



DRAFT Meeting Notes

Regional Water Management Group Regular Meeting

Monday, May 24, 2021
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

To be held virtually via Zoom:

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As authorized by Governor Newsom's Executive Order, N-29-20, dated March 17, 2020, RWMG meetings will be held via teleconferencing with members of the RWMG attending from separate remote locations. This altered format is in observance of recommendations by local officials that precautions be taken, including social distancing, to address the threat of COVID-19.

If you require special accommodations to participate in this meeting in person or by phone, please contact Allison Dodds (allison@inyo-monowater.org) no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

RWMG Meeting Process

The public will be offered the opportunity to comment on each agenda item prior to any action on the item by the membership. The public will also be offered the opportunity to address the membership on any matter pertaining to IRWMP business. Agenda items indicated as "Action" require that members undertake activities subsequent to the meeting. Agenda items indicated as "Decision" are items where the membership will make a decision on the item at the meeting. This agenda can also be viewed in the Calendar section of www.inyo-monowater.org.

All decisions of the RWMG are made by consensus as defined in Article I of the Inyo-Mono Regional Water Management Group Planning and Implementation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). After a motion is made by a Member, there is opportunity for discussion, and then RWMG Members are asked to vote. Members may approve a decision (thumbs up), vote that they can live with a decision while not completely approving of it (thumbs sideways), or disapprove of a decision which withholds consensus (thumbs down). A Member may also abstain from voting, which will be interpreted as no opposition to the action. If there are no Members voting thumbs down, the decision is passed by consensus. The decision is then recorded in the meeting notes.

AGENDA – May 24, 2021, RWMG meeting

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Holly Alpert – IRWM Program Director
- Allison Dodds - IRWMP DAC Coordinator & CalTrout
- Rick Kattelmann – IRWM Program Office, Eastern Sierra Land Trust
- Linda Monreal – Birchim CSD
- Malcolm Clark - Sierra Club Range of Light Group
- Jeff Fitzsimmons - Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Bruce Woodworth – Mono County RCD, WRAMP Foundation, and Eastern California Water Association
- Michael Draper – Mono County
- Scott McKenzie - Aspendell Mutual Water Company
- Aaron Steinwand – OVGA & Inyo County
- BryAnna Vaughan – Big Pine CSD, Bishop Paiute Tribe
- Peter Bernasconi - Bishop Paiute Tribe
- Paul Stiglich - June Lake PUD
- Pam Bold - High Sierra Energy Foundation
- Ian Bell – Owens Valley Indian Water Commission
- Edward Herrmann - Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation
- Jennifer Krafcheck – Eastern Sierra CSD
- David Swisher - Lundy Mutual Water Company
- Dan Totheroh – Inyo County Supervisor
- Don Zdeba – Indian Wells Valley Water District
- Eric Huber - Fort Independence Tribe
- Noah Williams – Big Pine Paiute Tribe
- Cheyenne Stone – Fort Independence Tribe

2. Public Comment

Pam Bold – SoCalRen reminder - Public agencies in SCE territories may be eligible for battery backup through the Solar Generation Incentive Program if you're in a high fire zones and income qualified.

3. Quick Decision Items

- a. **DECISION ITEM:** Approval of January 27, 2021, meeting notes
 - Malcolm Clark made a motion to approve notes; Aaron Steinwand seconded; all in favor

4. Action Items Report from January 27, 2021 (no verbal report)

- a. **ACTION ITEM:** After this meeting, Program Office will examine what signatories should be asked to reconsider their status. DONE
- b. **ACTION ITEM:** Send reminder to RWMG about Admin. Committee meeting in case anyone else wants to attend. DONE
- c. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will send out a fundraising letter to RWMG. PENDING discussion in Item 8 of this agenda
- d. **ACTION ITEM:** – Program Office will follow up with Jake about posting Inyo County Master Plans to RWMG library on website. DONE (<https://inyo-monowater.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Master-Plan-Town-Water-Systems-Final.pdf>)
- e. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will schedule more trainings in conjunction with CRWA staff. Held Well Diagnostics (January), Emergency Response Preparedness

(March), and Board Ethics (April) trainings. Will try to hold 1-2 more before the end of the grant.

