

Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Meeting Notes – Upper Los Angeles River Watersheds Steering Committee

March 15, 2007

LADWP Conference Room 1471

Present:

Mario Acevedo, LADWP
 Mary Benson, LA Trails
 John Biggs, Brown and Caldwell
 Shirley Birosik, LA RWQCB
 Brad Boman, Pasadena
 Donna Chen, LA City BOS
 Rebecca Drayse, TreePeople
 Michael Drennan, Brown and Caldwell
 Tom Erb, LADWP

Darryl Ford, City of LA Rec and Parks
 Terri Grant, LA County DPW
 Mark Horne, Brown and Caldwell
 Andree Hunt, Malcolm Pirnie
 Chris Kroll, Coastal Conservancy (via phone)
 Frank Kuo, LA County DPW
 Mark Mackowski, Upper LA Watermaster
 Vivian Marquez, City of LA BOS

Lianne McGinley, Burbank City Water and Power
 Ed Means, Malcolm Pirnie
 Nancy Steele, LASG Watershed Council
 Dash Stolarz, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Topic/Issue	Discussion	Action/Follow up
1. Introductions	<p>Tom Erb opened the meeting and welcomed everyone at 9:40 AM.</p> <p>Tom noted that project database maintained by the County has new features for online project mapping. Provides ability for collaboration and integration, although it was noted that they are trying to find a way to represent projects that cover a large area. It was suggested that project proponents should update their project information and include location information. It was suggested that latitude and longitude information should include at least four decimal points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frank Kuo will send email to project submitters to update project information, including latitude and longitude.
2. Approve Meeting Notes	<p>Meeting notes from 2/2/07 meeting were approved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any comments on future meeting notes should be emailed to Mario Acevedo.
3. Update on Leadership Committee a. Status of \$25M Grant b. Meeting with Ventura County c. Consultant Scope of Work	<p>Mario Acevedo provided a summary of a meeting held the previous day with DWR and representatives from the Greater LA, Ventura County, and Upper Santa Clara River IRWMPs to discuss the potential allocation of \$215 million of Prop 84 funds.</p> <p>Although a consensus on a funding split is not required, the State would consider a proposed funding split. The fund allocation could be based population, or on other factors such water supply and water quality needs. To inform this discussion, the Leadership Committee has requested the development of a matrix of potential water objectives and quantifiable targets (per the LA IRWMP).</p> <p>The presence of the Upper Santa Clara River group was questioned, given that they don't currently have an IRWMP and could be considered part of the Ventura</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC will continue meeting with Ventura and Santa Clarita to develop consensus of allocation of Prop 84 funds

The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan is to address the water resources needs of the Region in an integrated and collaborative manner.

Topic/Issue	Discussion	Action/Follow up
	<p>County plan. It was noted that they are developing their own plan and want their own individual fund allocation.</p> <p>It was noted no decision has been made on the unallocated \$100 million of Prop. 84 funds and that 8.5% of the total funds will be required for bond costs and grant administration. The timing of Prop. 84 funds is proposed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year 1 (2008) - \$140m ▪ Year 2 (2009) ~ \$450m ▪ Year 4 (2011) ~ \$450m <p>It was noted that a decision on the remainder of Prop. 50 funds was still pending. DWR suggested that recipients of Round 1 funding (e.g., Greater LA) may not be eligible for a second round.</p> <p>DWR representatives asked if it would be useful to create a super umbrella IRWMP (for the entire Los Angeles-Ventura-Santa Clarita area), but local attendees felt that this idea would not add value to the process.</p> <p>The State is considering performance-based criteria for the award of the Prop. 84 funds, which would recognize the extent of competition that will be required to create project lists at the local level. A draft grant package should be available around June, with a final grant application package in October or November.</p> <p>In response to a question, DWR suggested that it was worthwhile to begin prioritizing projects now and encouraged the establishment of a clear rationale for project selection. If needed, project priorities could be adjusted once the grant guidelines have been finalized.</p>	
<p>4. Governance Structure</p>	<p>Ed Means facilitated a discussion regarding the existing governance structure for the IRWMP and noted the consultant team will develop a draft technical memo that provides specific recommendations regarding potential modifications to the existing structure based on input from the Steering Committees.</p> <p>Stakeholders identified the following as things that had worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We met the goal of a comprehensive plan. • Agency reps have stayed committed and engaged in the process. • There's been good PR. Elected officials have been made aware of the process. • Stakeholder outreach has been effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultant team will forward a Draft Technical Memo with recommendations for review by the SC.

The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan is to address the water resources needs of the Region in an integrated and collaborative manner.

