

**Merced Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan**

**Regional Advisory Committee Meeting #1**

**Wednesday May 23, 2012
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

***The Sam Pipes Room***

***1st floor of the Civic Center (City Hall)***

***678 W. 18th Street***

***Merced, CA 95340***

**DRAFT MEETING NOTES**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. Charles Gardiner welcomed members of the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) and interested parties to the first meeting of the Merced Region Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan RAC. All those present introduced themselves.

**Introduction to the IRWM Program**

Ms. Alyson Watson walked through a PowerPoint presentation (available on Merced Region IRWM website: [www.mercedirwmp.org](http://www.mercedirwmp.org)) summarizing the IRWM Program. Watson provided an overview of the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) objectives and funding for the program, the general process for developing an IRWM Plan, and key IRWM Plan components. Mr. Hicham ElTal provided an overview of water management planning in the Merced Region and described the IRWM-related activities that have occurred to position the Region to develop its first IRWM Plan, including completing the Region Acceptance Process with DWR to establish the Region and completing a successful planning grant application through Proposition 84, which will fund IRWM Plan development.

Watson described the IRWM Plan as an umbrella document, coalescing the local planning that has been completed to-date. She also discussed the five special studies (Climate Change, Integrated Flood Management, Water Conservation, Salt & Nutrient Management, and Groundwater Recharge) which will be completed in parallel with IRWM Plan development to enhance the technical basis of the Plan. She explained that the interim governance structure for completing the Plan will be composed of the Merced Irrigation District, City of Merced, and County of Merced acting as the Regional Water Management Group and overseeing Plan preparation. A key aspect of Plan preparation will be developing a long-term governance structure, which will take effect once the Plan is complete. That governance structure will be developed with input and participation by the RAC.

Watson explained the importance of assessing the needs of disadvantaged communities (DACs) in the Region. DWR defines DACs as census blocks with a median household income (MHI) of less than 80% of the statewide MHI. Based on preliminary data, much of the Merced Region falls into this category.

Watson reviewed the schedule for completing the Plan included in the DWR contract. She emphasized the need to complete the Plan by June of 2013, and explained that the next round of project funding is expected to begin in the fall timeframe, with applications due in March of 2013. As such, the Region needs to get through goals and objectives and prioritization by fall to be well-positioned to compete for this funding. As such, there is much work to be done over the next several months.

Questions and discussion from the RAC included the following.

* Who will be participating in and coordinating the technical studies? *Response: The technical studies are being developed by subconsultants to RMC, with scopes of work detailed in the master agreement with DWR. They will be starting next month, and there will likely be technical workgroups developed to provide input to those studies.*

**RAC**

Gardiner walked through a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the RAC (available on Merced Region IRWM website: [www.mercedirwmp.org](http://www.mercedirwmp.org)). Specifically, he walked through the draft RAC Charter, discussed the proposed RAC Roles and Responsibilities, and presented an overview of the Governing Procedures.

* Question: Will there be a good feedback loop if the three agencies do not incorporate comments?

Answer: It is the project team’s responsibility to ensure that the RAC’s comments and feedback are addressed to the greatest extent feasible.

* Question: If there are assumptions in General Plans that are not realistic and / or will negatively impact the region, can the IRWM process force changes to the General Plans?

Answer: Rather than superseding the local planning documents, the IRWM Plan uses these documents as a basis for developing a wider, regional view of water supply, demand, and quality throughout the region.

* Comment: Recreational water needs should be called out on the charter.
* Comment: Water rights will need to be addressed, and representatives should be engaged from regions such as Snelling, where there is a lot of groundwater pumping and surface water diversions.
* Question: Who is the RWMG?

Answer: Currently – during Plan development - the RWMG is the Merced Irrigation District, the City of Merced, and the County of Merced. The long-term governance structure, including make-up of the RWMG, will be developed with RAC input as part of Plan development.

* Question: Is there an official entity, such as a Joint Powers Authority, that includes the three RWMG agencies participating in the IRWMP, or are they individual?

Answer: They are participating as individual agencies. Each governing body will need to adopt the completed IRWM Plan.

* Comment: Watershed management should be added to the Charter as a focus area.
* Question: Are RAC members expected to represent their respective organizations?

