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LEGISLATIVE AND FUNDING CHANGES

Background

The IRWM planning process evolved out of Proposition 50, the *Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act (2002)*. Through Chapter 8 of Proposition 50, approximately \$180 million in grants is expected to be available statewide in 2007 to fund projects identified in adopted IRWM Plans. Additionally, Proposition 84, the *Clean Water, Parks and Coastal Protection Act (2006)*, provides approximately one billion dollars in additional funding for IRWM Plans and projects, of which \$91 million has been allocated to the San Diego sub-region. Both grant funds will be administered by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and/or the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

Latest News

On January 23, 2007 we became aware of a proposal by DWR and SWRCB staff that could significantly effect the availability of Prop 50 funds for San Diego County IRWM planning and implementation. In November 2004, the SWRCB and DWR staff adopted Proposition 50 Chapter 8 IRWM Guidelines, which identified two funding cycles of approximately equal amounts of funding. On January 18, 2007, DWR and the SWRCB approved funding for seven regions in the first funding cycle. On January 23, 2007, DWR and SWRCB staff proposed an additional funding recommendation that would fund the nine regions that were not funded in the first funding cycle, Step 2 process. This recommendation would eliminate a second round for funding. The RWMG believes that this proposal is inconsistent with the Prop 50 program guidelines. It is in effect a change in the rules of the program in the middle of the process and detrimental to those regions that have been moving forward under the existing guidelines. The State's PowerPoint presentation that details this proposal will soon be posted on the IRWM website.

The SWRCB had initially scheduled to take action on the Prop 50, Chapter 8, additional funding recommendation at a February 20, 2007 meeting, but delayed action until March 20, 2007.

Other Funding Sources

Proposition 1E – The Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond of 2006: This Proposition authorizes the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$4.1 billion. Of this amount, three hundred million dollars will be available for grants for stormwater and flood management projects that are consistent with an IRWM Plan. It is anticipated that this funding source will become available by 2008.

Senate Bill 59 – Reliable Water Supply Bond Act of 2008: This bond, if approved by voters, would authorize the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$3.95 billion. Of this amount, five hundred million would be available for the planning, design, and construction of locally managed conjunctive use and groundwater storage projects which are consistent with an adopted IRWM Plan. Additionally, a total of two hundred million dollars would be available for agricultural and urban water use efficiency projects which are consistent with an adopted IRWM Plan. If approved by voters, it is anticipated that this funding source would become available in late 2008.

GETTING INVOLVED

RWMG

The County Water Authority, City of San Diego, and County of San Diego formed the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) which has funded, guided, and managed the development of the IRWM Plan to date. The RWMG continues to meet regularly to research, review, discuss and formulate ideas and concepts for the Plan development and implementation. Additionally, the RWMG continues to provide information and presentations to various stakeholder groups including water supply agencies, environmental organizations, and other agencies regarding various components of the IRWM Plan.

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In response to the State proposal to change Prop 50 funding allocations and guidelines, the RWMG agencies have taken the following actions:

1) Water Authority staff provided testimony at the State's January 23, 2007 scoping meeting in Sacramento opposing the funding of the remaining nine proposals from Cycle One, Step Two.

2) The Water Authority and County of San Diego's legislative advocate spoke with the Director of DWR to express the region's opposition to the funding of the remaining proposals from Cycle One, Step Two.

3) At the DWR public hearing on January 31, 2007, RWMG representatives provided testimony in opposition to funding the remaining Cycle One, Step Two proposals.

4) On February 20, 2007, RWMG members attended the State Water Resources Control Board Meeting. On the agenda for this meeting was a proposal to fund seven of the remaining nine unfunded Prop 50 applications. However, this agenda item was postponed due to the many opposing responses that have been received from stakeholders and especially those received from legislative representatives.

5) Additional contacts have been made and letters have collectively and individually been sent to the SWRCB and DWR Directors and Staff, Governor, and State Senators and Congressmen and women regarding our opposition to the proposed changes.

6) On March 12, 2007, DWR will hold a funding area meeting to begin a dialogue on revising the IRWM Guidelines for implementation of Proposition 84.