Topic/Issue	Discussion	Action/Follow up
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantifiable goals were established, and this will likely serve as a model for the rest of the state. • The process has been very transparent, and everyone has been invited to participate. • We have received good input from stakeholders at the subregional and regional workshops. • The process has allowed for creativity, and encouraged out of the box thinking, and allowed for project concepts to be submitted to the database. <p>Thing that haven't worked well include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workings of the Leadership Committee (LC) are somewhat of a mystery. There needs to be more transparency, such as wider circulation of agendas and meeting minutes. • Materials provided at the LC should be provided to the members of the Steering Committee (SC) as soon as the meeting is completed. • Revise the timing of the meetings of the SC to occur immediately before the Leadership Committee meeting, to allow for review of the draft agenda and provide input. • Create an LC agenda item for public comments. • Need to clearly define the role of the LC before we determine the appropriate governance structure. • The process should avoid "integration by stapler". • As many decisions as possible should be made at the subregional level, and then there is some need for regional oversight. • The LC should serve as body that can respond to future funding opportunities. • The LC should be tasked with setting regional priorities and serve as a resource for Regional project ideas. <p>It was suggested that the decision-making process should be iterative between the SC and LC, with project prioritization considered as a separate function from the LC. The LC needs to hold the SC's accountable for maintaining participation and providing feedback to the LC.</p> <p>Resource Conservation Districts should be considered as part of the governance model, as RCD's made up of land owners and land managers could reflect the relationship between land use planning and water resources planning.</p> <p>The LC should be charged with development of a sustainable long-term funding</p>	

The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan is to address the water resources needs of the Region in an integrated and collaborative manner.

Topic/Issue	Discussion	Action/Follow up
	<p>source, and serve as representative to Wash DC for federal funding. The LC should also be charged with coordination with larger regional efforts such as the LA Integrated Resource Plan.</p>	
<p>5. Project Prioritization Framework</p>	<p>Mark Horne led a discussion on development of a project prioritization framework for the IRWMP, based on a hand-out. Based on feedback from the Steering Committees, the consultant team will develop a specific recommendation for a project prioritization framework, which would ultimately be adopted by the Leadership Committee.</p> <p>Some key issues in this process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we trying to identify the best projects, or the best projects that are ready for a grant application? • Should we review every project, or just a subset? • How to deal with the significant limits on the information in the project database? • Should project prioritization respond to local (e.g., subregional) priorities? <p>The issue of how cost-benefit analysis fits into this process was raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last round of funding State wanted rigorous cost/benefit evaluation of projects • What stage do we need to look at costs & benefits? • Need to address benefits and costs to get there • How to address the economic value of open space and habitat, given that many economic models give open space/habitat a low benefit value?. <p>The conceptual process outlined in the consultant's scope suggests sorting the database, possibly based on which projects have quantified benefit information, to focus on a small group of projects. It was noted that setting aside approximately 1000 projects in the initial stage (because they are not fully developed projects) could eliminate some great ideas from the process.</p> <p>The conceptual framework (developed from this process) would be applied to the list of projects for each subregion to identify the top 30 projects. The SC would then identify 10 projects which could benefit from integration or improvement (e.g., by combining other project features or combining projects). The list of projects (including the newly integrated projects) would be re-ranked. That list would then be adopted by the SC, and be considered for inclusion in future grant applications.</p> <p>It was suggested that perhaps a first step, integration of projects be considered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA County should send an email to project proponents and request that project information be updated. • Future SC meeting notices should include a request to update project information. • The consultant team will incorporate feedback into a Draft Technical Memo on project prioritization which will be circulated to the SC for comment.

The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan is to address the water resources needs of the Region in an integrated and collaborative manner.

Topic/Issue	Discussion	Action/Follow up
	<p>This could include geographic integration, or by adding additional features (e.g., a trail component) to projects. It was noted that this concept requires good location information (which many projects lack) and complete project information (to adequately identify project features). Are we trying to find the best projects, or trying to "generate" the best projects?</p> <p>It was suggested that waiting to integrate 10 projects at the end may miss some great project opportunities. If fewer project concepts were removed in the initial step, more project ideas could be considered in this process.</p> <p>It was suggested that some additional screening questions would be useful in the project database, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do you own or control the property? ▪ Is this a multi-regional or regional project? <p>Other possible issues to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relative contribution (e.g., a project from a small jurisdiction with a large benefit) ▪ The life-cycle (or longevity) of project – how long will the benefit accrue? ▪ Has Green Visions identified a prioritization structure. <p>The concept of a local weighting factor was discussed. It could be a simple matter of ranking the top-tier objectives (e.g., improve water quality), or assigning values to more specific targets or objectives (e.g., clean-up groundwater). These values could be assigned by the steering committee, or generated by a statistical measure (to assure a range of values). Mixed feelings were expressed about the utility of a weighting structure or the use of the statistical measure.</p> <p>Other questions:</p> <p>Will the Leadership Committee respect the decision of the Steering Committees (e.g., each subregions top projects would be chosen for a grant application), or will the LC merge projects lists to generate a new list of priorities?</p> <p>Should the SC respect the prioritization decisions of other groups (e.g., watershed plans)?</p> <p>How do we incorporate projects from other entities that did not participate in the IRWMP Call for Projects?</p> <p>The importance of follow-up with project proponents was noted. An email should be sent to ask them to update project info and explain why this information is</p>	

The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan is to address the water resources needs of the Region in an integrated and collaborative manner.

Topic/Issue	Discussion	Action/Follow up
	needed. It was noted that project proponents may update project information, or <i>add new projects</i> , until the end of April (5 pm on April 30, 2007). After that point, the prioritization process is scheduled to begin.	
6. Upcoming Meetings/ Workshops	The next meeting of the Upper LA Steering Committee will be on April 4, 2007 at 10 AM to 12 PM, at LADWP in Los Angeles. The next meeting of the Leadership Committee will be held on April 5, 2007 at 9:30, at LA County DPW in Alhambra.	
7. Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 12:57 pm.	

Meeting notes prepared by John Biggs, Brown and Caldwell