



Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority's MAC Plan Update

MEETING SUMMARY

Regional Participants Committee (RPC) Meeting No. 4

December 14, 2011; 1:35 pm to 4:00 pm

Amador County Administration Building, Conference Room C, Jackson California

Attendance and Introductions

RPC Members	Present	Absent	Affiliation	Alternate
Pete Bell	X		Foothill Conservancy	
Krista Clem		X	Golden Vale Subdivision	
Mike Daly		X	City of Jackson	
Tom Infusino	X		Calaveras Planning Coalition	
Jeff Gardner	X		City of Plymouth	
Tom Francis	X		East Bay Municipal Utility District	
Sarah Green		X	Alpine Watershed Group	
Donna Leatherman		X	Calaveras Public Utility District	
Gene Mancebo	X		Amador Water Agency	
Teresa McClung		X	USFS Stanislaus National Forest	
Ted Novelli	X		Amador County Board of Supervisors	
Edwin Pattison	X		Calaveras County Water District	
Rod Schuler	X		Retired Amador County PW Director	
Gary Slade	X		Trout Unlimited, Sac-Sierra chapter	
Susan Snoke		X	Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Council	
Hank Willy	X		Jackson Valley Irrigation District	
Observers	Present	Absent	Affiliation	
Jason Preece	X		Department of Water Resources	
Bob Dean	X		Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority, Calaveras County Water District	
Project Team	Present	Absent	Affiliation	
Rob Alcott	X		Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority (UMRWA)	
Karen Johnson	X		Water Resources Planning	
Alyson Watson	X		RMC Water and Environment	

Introductions and Background

The fourth meeting of the RPC for the Mokelumne/Amador/Calaveras Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (MAC IRWMP) Update was initiated by Rob Alcott at 1:30pm at the Amador County Administration Building, Conference Room C, in Jackson, California, on Wednesday, December 14, 2011.



Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority's MAC Plan Update

Alcott began the discussion by confirming that each RPC member received his or her packet. RPC members requested that the project team evaluate the feasibility of using regular mail as opposed to overnight delivery. In addition, the project team should eliminate the signature requirement such that packets will be left when RPC members are not physically available to sign.

Alcott introduced the project team and began a PowerPoint presentation outlining the purpose and agenda for RPC Meeting #4. Changes to RPC membership were reviewed (addition of Teresa McClung and Tom Infusino). Alcott discussed his actions to reach out to other potential RPC members representing PG&E, SPI, Amador Flyfishers, CSRC&D, Eldorado National Forest, BLM and OARS to which no responses had yet been received. Jeff Gardner offered to provide Alcott with contact information for the Lone Band of Miwok's community development director to solicit RPC participation. Alcott will reach out to local Native American groups to solicit their participation.

Alcott reviewed the RPC Governing Procedures Guidebook which states that if an RPC member misses two sequential meetings, the RPC may elect to remove that member from the RPC. The RPC requested that Alcott contact RPC members who have missed the last two meetings to determine if they are interested in continuing participation. If they elect to leave the RPC, they will be asked to identify an alternate representative from their organization to participate in their place.

Policies, Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

An overview of the draft Policies, Goals, and Objectives was presented; it was developed to provide guidance to the updated Plan. Policies are overarching regional commitments, goals are intended outcomes, objectives are actions to achieve goals, and performance measures are used to track progress in meeting goals and objectives.

The RPC began discussing each policy, goal, and objective. It was explained that goals and objectives will eventually be applied to projects qualitatively as a screening tool in the project review phase. Comments received during the RPC meeting included the following.

- The updated IRWM Plan should include an appendix with definitions (such as a glossary) for terms such as firm yield; this may be based on the California Water Plan glossary and/or other existing documents.
- Goals and objectives should be reviewed in conjunction with the project review process to ensure that the number of goals and objectives for different policies does not result in a review process that inadvertently gives preference to specific project types.
- Education and outreach should be considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the goals and objectives.



Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority's MAC Plan Update

- Regional cooperation, and achieving mutually beneficial outcomes, is a major goal of IRWM planning. This should be incorporated into the policies, goals, and objectives if possible. (It was discussed later under evaluation criteria.)
- Source water supply protection should be considered, possibly under Policy 2 (Improve Water Supply Reliability), or as a preamble. Source water supply protection refers to the concept that different forms of land use, land management, vegetation, etc, can affect water supply. Edwin Pattison and Bob Dean agreed to draft language to address this issue.
- It should be clearly stated in the Plan that the RPC and the agencies represented by the RPC members do not have jurisdiction / authority to achieve many of the recommended outcomes. The Performance and Monitoring section of the Plan should identify those specific agencies that will be contacted to collect data to be used to assess progress as described by the draft performance measures.
- Where possible, performance measure data should be reported in context (e.g., as a percentage rather than a number). All agreed that this will not be possible in many cases due to limitations on available information (e.g., an unknown number of abandoned mines) and quantifying values. For example, Penn Mine is one mine restoration project with a greater value than many restoration projects combined.
- Performance measure 4 under Policy 1 Goal: “Manage stormwater flows and transport of sediments and contaminants” should be expanded from the number of grazing permits requiring off-stream watering to refer more broadly to the number of programs or actions minimizing impacts from grazing.
- The objective under Policy 3 Goal: Identify opportunities for public access, open spaces, trails, and other recreational benefits” should be interpreted as not being limited to a component of a water supply or water quality project; this objective could include stand-alone environmental projects.

Quantified performance measures must be realistic to monitor. Someone will be tasked with preparing annual progress reports; the effort will likely have a small budget. Entities to contact for completing the annual monitoring will be provided in the Plan.

It was agreed an editable electronic version (in MS Word) of the draft policies, goals, objectives, and performance measures will be emailed to the RPC. Edits were requested to be provided to the project team before the next RPC meeting on February 8, 2012.

The RPC discussed the common (or mirror) chapter from the 2006 IRWM plan. The group would like to maintain a common chapter moving forward. Alcott will coordinate with Mel Lytle of the Eastern San Joaquin IRWM Region about the process for preparing updates to the common chapter.



Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority's MAC Plan Update

Alyson Watson reviewed the handout of Resource Management Strategies and Statewide Priorities. Most RMSs identified by the California Water Plan were determined to be applicable to the MAC Region, with the following exceptions: Desalination, Crop Idling for Water Transfers, Dewvaporation or Atmospheric Pressure Desalination, Fog Collection, Irrigated Land Retirement, Rainfed Agriculture, and Waterbag Transport / Storage Technology. RPC members did not disagree with the exceptions.

All Statewide Priorities identified by the Proposition 84 Guidelines were captured by the proposed policies, goals, and objectives. This is beneficial to the region because it means that the IRWM Plan will likely promote projects that align with Statewide funding priorities.

Project Solicitation Process and Schedule

Watson reviewed the proposed Project Solicitation process. In order to collect project information to be used to finalize the Project Review Process for the February RPC meeting, project information needs to be received by the end of January 2012. As such, the Project Solicitation process will occur from December 20, 2011 through January 20, 2012. Projects included in the 2006 Plan will need to be re-submitted to be included in the updated Plan. Watson will send out an updated Project Information Form on December 20 to collect the information needed to complete the review process and subsequent Plan sections.

Recognizing that this could be a difficult timeframe for some agencies, the project solicitation process will be extended, allowing additional projects to be submitted through a May 23 timeframe. The benefit of submitting projects by January 20 is that project proponents will have an opportunity to see how their project fared in the prioritization process and revise and resubmit their project to strengthen its scoring if desired. Proponents not submitting their projects by the January 20 deadline will not have the opportunity to revise and re-submit their projects to enhance scoring.

The draft Plan indicates that UMRWA, in the future and at its discretion, may hold periodic project solicitation processes and reconvene the RPC to review and prioritize submitted projects. In this way, the IRWM program may accept additional projects in advance of future funding opportunities without revising the entire Plan.