Selection of Consultant

RMC Water and Environment has been selected to work with the RWMG to: review and comment on the draft IRWM Plan; develop a process to prioritize projects; rank the projects based on the established prioritization process; organize and facilitate RWMG, RAC, and stakeholder meetings; develop a public outreach plan; conduct public/stakeholder outreach activities; review and provide input on the

RAC's recommended governance structure; and assist with the IRWM Plan grant application. Since 2004, RMC has prepared or been involved with preparing ten IRWM Plans including those for successful regions of Pajaro River Watershed and Los Angeles County. To date, RMC led efforts have accounted for 42% of the total money allocated in California.

RAC

To date, the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) has met three times and has helped the RWMG formulate a Mission Statement, develop language for a revised RWMG interagency MOU, discussed options for a long-term governance structure, discussed Regional priorities, and reviewed the Plan outline.

Two facilitated meetings are currently scheduled for the RAC. The meeting dates and topics that will be discussed are:

February 27, 2007: Introduction of the consultant team that will assist staff in completing the IRWM Plan, conducting public outreach, and completing grant applications; update on status of proposed changes to IRWM funding and Plan Standards; further discussion on Plan content.

March 19, 2007: Prioritization of Plan objectives; process for project prioritization; and, readiness to proceed factors.

These RAC meetings, which are open to the public, will be 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM at the San Diego County Water Authority, 4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123.

General Stakeholders

We would like to thank those stakeholders whom attended the hearing in Los Angeles, and those who were able to send comment letters expressing the region's opposition to funding the additional Step 2 proposals.

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Upon completion of the internal reviews of the draft IRWM Plan, the draft Plan will be released for public review and comment. In addition, shortly after release of the public draft (currently projected to be in May), public workshops will be scheduled to present and coordinate stakeholder feedback on the draft Plan. Stay tuned for further information.

Upcoming Workshop

Over the coming months, DWR will be developing the Prop 84 guidelines and criteria for grant applications. The guidelines will be developed based on those that were developed for the Prop 50 process. Make your voice heard and attend this workshop being held in Sacramento to find out what's working, what's not, and develop solutions to improve the grant application process and program requirements. Case studies will include the North Coast; Consumes, American, Bear, and Yuba (CABY); and Ventura County IRWMPS. Visit this website for the agenda and to RSVP:

<http://www.watershednetwork.org/docs/2007/IRWMPWorkshopAgenda.pdf>

SD IRWM PLAN

Status

We are on track for completing the San Diego IRWM Plan this year. The RWMG, in conjunction with a consultant team, has been diligently reviewing, revising, and editing an internal draft of the IRWM Plan. We anticipate having a final draft Plan available for public review in May. The public release date has been adjusted to account for the need to identify and address anticipated changes. We hope you understand the need to be flexible so that we can accommodate these changes as they arise.

Timeline

- ⇒ Draft IRWM Plan Released for Public Review and Comment: ~May 2007
- ⇒ Public Comment Period Ends: 45 - 60 days from the date that the draft Plan is released for public comment.
- ⇒ Project Proposals Due (to be included in final IRWM Plan and to be considered for Prop 50 funding application): at close of public comment period
- ⇒ Resolutions of Support from Participating or Interested Entities Due: Fall 2007
- ⇒ IRWM Plan Adoption by RWMG: Fall 2007

PROJECTS

Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to submit project proposals that they would like to have considered for inclusion in the adopted IRWM Plan. Project proposals received will augment, rather than replace, those already identified in previous solicitations. All projects that are consistent with one or more of the Regional Objectives of the IRWM Plan will be considered. This project list will serve as a basis for future solicitation of more detailed project information as grant funding becomes available. In addition, if there have been any changes to projects that were previously submitted, please fill out and submit a new project sheet indicating that the project needs to be updated with the information provided on the form.



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WORK PRODUCTS

The RWMG has produced several products to date that are available for review on the website (address below).

Items Currently Available:

- Plan Vision, Goals, Objectives
- Public Workshop Presentations
- Stakeholder Comments
- Stakeholder Reference Guide
- Project Solicitation Form
- Project List (updated as of 12/29/06)
- San Diego IRWM Plan Outline
- Region Map
- RAC Membership
- RAC Meeting Schedule
- RAC Meeting Materials
- Funding Information
- Resource Links
- Opportunities for Involvement
- Updated Plan Status

Items Available Soon:

- Updated Timeline
- Final Project List (for Plan inclusion)
- Draft IRWM Plan
- State PowerPoint Presentation on Proposed Prop 50 Funding and Guideline Changes

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San Diego IRWM Plan Website:
www.projectcleanwater.org/html/sdirwm.html