

Southern California Water Dialog

IRWMP Meeting

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

At Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Headquarters

Presentation from Tracy Billington, DWR
and comments from John Woodling, DWR;
Shala Farahnak and Jim Maughn from SWRCB.

Presentation file attached.

Significant Points and Comments

Minimum criteria labeled in bond act and implementing language
Water supply reliability quality and desal, conservation, environmental and flood
control

50 proposals in Step 1
16 called back for step 2
5-6 will be selected

Draft funding list in November
Grant Awards December/January

Comments and Recommendations from Attendees:

San Diego:

If there are changes in the guidelines, the draft guidelines should be circulated to all those working on IRWMP's. DWR indicated that draft review will be part of any update.

Ventura:

Did DWR find there was adequate Ecosystem Restoration? DWR indicated that they do not have set objectives for the levels of project areas that are up to the regional plans. But they feel, based on the initial review that they got a good cross section of project types in the submissions.

The primary focus of the funding is water supply and quality, wastewater related projects, looking for multipurpose projects that also have significant benefits in other areas.

Others:

What worked well and what did not in Round 1

While the complete analysis is not finished several observations were made by DWR and State Board members.

1. Bit off too much to start with, running step 1 and step 2 along with planning grants for a large number of agencies was a large challenge.
2. Reducing grant amounts from \$50 to \$25 million was difficult between step 1 and step 2.
3. Standards will be higher in future rounds, this will be the key reducing the details required in each applications.
4. January 2007 is not the deadline for plan approval if you're working toward a round 2, it applies only to round 1. You may be able to have it completed as late as the application date or award.
5. True integration is not really being accomplished in many plans. Multi benefit projects with from better integrated project are needed.
6. Functional Equivalence will not likely fly in the future a plan that summarizes the benefits, goals and priorities succinctly will be needed.
7. Future efforts will likely be staged, help planning and check governance, then apply for funding.
8. Consolidations were done in areas that were not inclusive enough, the process was difficult but resulted in better plans, and guidance on regions is needed. Overlap is acceptable but not if you want to get the entire \$50 million or you do not like agencies in your region.

Participants asked if the guidelines would change in the future. Likely changes include:

1. Governance will likely be clarified in the next round.
2. If Prop 84 passes the additional strategies in the State Water Plan would be required to be incorporated as mandatory.
3. Guidelines on stakeholder participation, specifically addressing watershed groups and disadvantaged communities.
4. Process, provide guidance and let regions go, rather than dictate; provide guidance, samples, and minimum requirements

In round 1 the scores were roughly 50% plan quality and 50% project quality. In round 2 statewide benefits were considered in addition to local benefits.

Participants asked for model plans and planning workshops to help in preparation of better plans. Focus, will be on best practices and interaction processes. Many more applications were received than expected. Interregional coordination, and involvement of cities and local agencies.

A participant suggested funding be focused on low hanging fruit funding big well sponsored projects.

All applications are available on FAST system. Identify model and best practices from them

IRWMP's are likely on a different scale than watershed plans, intended to be umbrella or summary plans with likely more detailed planning in certain areas as needed. State may fund planning in certain areas to bring them up to the appropriate levels. Watershed plans are one method of such planning.

One participant asked if they can eliminate projects that are from a rogue agency and if that would hurt their scores. The State indicated that it would not hurt score but would tell them there is more work needed in that region to have a coherent plan.

A 25% match was required for planning grants, after 50% was opposed as unworkable, the match may be higher in the future.

Implementation match must be at least 10% but maximum points for 60% and higher. Proposals in step 2 range from 11% to 95% the match is on a proposal basis not a project basis so funding part of an expensive highly leveraged project helps environmental projects that do not have much match as part of a program proposal.

Discussion on what integration means. It seems to some LA participants that it could mean different things to different regions.

Regions are not likely to change from Region I to Region II participants must demonstrate appropriateness of their ideas of region.

In the future the State will likely performance a Governance check step before continuing the process for political and coordination problems there by avoiding consolidation of plans and projects at a later stage.

Several participants asked about Urban Water Management Plans. IRWMP is not likely to be standardized like UWMP, because different regions will approach it differently and the flexibility is intended to be there to support that. UWMP are regulatory and therefore standardized for water providers, not all providers are required to do them, e.g. Ag etc. There may or may not be coordination required with the UMWP's as part of application, but they should not be contradictory.

Some participants recommended that natural communities of interest will form and be formed in the process of these plans.

Some participants commented the consensus on the consolidation and governance were unnerving and that the effort would need political accountability as well as technical accountability.

Mojave indicated that they found the process of combining Ground water and other plans into a community driven integrated plan was rewarding and would continue with or without the funding availability.

Some discussion of Prop 84, its changes and the need for support ensued. Most efforts planned for after October 10 to get absentee voters and then just before the election.