- f. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will put (SGMA) outreach flyers on website and distribute to RWMG list. DONE
- g. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will schedule a mapping tool demonstration workshop. IN PROGRESS
- h. **ACTION ITEM:** All projects that wish to go forward for Round 2 Implementation funding that are not already in the IRWM Plan (and any project that wishes to be considered for the IRWM Plan regardless of funding) must be submitted via the online submission form by April 1, 2021. Link: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/cf74b63e4dc842eb8eab3dd78a03728f> Deadline reached.
- i. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will circulate the Round 1 PSP as an example of what the grant application process entails. DONE
- j. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will circulate the grantee scope of services and application to the RWMG, with applications to be due March 1, 2021. DONE
- k. **ACTION ITEM:** Program Office will post (Peter Bernasconi's) presentation on the website. DONE (<https://inyo-monowater.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IRWM-Project-2-BriefingReport.pdf>)

5. Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Grant Update

- a. Grant ends October 31, 2021, with all grant administration to be complete by 12/31/2021 – extended grant out 8 months with amendment
- b. Focused mainly on technical assistance and project development deliverables
- c. Water Conversations sessions held
 - i. Second sampling session focused on Mono County
 - ii. Water-efficient landscaping
 - iii. Public safety power shutoffs
 - iv. Electronic annual reporting- Inyo County Environmental Health
 - v. Upcoming: Inyo-Mono mapping tool
 - vi. Upcoming (maybe): Consumer Confidence Reports
- d. CRWA trainings
 - i. Held Well Diagnostics, Emergency Response Preparedness, Board Ethics since last RWMG meeting
 - ii. Will try to hold 1-2 more before end of grant
- e. Project development efforts
 - i. Lundy MWC booster pump engineering report complete
 - ii. Lundy MWC source water alternatives analysis complete and is being followed up on by submitting a project for Round 2 funding
 - iii. Keeler CSD feasibility study within a couple of weeks of being complete
 - iv. Big Pine intertie feasibility study in Holly's hands for review and then will be completed & submitted to community
- f. SGMA
 - i. Program Office facilitated two OVGA outreach meetings
Aaron - Topical workshops on specific beginning parts of the GSP. Would like to continue to use Holly's input and advice. More coming this summer. Wants to use IRWMP to assist the OVGA.

6. Prop. 1 Round 1 Implementation Grant Update

- a. Three projects, ECWA is grant applicant, ~\$366,000
- b. Grant agreement with DWR was executed in February 2021; contracts with local project sponsors executed soon thereafter

- c. Advanced payment for 50% of two of the projects, submitted upon execution of grant agreement (Big Pine and Amargosa)
- d. Crowley Lake MWC has already purchased generator and is in bidding process for contractor
- e. First quarterly invoice submitted end of April; included grant administration and Crowley Lake MWC expenses
- f. Expect other two projects to begin this summer
- g. Input from LPSs or ECWA? **None**

7. Prop. 1 Round 2 Implementation Grant

- a. Expected timeline and process
 - i. Second and final round of project implementation funding
 - ii. Generally, for shovel-ready projects, with some exceptions for decision support tools
 - iii. Inyo-Mono's non-competitive allocation is \$2.851 million, including grant administration funding (typically capped at 10%)
 - iv. Match requirement is 50%, waived for projects benefitting DACs
 - v. Some funding must be specifically allocated to projects benefitting DACs (10%)
 - vi. Recently attended a workshop by DWR on their thinking for the Round 2 application process
 - vii. Likely to be a streamlined process compared to Round 1 – not multi-phase
 - viii. Release of draft PSP in summer (hearing July)
 - However, that may get held up with drought funding
 - We heard a promise that Round 2 funding will not become a drought round but that drought may be a priority in Round 2
 - Other likely priorities in the PSP: Water Resilience Portfolio goals; climate resilience; and diversity, equity, and inclusion (i.e., Human Right to Water, disadvantaged communities)
 - ix. Opportunity to comment on draft PSP
 - x. Should also guide our project evaluation/ranking process
 - xi. DWR suggesting dual application deadline: March 2022 and September 2022
- b. Grant applicant
 - i. Received one statement of interest by the March 1 deadline, by Eastern California Water Association
 - ii. ECWA is the grantee for Round 1 Implementation and also manages the funds we raise internally
 - iii. Opportunity for ECWA representatives to speak
Bruce – Board had a discussion and wrote letter stating interest. Described it as provisional based on the PSP (e.g., If administrative costs are lowered that would not work out for ECWA).
Holly – Do we want to add provisional into the decision item?
 - iv. **DECISION ITEM: Approve Eastern California Water Association as provisional grant applicant for Prop. 1 Round 2 Implementation Grant**
 - o **Dave motioned to make ECWA provisional grantee; Scott seconded; all approved**
- c. Projects
 - i. Holly presented and walked the Group through the projects
 - ii. Of the 19 projects gathered through the initial solicitation, about 12 remain for various reasons: funding request was too high for the amount we have available; projects weren't ready to go
 - iii. \$2,591,000 available for projects (\$259,000 grant admin)
 - iv. Suggest we wait for draft PSP before developing evaluation criteria but will ask project subcommittee to begin reviewing past criteria and processes

