

Tulare Kern Funding Area  
Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM)  
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP)  
Project Advisory Committee (PAC)  
January 17, 2019, 9am-12pm  
Provost & Pritchard, 130 N. Garden Street, Visalia, CA

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**ATTENDEES**

**Project Advisory Committee Members**

- Mike Camarena, Kaweah IRWM - DAC Rep
- David Hoffman, Tule IRWM
- Ralph Gutierrez, Tule IRWM - DAC Rep
- Charlotte Gallock, UKIRWMA IRWM
- Soua Lee, UKIRWMA IRWM
- Jim Maciel, UKIRWMA IRWM - DAC Rep
- Stephanie Hearn, Poso IRWM - DAC Rep Alternate
- Frank Ohnesorgen, Poso IRWM - DAC Rep
- Christine Gutierrez, Poso IRWM DAC Rep Alternate
- Regina Houchin, Kern IRWM - DAC Rep
- Bobby Kamansky, Southern Sierra IRWM
- Julie Allen, Southern Sierra IRWM
- Bob Martin, Westside San Joaquin IRWM

**Project Team**

- Denise England, Tulare County
- Maija Madec, Provost & Pritchard
- Malka Kopell, facilitator, Consensus and Collaboration Program, CSUS
- Gavin O'Leary, Provost & Pritchard
- Mark Thompson, Provost & Pritchard
- Michael Taylor, Provost & Pritchard

For others in attendance, see Appendix A.

---

**1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & AGENDA REVIEW**

Malka Kopell, Collaboration and Consensus Program, Sacramento State, introduced herself and reviewed the agenda. Ms. Kopell is the neutral facilitator provided by a grant from the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Ms. Kopell noted that the summary of the previous meeting had been distributed to PAC members and interested parties, but that additional revisions were needed and it would be redistributed along with the summary for the present meeting.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members and members of the public introduced themselves and quorum was established.

Ms. Kopell asked for public comments. There were none.

## **2. REVIEW OF DAC ENGAGEMENT, PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS REPORT** *(cont'd from October meeting)*

Maria Herrera, Self-Help Enterprises (SHE), reviewed the content of a report on present circumstances and recommended actions for disadvantaged community (DAC) engagement, following up on discussion of a previous draft of the report during the PAC meeting in October 2018. See Appendix B for the report. Ms. Herrera presented statistics on the level of DAC participation in IRWMs, noting that DAC engagement is very low on average. The rate of participation of unincorporated DACs and SDACs (severely disadvantaged communities) is especially low. Additional observations from the report included that IRWM regions do not all share the same participation categories, that some DACs or SDACs may participate in multiple participation categories, and that many DACs and SDACs are listed as interested parties but may not have been involved in development and implementation of an IRWM plan. Ms. Herrera said that she would return to the PAC after the second phase of the assessment was completed.

Ms. Herrera reviewed the program budget, approved at the October 2018 PAC meeting, which allocates \$416,210 for Phase One, covering the report's ten recommendations. The remaining \$133,790 of the DAC Engagement and Education Program (DACEEP) budget would be allocated during Phase Two. She then presented next steps, which include continuing the evaluation of present DAC engagement, meeting with the IRWM regions, developing DAC engagement and outreach recommendations for each of the regions, developing recommendations for communities outside the IRWM regions, and updating the report on DAC engagement in IRWM.

PAC members and members of the public were given an opportunity to present comments and questions. A participant asked what time period engagement data was describing. Ms. Herrera said that the data was gathered from the most recent IRWM plans.

A participant noted that incorporated areas usually have paid staff, while unincorporated areas are often staffed by volunteers, which may contribute to the differences in participation. Another participant said that most DACs have few employees, which makes engagement challenging.

A participant asked what areas qualify as unincorporated. Ms. Herrera said that areas outside a city are unincorporated.

A participant asked about the response rate for the surveys used. Ms. Herrera said that over 200 surveys were mailed, and 36 responses had been submitted. DACs have until the end of January 2019 to complete the survey, and staff at Self-Help Enterprises are being encouraged to bring surveys with them when they meet with communities, and phone calls are also being made to encourage survey response.

## **3. REVIEW PRELIMINARY NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Maija Madec and Gavin O'Leary, from Provost & Pritchard, gave an overview of the preliminary needs assessment, with updates about the dataset. See Appendix C for the Preliminary Needs Assessment report. Mr. O'Leary said that the dataset had been updated based on comments from the PAC. Information is now available by county, data can be broken out by incorporated versus unincorporated areas, and individual well data can also be accessed.

