



INYO – MONO WATER NEWS

May 2014

From the Program Director, Mark Drew:

Slowly but surely we are making progress: preliminary funding award for a Tecopa water system has been granted!

As of this past February, the Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Program has been working to identify and address regional water needs for *six years!* A particular focus of the Program has been to support the needs of economically disadvantaged communities within the region. Through collaboration and hard work, we are beginning to make a difference. We have been able to secure funding for an array of needs, including school drinking water systems, watershed planning, community water systems, and climate change adaptation. One personal highlight for me has been the work done with partners in the small community of Tecopa, located just southeast of Death Valley. Tecopa is a severely economically disadvantaged community that does not have a water system, and residents must rely on contaminated drinking water or drive 70 miles round-trip to purchase bottled water for domestic use. Early on, a partnership developed among Program Office staff, the Amargosa Conservancy, and residents of Tecopa to secure funding to conduct a feasibility study focused on identifying potential sources of safe drinking water. The study was completed last fall with a recommendation that a water vending machine be installed in Tecopa that would treat groundwater on-site and provide the community with safe drinking water. The next step in reaching this goal was to secure the necessary funding to purchase and install a water vending machine. I am extremely pleased to share with you that as of last week, a preliminary award to fund a local water system in Tecopa was granted from the State Water Resources Control Board. If all goes well, by early 2015 Tecopa will have safe drinking water for the first time ever. Although there are still details to be worked out, the award—



and effort -- signifies what can be achieved by working together to solve regional needs. A small step forward has been made. Let's continue in the spirit of what started more than six years ago, and accomplish more.

I also want to let you all know that Maya has decided to move on after working with the Program for almost 1½ years. Maya has been a wonderful individual to work with and has provided essential support to the Program Office and indeed, the Program as a whole. Fortunately, Maya is staying local, and I want to personally wish her the very best as she moves on in her professional career. In the meantime, we are dividing Maya's many responsibilities among the Program Office staff until we figure out a longer-term solution.

PROP. 84 IRWM GRANTS

Planning Grant 2

Reporting and Invoicing: California Trout has requested that the Program Office begin submitting grant invoices and reports to DWR on a monthly basis. An invoice covering January and February 2014 was submitted at the end of March, and another invoice covering March was submitted around April 15. Staff is still working with DWR to finalize these invoices.

Progress on Updating Plan Standards: Progress is continuing on updating our IRWM Plan to meet DWR 2012 Plan Standards, albeit slowly. As of the writing of this newsletter, we have drafts of four Plan chapters, partially or wholly satisfying four standards. There is a timeline table that the Program Office is using to mark progress and make sure we stay on track. We will be aiming to approve the goals, objectives, and resource management strategies at the May RWMG meeting/conference call. You can help out by reviewing the materials we provide ahead of the meeting and volunteering to review and comment on draft Plan chapters.

Funding/Project Solicitation: At the March RWMG meeting, the Group agreed that potential project proponents for the drought round of Prop. 84 Implementation funding would submit their interest and/or projects by April 15, 2014. The Program Office did not receive any communications indicating interest. At this point, it is assumed that the Inyo-Mono IRWMP will not be submitting an application for the drought round of funding. See more on the drought funding in the News section below.

The Program Office continues to research additional funding sources. In late April, the State Water Resources Control Board announced another funding opportunity related to the drought legislation (this is the funding source for the Tecopa project). This funding source focuses on providing interim water quality and supply solutions to disadvantaged communities with contaminated water supplies. The Program Office has communicated this opportunity to several DAC water systems in the region. You can find more information at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/caa/dw_droughtfund/

DAC Grant

Reporting and Invoicing: Similar to the Planning Grant, we are starting to invoice DWR on a monthly basis. An invoice covering January and February 2014 was submitted at the end of March, and another invoice covering March was submitted around April 15. Staff is still working with DWR to finalize these invoices. An amendment was recently finalized with DWR that allows for the work of the grant to be extended through September 2014 and final reports and invoices to be submitted by November 30, 2014.

Findings Dissemination: Over the next several months, there will be a lot of effort going into discussing the findings of the DAC grant and how to continue the mutually beneficial engagement of DACs and tribes in the Inyo-Mono IRWM planning process. Many of these discussions will take place during planned events, which are listed below. The DAC grant report (which we are calling a white paper) will be a culmination of all of the work performed through the DAC grant along with analysis of what was learned and recommendations to the State and other IRWM regions.

The first findings dissemination event will be the **Sierra Water Workgroup Summit June 12-13 in Kings Beach, CA** (north Lake Tahoe – beautiful setting!). Mark and Holly will lead a session focused on the Inyo-Mono DAC grant and DAC/tribal engagement in Sierra Nevada IRWMPs. The session will also feature the first public showing of the DAC documentary. If you are interested in attending, register soon:

<http://sierranevadaalliance.givezooks.com/events/2014-sierra-water-workgroup-summit>.

There may be some travel funding available for DAC and tribal representatives. Contact [Holly](#) with questions.