Answer: To the extent possible, yes. Most importantly, RAC members are encouraged to be engaged in two-way communication with their respective organizations and constituencies, communicating what is happening in the IRWM process. If appropriate, the RAC member can invite others from his / her organization to attend meetings on topical areas of interest.

* Question: Will there be any community meetings?

Answer: Yes, in addition to the RAC meetings, which are open to the public, there will be five general public meetings held throughout the course of the project.

* Question: Who are the members versus alternates?

Answer: The project team will provide clarification on the representatives and their alternates in advance of the next meeting.

* Question: What is the role of members vs alternates?

Answer: In general, members and alternates are all invited to participate and voice concerns, etc. The goal is for this to be a consensus process, avoiding formal votes. To the extent voting needs to occur, only the member votes would be tallied.

* Question: What is the extent of the Merced IRWM Region?

Answer: The region is bounded by the Merced River and watershed (Dry Creek) to the northwest, the San Joaquin River to the southwest, the Chowchilla River to the southeast, and the Merced county line to the northeast.

**Brainstorming Objectives**

This agenda item was postponed until the next meeting due to time constraints.

**Meeting Scheduling**

The group agreed to schedule future meetings from 2 pm – 5 pm on the fourth Tuesday of every month through June 2013. Meetings will be held in the Sam Pipes Room of City Hall unless otherwise noted.

**Next Steps**

The project team will make revisions to the materials provided and distribute these revised materials and draft meeting notes from the first meeting, as well as a draft agenda and materials for the second RAC meeting. Materials will be provided one week in advance of the meeting.

**Public Comment**

* Michelle Dooley of DWR commented on the status of IRWM planning in other regions in the San Joaquin funding area.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:05 pm.

**Attendance**

**RAC Members and Alternates**

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| RAC Member  | Present | Alternate | Present |
| Johnnie Baptista |  | Brad Samuelson | X |
| Martha Conklin |  | Thomas Harmon | X |
| Kathleen M. Crookham | X | Bill Spriggs | X |
| Daniel De Wees |  | Scott Magneson | X |
| Hicham ElTal | X |  |  |
| Connie Farris | X | Irene De La Cruz |  |
| Bob Giampoli | X | Tom Roduner | X |
| Thomas Grave | X |  |  |
| Gordon Gray | X | Dena Traina | X |
| Robert Kelly | X |  |  |
| Cindy Lashbrook | X |  |  |
| Jim Marshall | X | Marjorie Kirn | X |
| Lydia Miller | X | Bill Hatch | X |
| Jean Okuye | X |  |  |
| Jose Antonio Ramirez | X |  |  |
| Terry Rolfe | X | William (Skip) George | X |
| Ron Rowe | X |  |  |
| Larry S. Thompson | X | Jerry Shannon |  |
| Kole Upton | X | Walt Adams | X |
| Paul van Warmerdam | X | Gino Pedretti, III | X |
| Michael Wegley | X |  |  |
| Bob Weimer |  |  |  |
| Jim Cunningham |  |  |  |
| Craig Smith | X |  |  |

**Project Team and Staff**

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| Team Member | Affiliation | Present |
| Ann Marie Felsinger | Merced Irrigation District | X |
| Dick Tzou | Merced Irrigation District | X |
| John Bramble | City of Merced | X |
| Stan Murdock | City of Merced | X |
| Ken Elwin | City of Merced | X |
| Vicki Jones | County of Merced – Environmental Health | X |
| Kellie Jacobs | County of Merced – Public Works | X |
| Oksana Newmen | County of Merced – Planning | X |
| Ali Taghavi | RMC Water and Environment | X |
| Alyson Watson | RMC Water and Environment | X |
| Ryan Alameda | RMC Water and Environment |  |
| Samantha Salvia | RMC Water and Environment |  |
| Leslie Dumas | RMC Water and Environment |  |
| Charles Gardiner  | CLGardiner | X |
| Garth Pecchenino | Fremming, Parson and Pecchenino | X |
| David Bean | AMEC Geomatrix, Inc. |  |
| Grant Davids | Davids Engineering |  |
| Dave Peterson | Peterson Brustad, Inc. |  |

**California Department of Water Resources**

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| DWR Representative | Affiliation | Present |
| Michelle Dooley | DWR | X |
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**Other Interested Parties**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Affiliation (if any) | Name | Affiliation (if any) |
| Larry Harris |  |  |  |
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