PAC members and members of the public were given an opportunity to present comments and questions. A participant asked whether it was possible to calculate statistics by IRWM region. Mr. O'Leary said that it is possible.

A participant said that the information provides a good snapshot, but State data may not be accurate and timely.

A participant asked whether there was coordination with SGMA processes. The consultants from Provost & Pritchard said that the SGMA processes are not ready to coordinate so the processes are running in parallel. They also noted that Tulare County is working on data sharing with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs).

A participant asked if data indicates whether water quality issues are related to a single contaminant or multiple contaminants. The consultants said that compliance status and notice of violation information can be used to determine if the system has issues with multiple water quality contaminants.

A participant from Self-Help Enterprises said that some data, for example defining private well communities' current water quality, had been collected and asked whether that data would be shared. The consultants said that if it is public data, they could look into including it.

A participant noted that in the past the State had created a map of a potential nitrate contamination issue to facilitate provision of bottled water by the County to those affected.

A participant suggested that private wells should be approached differently and noted that Three Rivers has good private well data. Denise England from Tulare County said that the County's public health department has a lot of information about private wells and that Tulare County has digitized much of the well quality and depth data. A participant asked whether that had been done for individual wells. Ms. England said it had been done for any well for which they have data.

Ms. Madec reviewed the preliminary needs assessment, which uses publicly-available data to provide a preliminary understanding of the needs and issues related to water supply, water quality, and wastewater of DACs in the Tulare-Kern Funding Area. Ms. Madec noted that what constitutes "underrepresented communities" has not yet been defined and requested input from the PAC about the question.

The preliminary needs assessment was based on information for about 493 communities in the Tulare Kern Funding Area (TKFA), 136 of which are DACs and 197 SDACs, collectively referred to as DACs. Ms. Madec noted that data relevant to consolidated DACs was included, but not counted separately. The total population of the DACs is about 1.4 million people, out of a total of 1.9 million in the funding area. Of the 333 total DACs, 303 are unincorporated and 30 incorporated. Service connections in DACs account for 70% of the funding area's 496,154 connections.

The preliminary needs assessment presents information about individual DACs, including IRWM region (or if the community is outside of any IRWM region), community population, number of service connections, wastewater treatment agency, design flow and number of recent enforcement actions in the wastewater treatment agencies, and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund funding status. Datasets informing the assessment included:

- Drinking water supply source
- Drinking water quality, including compliance and exceedances
- Consolidated systems
- Private well communities
- Wastewater treatment facilities, including enforcement actions within the last five years

Ms. Madec said that, in addition to continuing the work to complete the final assessment, the recommendations of the preliminary report are to move forward with project solicitation, considering water supply, water quality compliance, and wastewater compliance issues, particularly for those DACs that do not currently have a project or funding application in progress.

PAC members and members of the public were given an opportunity to present comments and questions. A participant asked whether the data indicate if exceedances represent only part of a year (for example, seasonal fluctuations in water quality). The consultants said that some data is shown through the graphing tool, but a separate analysis is not carried out.

A participant noted that some of the facilities are antiquated. The consultants agreed and noted that design flows and facilities with enforcement actions are identified, as well as funding status.

A participant asked whether the assessment included septic systems. The consultants said that the preliminary assessment did not yet include septic systems.

A participant said that the study was nicely done.

A participant said that it would be helpful to see how many wells had been tested in order to provide context for the numbers of exceedances in each community.

***PAC Action:*** Recommendation to accept the Preliminary Needs Assessment.

*Ms. Kopell asked for public comments regarding the recommendation; no public comments were made.*

*All PAC members were in favor.*

#### **4. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA**

Ms. Madec reviewed the draft project development guidelines, scoring criteria, and application form documents (see Appendices D-F). Project funding is \$2 million total, approximately 8-10 projects around \$250,000 each, which includes at least one from each of the seven IRWM regions plus an additional \$250,000 catch-all. Ms. Madec noted that the funding would accommodate at least one project per IRWM region.

Ms. England said that application development costs can now be reimbursed through the program. A participant asked for confirmation that an IRWM region that has a project with a high score to submit in Round One can apply to the County only for assistance with application costs. Ms. England confirmed that this is the case, due to the timing of Round One Implementation Funding. She also noted that there is a DAC-specific funding source track.

A participant asked how projects in communities that are outside the funding area will be handled. Ms. England said that such communities should be able to access project funds through an IRWM group.

A participant asked how project applications will be submitted. Ms. England said that they should be submitted through each IRWM, who will send the projects to the PAC.