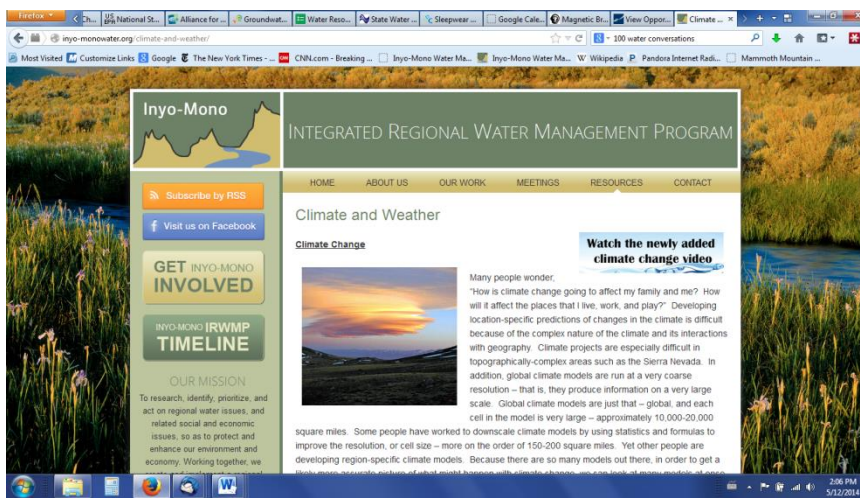
The second event will take place the very next week: the **regional DAC & tribal conference** that is a culmination of the work of the DAC grant. The conference will be **Wednesday, June 18**, and is taking place in conjunction with a meeting of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board in Bishop. The morning will be conference format and will feature a showing of the new documentary. The afternoon will include tours DAC water systems. You can find more information at: <http://inyo-monowater.org/2014/04/inyo-mono-disadvantaged-community-and-tribal-conference-june-18/>

Finally, the Inyo-Mono IRWM Program Office has been invited to participate in the **summer specialty conference of the American Water Resources Association**, which is focused on **Integrated Water Resources Management**. Holly will participate in a panel centered on environmental justice concerns in California IRWM, and Mark will lead up a showing of the documentary. The meeting will take place in **Reno June 30 – July 2**:
<http://www.awra.org/meetings/Reno2014/>

Please let us know if you are interested in or planning to attend any of these events.

DAC Documentary: The Program Office has reviewed and provided feedback on a first draft of the DAC documentary. The purpose of the documentary is to tell the story about water in the Inyo-Mono region, emphasizing the uniqueness of the area, challenges faced by disadvantaged communities, and what is being done through the Inyo-Mono IRWM Program to find solutions. The documentary is scheduled to be completed by early June, and public showings will take place throughout the summer, including at the various findings dissemination events outlined above. In addition to public viewings, the Program Office intends to present the documentary to state and regional decision makers as part of our broader strategy of bringing regional issues to their attention.

Climate change: The Program Office has started making available a series of webinars focused on climatic changes and impacts specific to the Inyo-Mono region. The first webinar is available



on the Inyo-Mono Climate and Weather webpage (<http://inyo-monowater.org/climate-and-weather/>) and is focused on what changes in the climate may be expected in the eastern Sierra and adjoining deserts. More webinars will be posted as they are completed.

We are once again working with the Sierra Nevada Alliance to perform greenhouse gas emissions inventories for some of the disadvantaged community water systems in the region. So far, only three systems have signed up, though we are encouraging others to join. The inventories should be complete by June, and the Program Office will present the results to the Group.

Most of the other work related to climate change is focused on the drought. Holly Alpert gave a talk in April at the IOU Garden in Lone Pine as part of the “100 Conversations about Water” series. The talk focused on effects of the drought in the Owens Valley and how these impacts fit into the larger picture of climate change.

MAPS 101: Two Maps 101 classes were held in early April – one in Bishop and one in Mammoth. Attendance at both classes was good. Students learned about the basics of identifying locations for mapping purposes and used open-access online mapping tools to create maps of their water system boundaries. In Mammoth, students also heard from Mono County about the potential to house water system-related data on secure county servers. Janet was an excellent instructor, and we received many thanks afterwards.



Alternative DAC Metrics: The Program Office is finishing up some analyses of the various data gathered for exploring alternative ways of identifying and characterizing disadvantaged communities. We will make a presentation to the RWMG at a future meeting about the results of the

research. This information will also be presented at the various findings dissemination events highlighted above.

Round 1 Implementation Grant

Reporting and Invoicing: The first and second invoices, covering work performed up through September 2013, have been paid by DWR to Central Sierra RC&D, and checks have been cut for project proponents. The Program Office and project proponents have submitted invoicing materials for the first quarter of 2014.

Project progress reports: The last two quarters have been very productive. The New Hilltop Well is complete and being utilized. The Round Valley Well is complete. There were project close-out events for both of these sites in April. The Coleville project is complete, and the Tecopa feasibility study is complete. The remaining projects are SCADA and CSA-2 (Inyo County) and the MCWD well profiling. All three projects have received schedule adjustments to the Construction and Administration lines within their work plans. With these adjustments all three are in compliance with our contract with DWR and will be complete by the end of the calendar year.

NEWS

Drought Implementation funding

The Department of Water Resources has recently published a draft Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) for the next round of IRWM funding, which is focused on the current and future drought. The final PSP is due in early June and proposals will most likely be due in August. There is a total of \$200 million available state-wide to address one or more of the following priorities: (1) provide immediate drought preparedness, (2) increase local water supply reliability and the delivery of safe drinking water, (3) assist water suppliers and regions to implement conservation programs and measures that are not locally cost-effective, and (4) reduce water quality conflicts or ecosystems conflicts created by the drought. At this time, it is unclear how much, if any, of the remaining \$10 million funds for the Lahontan funding region will be awarded in the drought round. If you have a project need that meets the PSP funding criteria, please contact the Program Office ASAP. The draft PSP can be found on the Inyo-Mono and DWR websites.