



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: September 5, 2013 REPORT NO: 13-073

ATTENTION: Natural Resources & Culture Committee
Agenda of September 25, 2013.

SUBJECT: Adoption of the 2013 San Diego Integrated Regional Water
Management (IRWM) Plan

REFERENCE: 1) Report Number 13-067, July 31, 2013, providing an informational
update on the status of the draft 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan

2) Resolution Number R- 304719, March 20, 2009, extending the
term and increasing the program funding of the amended MOU

3) Resolution Number R-303237, December 18, 2007, adopting the
2007 San Diego IRWM Plan

4) Resolution Number R-302766, June 29, 2007, extending the term
and increasing the program funding of the original MOU

5) Resolution Number R-300517, June 13, 2005, approving a
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of San
Diego Public Utilities Department, County of San Diego and San
Diego County Water Authority to form a Regional Water
Management Group (RWMG)

REQUESTED ACTION:

Adopt the 2013 San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan.

SUMMARY:

The 2013 IRWM Plan provides the San Diego region with an updated vision for an integrated approach to managing the region's waters (Attachment 1). The Plan builds on existing water and stormwater management plans, and as such does not represent any new planning authority. However, the 2013 IRWM Plan does establish regional preferences for grant funding associated with California's IRWM Program. The Plan and the related grant program incentivize stakeholders from diverse perspectives to work together collaboratively to design projects offering multiple benefits. Since 2005, San Diego's IRWM Program has provided a unique forum for those interested in a more holistic approach to managing and planning for water supply reliability, water quality improvements and ecosystem restoration.

BACKGROUND

In 2002, the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Planning Act (SB 1672) was chaptered into State law, establishing the basis by which the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) would administer the State's IRWM Program. Propositions 50 and 84 were approved by the voters in 2002 and 2006 respectively, authorizing a total of \$1.5 billion of grant funds statewide for IRWM planning and programs. Additionally, Proposition 1E was approved by the voters in 2006 authorizing \$300 million in grant funding for stormwater flood management projects that are identified in IRWM Plans.

In 2005, DWR published the *California Water Plan* which set forth its priorities for future water supply reliability. The main initiative identified in this plan by the State was that of integrated water management planning. Conceptually, IRWM Planning is meant to promote highly efficient water resource management by incorporating broad, multi-benefitted approaches that recognize and account for the interplay of the health and well-being of both natural ecosystems and man-made water systems. Planning for water resources from a watershed perspective is intended to promote collaboration among all beneficiaries. By building awareness of the potential benefits that integrated projects can offer, IRWM offers a platform by which to coalesce diverse interests in a united, multifaceted, and sustainable approach.

Since 2005, the Public Utilities Department (Public Utilities) has participated materially and financially in the development and implementation of the San Diego IRWM Plan and Program. Public Utilities partnered with the County of San Diego (County) and the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) to form a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG). The RWMG agencies are equal partners, sharing the costs to administer the program. The Water Authority accepted the lead role on behalf of the RWMG and maintains the contractual relationship with DWR. The RWMG has identified the San Diego IRWM planning region as the 11 hydrologic units (or major watersheds) in San Diego County that flow westward to the coastal waters.

The formation of an RWMG is required by State law in order for regions to be eligible to participate in DWR's IRWM Grant Program. To date, the San Diego IRWM Program has received \$33 million in DWR grant funding for water management related projects in the San Diego region plus an additional \$1 million to update the 2007 IRWM Plan. Another \$10 million award is currently being reviewed by DWR and a balance of \$47 million from Proposition 84 funding will be awarded in subsequent grant rounds. The City of San Diego has been awarded, or is pending award of, \$14 million of the \$43 million IRWM grant funding made available to the region to date. A list of the City's IRWM grant-funded water projects is attached (Attachment 2).

IRWM focuses on collaborative efforts to manage all aspects of water resources. IRWM crosses jurisdictional, watershed, and political boundaries; involves multiple agencies, stakeholders, individuals, and groups; and, attempts to address the issues and differing perspectives of all the entities involved through mutually beneficial solutions.

One of the unique features of the IRWM Program is that the State does not select projects for grant funding, the regions do. The grant funds made available by Propositions 50 and 84 have

been allocated equitably among regions¹. As part of DWR's grant application process, regions must demonstrate that the suite of preferred projects selected by the region for grant funding meet State and regional goals, as established in each region's IRWM Plan.

2013 IRWM Plan and Update

San Diego's 2013 IRWM Plan does not deviate greatly from the goals and objectives established in the 2007 IRWM Plan, validating the direction originally established. The 2013 IRWM Plan continues to identify the following overarching goals:

1. Improve the reliability and sustainability of regional water supplies.
2. Protect and enhance water quality.
3. Protect and enhance our watersheds and natural resources.
4. Promote and support integrated water resource management.