- Holly: Anyone want to be on project subcommittee?
 - **Scott McKenzie, Dave Swisher, Bryanna Vaughan, Eric Huber (tentative) volunteered**
- v. Suggest having short project presentations at next RWMG meeting
- vi. **ACTION ITEM: all project proponents go back to budgets and see if they can get number down and/or contact Holly if you don't think you are ready to go through with funding project**
- vii. Comments:
- Dave Swisher** – Applied for a complete battery back-up system (FREE – from SCE). Suggested Pam Bold
- Pam Bold** – have to be served by Southern California Edison and it's first come first serve. Must be on GIS map. See links at the end of these notes that Pam put in the chat.
- Holly**- What are people's thoughts on climate resilience project themes or other themes?
- Cheyenne Stone** – Climate Resiliency, Resiliency Investments, conservation planning, improved drought resiliency
- Bryanna Vaughan** – greenhouse gas reduction and increased fire hazards helps with generator projects. Water resource conservation and restoration.
- Scott McKenzie** – might be able to tune numbers down by fine tuning proposals
- Bryanna Vaughan**– any opportunity to get generators for less by purchasing multiple
- Dave Swisher** – LMWC has a 70kw generator
- d. Funding the proposal process
- i. Past rounds: \$12,000 – 18,000 for proposal preparation, funded through various means
- ii. At most, seven projects in past rounds
- iii. Budget for this round: \$20,000-25,000, because likely several more projects and a bigger overall funding amount, meaning bigger projects
- Includes “pre-proposal” time coordinating projects and evaluation process, participating in DWR workshops, commenting to DWR, etc.
- iv. Possible funding scenarios
- Each project proponent contributes 1% of grant request (would also be used to reimburse time already spent)- can't have exceptions for DAC's
 - Each project proponent contributes flat fee
 - Comments:

Dave Swisher – no problem with either

Bryanna Vaughan- thinks the 1% is reasonable and additional left over could be a different ask.

Paul Stiglich – agrees with 1%

Scott McKenzie – agrees with 1%

Linda Monreal – agrees with 1%

Aaron Steinwand – would have to go to board and 1% seems reasonable

Action Item: Ask all project proponents to go to their boards and discuss the 1% grant contribution (use flat rate as alternative).

In late June we can discuss what proponents are hearing from their boards

Pam – make it a group policy (if you go for implementation funding) you contribute 1% toward proposal

Holly – making a 1% contribution towards proposal in future funding rounds could be a decision item at a future RWMG meeting.
 - No cutouts for DACs

