Angeles.



Yet despite the central role that water plays in the Eastern Sierra, and despite the fact that it provides critical source-water to a distant city, there are numerous communities within the region that don't have access to reliable and safe drinking water.

This documentary tells the stories of a number of economically disadvantaged communities in the Eastern Sierra that are dealing with such challenges, and the progress being made through the Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Program.

Living in the RAIN SHADOW

Stories of the Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Program

A BRISTLECONE MEDIA Production
Written and Directed by BRUCE W. CHRISTENSEN. Screenplay by BRUCE W. CHRISTENSEN. Produced by BRUCE W. CHRISTENSEN. Edited by ALBERT SHERMAN & SANDRA J. JENSEN. Music by BRUCE W. CHRISTENSEN. Sound by BRUCE W. CHRISTENSEN.

Available on DVD and Blu-ray. \$29.95. Includes a 10-page photo book.       

Report & Recommendations

- Topics covered:
 - Outreach & communication techniques
 - DAC definition
 - Technical assistance and trainings
 - IRWM grant program requirements
 - Water system consolidation
 - Role of counties
 - Rate structures



Since the DAC grant...

- Planning Grant 2 –
 - Ongoing Program operations
 - Continued outreach & engagement *important*
 - Targeted campaign focused on project, TMF needs
 - Funding opportunities

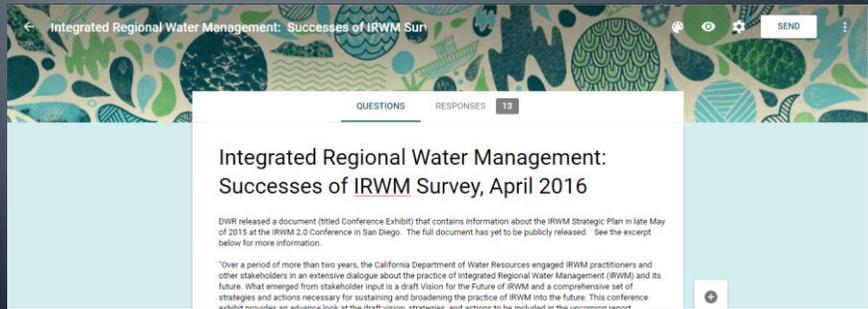
Final shameless plug...

Successes of IRWM Survey

Thanks to those who have done the survey!

Please do the survey if you haven't already...

(see me if you don't know how to access it)



THANK YOU and Contact Info

Mark Drew, Program Director: mdrew@caltrout.org

Holly Alpert, Program Manager: holly@inyo-monowater.org

Rick Kattelman, Project Development Specialist:

rick@inyo-monowater.org

www.inyo-monowater.org





Recommendations

Recommendations

- 1. Disadvantaged community outreach in IRWM regions should be recognized as a process that takes time, persistence, understanding, and community-specific knowledge. IRWM regions should look to learn from each other about how to conduct successful and meaningful DAC outreach.*
- 2. In rural, sparsely-populated regions, such as the Inyo-Mono IRWM region, a variety of communication techniques should be used to provide and present information to DACs and their water systems. Agencies and IRWM groups should work to understand the best methods of communication for the communities they work with.*

Recommendations

- 3. DWR and other state water agencies should consider alternative ways of defining disadvantaged communities to take into account communities without clear median household income data.*

Recommendations

- 4. Water system-specific, individualized technical assistance should be made available to DACs to help determine needs and decide how to bring resources to address those needs.*
- 5. Water system-related trainings should be made available to disadvantaged communities in a way that is tailored to their needs: at no charge, with travel assistance or close to the community, at convenient days/times, with continuing education credit, and/or based on water systems' needs.*
- 6. Regional water management programs should facilitate the sharing of resources and expertise among small water systems, larger water systems, and local businesses to address technical and managerial needs. DWR and DPH should promote use of "circuit-rider" services to small rural systems through subsidies or grants.*

Recommendations

7. *Disadvantaged communities wishing to obtain funds from the IRWM grant program should be subject to different and less stringent requirements related to proposal submission and grant administration.*
8. *Small water systems should consider merging at least part of their operations with neighboring systems to distribute costs among a larger customer base and take advantage of economies of scale. DWR and DPH should consider an incentive program to study and implement consolidation of small systems.*

Recommendations

9. *County governments should assume a lead role in overseeing the provision of assistance to DAC water suppliers. DWR and other state water agencies should create a grant program for counties willing to improve water supplies for their DACs.*
10. *DWR and other state and local water agencies should consider ways to ensure adequate rate structures in small, DAC water systems, such as providing assistance to do system-specific rate assessments and relax some Proposition 218 requirements. At the same time, water systems should begin educating their ratepayers about the true cost of water delivery and treatment.*

Inyo-Mono IRWM region

- Land area: 17,259 mi²
 - 11% of California
 - >50% of Lahontan funding region
- Population: ~68,000
 - Major population centers: Ridgecrest, Mammoth Lakes, Bishop
 - 4 people/mi²
- Mountains, desert, saline lakes, water exports
 - Source water for >1 million people in L.A.