The draft 2013 IRWM Plan released for public review expanded on certain subjects including: sustainability and climate change; regulatory processes enhancing integrated water management; flood and stormwater management; tribal nations; disadvantaged communities; and, technical analysis. The draft 2013 IRWM Plan was released for public review on June 20, 2013, and comments were solicited through July 31, 2013.

Response to Public Comments Received

On July 31, 2013 Public Utilities staff presented an informational item to the Natural Resources & Culture Committee regarding the draft 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan effort. At the Committee meeting, a member of the public stated support for written comments submitted by the Metropolitan Wastewater Joint Powers Authority (Metro JPA). The Metro JPA had previously submitted written comments to the San Diego IRWM Program requesting an expanded discussion of wastewater reuse opportunities in the region and how it fits within the region's water management strategy in the 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan. Since the NR&C meeting, staff has worked diligently to incorporate this comment and others received during the Public Comment period in order to present a final draft IRWM Plan that satisfies all stated concerns.

On August 7, 2013, the IRWM Program's Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) met with the objective of reviewing the significant public comments received, including those of the Metro JPA. The RAC consists of 28 voting members with expertise in water supply, wastewater, recycled water, stormwater and urban runoff, natural resources, and environmental stewardship. A Metro JPA representative holds a seat on the RAC and was present at the August 7, 2013 meeting. At the meeting, the RAC considered suggestions for addressing the comments received and unanimously supported the following edits to the draft 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan to respond to Metro JPA's comments received.

In total, the draft 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan received comments from sixteen local agencies, six non-governmental organizations (NGO) and four residents. The influx of comments from

¹ Of the \$1.5 billion total grant funding for IRWM projects statewide, \$90 million is allocated to the San Diego planning region. The San Diego IRWM Program selects projects for award; however, DWR maintains final approval authority.

various sources suggests that the draft 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan has garnered the interest of many regional stakeholders and community members.

The 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan, with all public comments incorporated, is attached and is also available at www.sdirwmp.org. The 2013 IRWM Plan will be considered 'final' after City Council adoption. The Water Authority's Board of Directors and the County's Board of Supervisors will similarly be asked to formally adopt the 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan. Approval of the Plan by the governing bodies of all three RWMG agencies is required by DWR, no later than October 31, 2013, for ultimate Plan approval.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING:

Not applicable at this time.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Since 2005, the Department has pledged \$600,000 plus staff resources towards the management of the IRWM Program through 2016. This funding amount has been matched by the County and the Water Authority. To date, the Department has directly received grant awards totaling \$14 million for Public Utilities sponsored or co-sponsored projects. This action item does not include a request for consideration of a fiscal expenditure.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the three RWMG agencies was first approved by Council in 2005 (R-300517) and since has been amended twice (R-302766 and R-304719) extending the term and program funding to allow Public Utilities and other RWMG partners to continue providing program support through 2016. Total financial commitments for the management of the IRWM Program to date equal \$600,000. This amount has been matched by the County and Water Authority, as the three agencies co-manage the program as equal partners. In 2007, Council adopted the first San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (R-303237).

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

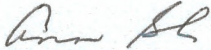
Recognizing the need for broad stakeholder involvement in IRWM Planning, the RWMG formed the Regional Advisory Committee in December 2006. The RAC meets bimonthly, and as needed, to assist with the development of the IRWM Plan and the prioritization of projects in funding applications. Additionally, the public is welcome to participate in RAC meetings and various workshops on specific topics.

Regional outreach for the 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan has been extensive, beginning with a kick-off summit on February 29, 2012, that included a keynote presentation by Mayor Sanders. Since then, 20 public workshops have occurred in addition to 20 publicly noticed workgroup meetings on key planning study issues. The RWMG secured a \$1 million grant from the State in order to have the resources sufficient to allow comprehensive outreach and involvement of the region's stakeholders over the past year and a half.

The IRWM Program maintains an electronic distribution list of more than 450 stakeholders and interested parties who receive IRWM Program updates, announcements, RAC meeting agendas and summaries, water-related workshops and seminars, and updates from DWR.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

Stakeholders in IRWM Planning include governmental and non-governmental entities that have a role in or are affected by the management of water in the San Diego Region. A list of the Regional Advisory Committee members can be found in Chapter 6 of the Plan.



Ann Sasaki
Interim Director of Public Utilities

Attachments:

1. 2013 San Diego IRWM Plan
2. List of IRWM Grant-Funded City Projects