- Any unused funding could be returned proportionally (discussed using toward some other task, such as grant administration, but it was dismissed)
- May be able to use the 1% as match

~~~~~10 min break~~~~~

## 8. Future of IRWM Program

### a. Possible funding opportunities

#### i. Drought emergency response funding

- 2 Executive Orders around drought
- Inyo and Mono Counties not included, but Kern is
- \$5.1 billion drought funding included in May revise of budget proposal based on recent surplus
- DWR and SWRCB would have drought pots of money
- On the order of hundreds of millions of dollars over 1-2 years
- Many different programs
- Would help to identify our drought-related needs
- Question to the RWMG: what are your drought-related needs?  
**Dave Swisher** – Meters to accurately count all the water going to each home. Read that by 2025 all systems need that. Dan stated that in the past that is not for everyone – not small systems  
**Dan Totheroh** –Water Conservation Education and Landscaping Education  
**Paul Stiglich** – if you are not an urban water supplier (less than 3,000 customers) you do not have to file report with state water board on water conservation.  
**Pam Bold** – Incentives for people to change out their landscaping  
**BryAnna Vaughan** – Irrigation efficiency. Increases in E.coli and cyanobacteria. Harmful algal groups are present and likely to have toxicity. Dogs are biggest problem. Education outreach. HABS (Harmful Algal Bloom) program.

#### ii. Federal infrastructure funding

- Recent \$2.7 billion allocation from EPA for State Revolving Funds – Clean Water and Drinking Water
- Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021 passed the Senate in April but can't find any news of it since
- Does anyone have any more insights here? **NONE**

#### iii. [CalEPA Environmental Justice Small Grant](#) – due June 30

- Purpose: address environmental justice issues in areas disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and hazards
- Relevant focus areas:
  - Develop Community Led Solutions to Climate Change Mitigation, Adaption, and Resilience Challenges
  - Improve Access to Safe and Clean Water
- \$50,000, 18-month term
- Possible scope of work ideas: water operator training, Water Conversations, CRWA trainings, generalized technical assistance
- Other ideas?

**BryAnna Vaughan**– Cal EPA also has EJ grants. I have heard they are very competitive and not easy to get, historically there have been

less funds available. Also heard there is more money coming in for future EJ grants, so hopefully it won't be as competitive moving forward. Alan Bacock has recently taken a job with EPA EJ program, which is where the state receives their funds to provide EJ grants, maybe we could reach out and see if he could help guide us through the process.

**Dave Swisher** – Worth pursuing

**Pam Bold** – Worth pursuing

- ECWA as grantee?
- RWMG generally approves moving forward with grant application. Program Office estimates \$2000 to prepare application

iv. [California Financing Coordinating Committee](#)

- Consortium of state & federal funding agencies
- Funding fair May 27 – Allison & Holly will attend parts
- 1-page application can be submitted any time
- Program Office can submit it for you

b. Possible future scenarios

i. After Dec. 31, 2021, the bulk of our day-to-day programmatic funding goes away

- Internal fundraising can make up some of this but historically has not come close to keeping the program afloat
- Between Prop. 84 and Prop. 1, went on hiatus for 1-1.5 years

ii. Update on future bond funding

- Potential climate resilience bond measure on June 2022 ballot, but no specific allocation for IRWM

iii. RWMG fundraising

- 2021 contributors: Indian Wells Valley Water District, Mammoth Community Water District, Birchim CSD, High Sierra Energy Foundation
- Pay-for-play model, like many other IRWM groups do

iv. Go on hiatus until funding becomes available

v. Shut down altogether

vi. Expand the focus to other natural resource topics (see [North Coast Resource Partnership](#))

- Partner with RFFCP effort
- Comments:

**Dave Swisher** – Likes idea of expanding to RFFCP. Lots of Fire Grants out there – millions \$ per year in rural communities

**Eric Huber** – Likes expanding focus to fire. Sedimentation issues and water infrastructure affected by fire

**Paul Stiglich** – Ramp down water budget and look at other arenas to keep active and when water budget becomes available then go that way. Suggests using two separate budgets. Paul will not be able to participate if we go toward fire.

**BryAnna Vaughan** – expanding to fire and other natural resources is a good idea. Thinks the Pay to Play works for people putting in proposals and hoping to get back but other types of members will not benefit from this. Likes the 1% idea rather than the pay to be in a meeting. Hope to support having Program Office on as a resource.

**Scott McKenzie** – agrees with multiple resources. Many pay annual membership dues to CRWA etc and finds it easier to ask a board for

a membership fee. Would consider that as a small part of operational budget. Could be one steady flow of income.

**Holly** – would it be a given that we would except DAC's?

**Scott McKenzie**- yes

**Holly** – we have asked for a several year commitment to IRWMP from a few RWMG Members (known and steady income for a few years)

**Dan Totheroh** – likes idea of diversification but as our grant \$ goes away and funding for administration goes away, seems like diversification will balance the workload issue.

**Holly** – does not want to lose the Technical Assistance and Training

**Rick** – highest priority is to look into what the marriage looks like for the other IRWM groups. Hopes overhead for the fire stuff will help support the basic water work.

**Action Item:** talk to North Coast Resource Partnership. Also look into how much (\$) people “Pay to Play”

**BryAnna Vaughan** – encourages Holly not to say “should we move forward or not”

**Pam Bold** – Remain Optimistic

#### 9. Announcements, process check (10 min)

Pam Bold:

The High Sierra Energy Foundation and the SoCalREN will be hosting a virtual workshop on June 15 at 11:00 a.m. on available grants, and no- or low-interest loans reserved for public agencies for energy efficiency projects. Registration link:

[https://energycoalition.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_LNjUVJtLS4SX2OLjrcZt8Q](https://energycoalition.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_LNjUVJtLS4SX2OLjrcZt8Q)

#### 10. Next RWMG meeting – TBD, based on release of draft PSP: Agenda topics: SGMA updates, Amargosa Conservancy hydrologic monitoring presentation

#### 11. Adjourn

#### **Comments in ZOOM Chat:**

Public agencies in SCE territories may be eligible for battery backup through the Solar Generation Incentive Program if you're in a high fire zones and income qualified. More information can be found at:

[https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/uploadedFiles/CPUCWebsite/Content/News\\_Room/NewsUpdates/2020/SG\\_IP\\_non-res\\_web\\_120420.pdf](https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/uploadedFiles/CPUCWebsite/Content/News_Room/NewsUpdates/2020/SG_IP_non-res_web_120420.pdf)

To learn if you are in a DAC, please visit <https://bit.ly/2VCyKMw>

To learn if you are in an 80 percent MHI census tract, please visit <https://bit.ly/3lnudaW>

To learn if you are in a HFTD, please visit <https://ia.cpuc.ca.gov/firemap/>

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e4d7d4cc0c0743dbb836f3177a021074&extent=-13513596.7108%2C3889703.1691%2C-12584122.4469%2C4490192.4633%2C102100>