On a different note, a question was raised regarding the Collaborative Decision Process contract and if the results will be integrated into the MICUP and/or this Plan. Alcott indicated that it will be embedded in this Plan.



Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority's MAC Plan Update

Project Screening, Evaluation, and Prioritization Process

Karen Johnson reviewed the proposed project review process which was structured around a common screening, evaluation, and prioritization framework. Recommended changes from the 2006 Plan were highlighted. The initial screening process, which relies on the submitted project reflecting Plan Goals, Statewide Priorities, and RMSs was retained. For the projects that passed the screening step into the evaluation process, the 2006 Plan included a step to prioritize projects based on three specific criteria that were determined to be of greater importance than other criteria (i.e., updates antiquated water and wastewater infrastructure, generates additional regional water supply, or improves fire suppression capabilities). Johnson suggested eliminating this step as it determines a separate set of prioritized criteria and the three groupings must be maintained throughout the evaluation process.

Instead, the projects passing the screening steps would then be evaluated against a set of evaluation criteria, and a draft set of criteria was presented for discussion. Because of the lack of remaining meeting time, the evaluation criteria were discussed very briefly with the intent of going back over this topic at the next RPC meeting to allow for more time for members to review the materials. It was recommended that the evaluation process evaluate projects qualitatively, using a Low / Medium / High scoring system, against the criteria. With a clear set of criteria, projects can be configured or reconfigured to best meet the criteria, improve efficiencies, and maximize the benefits, thus ranking higher in prioritization.

The prioritization process has changed from the 2006 framework by removing the prioritization criteria based on project readiness. This is recommended since some projects of great value may take longer to implement, such as planning projects. It is recommended that projects be prioritized by being grouped into three priority tiers, with the highest tier including projects that received the most "High" rankings of the evaluation criteria (e.g., 3 plus), the middle tier including projects that received a medium number of "High" rankings (1 to 2 "Highs"), and the bottom tier including projects with no "High" rankings .

The project team agreed to distribute an editable electronic version of the draft evaluation criteria via email to allow RPC members to comment directly. Comments received during the RPC meeting included the following. These items and the whole recommended process will be discussed again at the next meeting.

- The RPC supported dropping the 2006 prioritization step which involved prioritizing projects based on their ability to update antiquated water and wastewater infrastructure, generate additional regional water supply, or improve fire suppression capabilities.



Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority's MAC Plan Update

- A recommendation was made that the evaluation criteria to address MAC Plan Update Goals be changed to address a set number of goals per policy.
- The criterion to provide multi-agency/entity benefits should be changed to reflect achieving a high benefit among the greatest number of people. The criteria should support implementing as many projects as possible.
- It was recommended that public ratepayers should support the projects which can be addressed by the economic benefit criterion.
- The technical feasibility criterion should be revised to better accommodate planning projects. Rather than being tied to a design timeline, it should correspond to knowledge / information to support the project feasibility. A suggested change was included in the editable electronic version emailed to the RPC after the meeting.

Next Steps and Adjournment

The project team will complete the following items in advance of the next meeting.

- Distribute electronic versions of the Goals and Objectives and evaluation criteria for additional comment by the RPC. The project review process will be discussed again at RPC Meeting #5 (February 8, 2012).
- Distribute via email the Project Information Form on December 20 for the first round of the project solicitation process. The projects submitted by January 20 will be run through the draft screening, evaluation, and prioritization process with the preliminary results presented for discussion at RPC Meeting #5.
- Draft and distribute this meeting summary.

The RPC is asked to complete the following items. Any comments or edits due on January 6 will be accepted any time before or at the February 8 meeting to allow for more review time.

- Provide comments on draft Chapters 3 and 4 by January 6.
- Provide comments on the draft Policies, Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures, by January 6.
- Provide comments on the draft project review process, and evaluation criteria in particular, by January 6.
- Submit projects to the IRWM Plan by January 20.

The next RPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 1:30pm.

The meeting concluded at approximately 4:00 p.m.