The PAC discussed the possibility of allocating \$250,000 worth of projects to each IRWM region, rather than allocating one project per IRWM region.

A participant asked whether an IRWM plan has to be adopted in order to receive funding. It was noted that this is a question that needs to be addressed further.

A participant asked whether funding could come through an organization like Self-Help Enterprises. Ms. England said that a project can be identified by an organization, but the funding needs to go through an IRWM.

A participant asked whether projects that include cost-sharing should be given additional points in the scoring process. It was noted that this is not how it is currently organized and that this approach would effectively penalize those that do not include cost-sharing.

***PAC Action:*** Recommendation to accept the Project Development Guidelines and Criteria, with the below changes incorporated:

- *A guideline allocation of \$250,000 per IRWM region, rather than one project per region*
- *The PAC will review IRWM scoring of projects, rather than completing a separate scoring, with the exception of projects in the catch-all/regional category, for which the*

- *PAC will need to develop a scoring mechanism*
- *The PAC will review projects for conformity to the program's intent*

*Ms. Kopell asked for public comments regarding the recommendation; no public comments were made.*

*All PAC members were in favor.*

## **5. DISCUSS APPROACH TO SOLICIT PROJECTS**

Ms. England reviewed the three funding sources for IRWM-related projects to benefit DACs. One of the funding sources, the Project Development funding, is part of the DAC Involvement Program (DACIP) specifically. The other two sources, the first and second rounds of IRWM Project Implementation grant funding, are separate from DACIP, but are related and include requirements about the amount of funding that must be allocated to DACs (10% of Prop 1 IRWM funding).

The DACIP Project Development funding is administered through Tulare County with guidance from the PAC, and must directly benefit a DAC, economically distressed area, or underrepresented community, collectively referred to as DACs, or a Tribe. The goal of the project development funding is to develop projects for IRWM Project Implementation funding, and can be used for feasibility studies, outreach, preliminary design, environmental documents, etc. IRWMs can rank projects according to scoring criteria and Tulare County has final approving authority in allocating the funding. Project development activities may begin in 2019 and must be completed by July 2020.

Any DACIP Project Development funding that goes toward projects for Round One of the IRWM Implementation funding will be in the form of project application funds for projects that are already ready, due to the approaching Round One deadline. The remainder of the Development funds will support development of projects for Round Two of the Implementation funding.

The IRWM project implementation funding is separate from DACIP, but timing of the funding cycles and other associated activities are relevant to DACIP and the PAC. For implementation funding, projects must be coordinated through individual IRWMs and regional groups must coordinate with other groups within the IRWM funding area. Between the two rounds, at least 10% of the implementation funding must go toward DAC projects. For Round One, projects are due to the regional coordinator by April 2019; timing for Round Two funding has not yet been determined.

A participant asked how IRWM groups will be affected if the DACs in their community do not have projects ready. Ms. England said that finding projects is not likely to be a problem, as DACs face many challenges that need resolution.

***PAC Action: Recommendation of the following next steps:***

- *March 28, 2019 PAC meeting:*
  - *Submit projects that need only application cost reimbursement and are ready for Round One Implementation funding*
  - *Projects needing DAC project development funding may be submitted in March, but will not be reviewed until June*
  - *Review projects for application cost reimbursement*
- *June 13, 2019 PAC meeting:*
  - *Submit proposals for projects that need DAC project development funding*
- *We encourage sending proposals to Ms. Madec and Ms. Kopell at least one week in advance of the meeting so that PAC members may review them*
- *Provide project application form, guidelines, and scoring criteria*

*Ms. Kopell asked for public comments regarding the recommendation; no public comments were*

*made.*

*All PAC members were in favor.*

## **6. CALIFORNIA INDIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE PRESENTATION**

JoAnne Lee, from the California Indian Environmental Alliance, was scheduled to give a presentation, but was unable to attend the meeting. Ms. England provided an update on progress toward bringing a Tribal representative onto the PAC. A Tribal invitation letter was sent to Kenneth McDarment of the Tule Tribal Council, which had a meeting scheduled for January 19, 2019.

**Action Item:** CCP will follow up with Bobby Kamansky regarding a PAC Tribal representative.

## **7. NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

The next PAC meeting will be held:

March 28, 2019

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Tulare County Conference Room

2800 W. Burrel Ave.

Visalia, CA 93291

**Appendix A: Additional Attendees**

- Maria Herrera, Self-Help Enterprises
- Ilse Lopez-Narvaez, Self-Help Enterprises
- Sonia Sanchez, Self-Help Enterprises
- Jessi Snyder, Self-Help Enterprises