

Upper Feather River IRWM Regional Water Management Group

FINAL SUMMARY MINUTES

April 27, 2018

Recordings of the meeting are available here:

Video #1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XO1bCLsASfg&feature=youtu.be>

Video #2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQv-CQFZvBs&feature=youtu.be>

Video #3: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AMH_gbms2g&feature=youtu.be

Video #4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b20lPRZqpc&feature=youtu.be>

Video #5: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBTQ5nlsdko&feature=youtu.be>

Call to Order and Roll Call

(Video #1 - 0:15)

Sherrie Thrall called the meeting to order on April 27, 2018 at 1:05 pm at the Plumas County Planning Conference Room, 555 Main Street, Quincy, California.

Members Present:

Sherrie Thrall, Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Paul Roen, Sierra County Board of Supervisors

Jeff Engle, Plumas County Board of Supervisors

Russell Reid, Feather River Resource Conservation District

Rick Roberti, Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District

Roger Diefendorf, Plumas County Community Development Commission

Trina Cunningham, Maidu Summit Consortium

Jeffrey Greening, Public Member

Joe Hoffman, Plumas National Forest (Advisory)

Members Absent:

Doug Teeter, Butte County Board of Supervisors

Jim Roberti, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District

Carol Thornton, Lassen National Forest (Advisory)

Quentin Youngblood, Tahoe National Forest (Advisory)

Staff Present:

Randy Wilson, Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Uma Hinman, Hinman & Associates Consulting

Leah Wills, Plumas County

Additions or Deletions from the Agenda

(Video #1 - 1:00)

None noted

Public Comment Opportunity

(Video #1 - 1:08)

None noted

Announcements / Reports

(Video #1 - 1:38)

Randy Wilson mentioned currently proposed legislation (AB 3045) to remove the State Water Project, including Oroville Dam, from DWR control and establish a nine member State Water Project Commission under the Natural Resources Agency to oversee the construction, operation, and maintenance of the State

Water Project. This Bill passed unanimously through the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee on April 24, 2018 and is now headed to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The purpose of the legislation is to separate the authority of operating and regulating the State Water Project facilities.

Trina Cunningham reported that the Tribal community is coordinating a Big Time in Sierra Valley on May 19th and 20th at Ross Meadows to bring together the Tribal voice of that place, which is the headwaters of the Middle Fork Feather River, and to look at cultural values to imbed in the Upper Feather River Water Plan. Trina also reported that it is the 50th anniversary of the Middle Fork Feather River being designated as a National Wild and Scenic River and there is a local effort to make a feature length film about it and the variety of uses in that area.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. RWMG

(Video #1 - 7:30)

Upon motion by Jeff Engel and seconded by Jeffrey Greening, the RWMG Meeting Minutes for January 19, 2018 were unanimously approved as presented.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Integrated Regional Water Management Coordination Updates

(Video #1 - 8:01)

a. Update on the IRWM Roundtable of Regions

Uma Hinman presented the update on the IRWM Roundtable of Regions (RoR) efforts. Uma noted that the RoR is a volunteer organization that has membership from all of the IRWM regions and has been advocating on behalf of the IRWM regions to DWR to make changes to the California Water Plan (CWP) and keep everyone informed of what DWR is doing around the State. Uma mentioned a few important updates from the list on page 11 of the agenda packet including: coordination meetings RoR held with DWR to discuss the next Prop 1 Proposal Solicitation Packet (PSP) and IRWM concerns regarding PSP development and the grant program, a RoR presentation to the California Water Commission on the success of IRWM regions, and a coordinated review of the 2018 CWP Update draft language conducted by RoR members. Randy Wilson added that he listened to the DAC call on April 24, 2018 and there is a RoR meeting scheduled in Sacramento on May 4, 2018 from 1-3 pm and it is possible to call in for this meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the benefit of a representative attending this meeting in person. Trina Cunningham mentioned that she has a phone call scheduled with Ted Baum, a DWR Grant Manager, to discuss grant funding issues for the Upper Feather River and invited others to listen in if desired. Randy mentioned that he and Trina attended a DWR Groundwater Workshop on April 23, 2018 and received a lot of information regarding Groundwater Management funding. Trina added that DWR acknowledged at the meeting that there is room for improvement in their process and they are interested in feedback from the IRWM regions. Uma mentioned that one of the things RoR has been focused on is that the California Water Plan Update and the proposed new Water Bonds do not really address the IRWM regions and so they are working on getting the word out about IRWM regions and their success stories. Randy noted that DWR’s emphasis has shifted from IRWM to Sustainable Groundwater Management. Sherrie Thrall noted that the IRWM process is such a valuable effort and it benefits the IRWM regions to demand that DWR continue the IRWM process. Discussion ensued regarding the Groundwater Workshop and the importance of having information ready about the IRWM regions to provide to the new Governor in January since things are changing.

b. Inter-regional IRWM Coordination

Uma Hinman provided an update on Inter-regional IRWM Coordination and noted that the Upper Pit River Watershed IRWM Region is in the process of soliciting for additional projects to include in their Plan for the next round of Prop 1 funding.

c. Legislative Update

Uma Hinman presented a Legislative Update and noted two bills (AB 2064 and AB 2060) that recently passed the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee hearings and that would change IRWM grant advanced payment provisions. Uma explained that these bills are related to addressing the significant delays in receiving reimbursement payments under Prop 50 funding. Discussion ensued regarding the level of momentum for these bills and the importance of addressing this issue especially for small rural districts that cannot afford tie up their limited financial resources for a year while waiting for grant reimbursement. Uma offered to draft a letter of support for these bills to the committee and local representatives. Discussion ensued regarding the Board of Supervisors potentially preparing a letter of support for AB 3045.

d. Update on James Lee School Project

Randy Wilson presented the Staff update on the Indian Jim River Resource Center (James Lee School) project. Randy noted that there is a meeting scheduled on May 11, 2018 at the school to discuss the project scope and the potential need to modify IRWM Proposal TAC-5 accordingly. Randy noted that he provided a letter of Support to the RAC to get some funding for planning. Trina Cunningham mentioned that they are going out to bid for engineering on the project and Ms. Miles is working on this with the Greenville Rancheria. Randy also mentioned that David Steindorf from American Whitewaters is getting people together on May 11, 2018 to visit Seneca related to the FERC licensing in the canyon. Randy noted that a new Draft EIR may be released by the end of the calendar year for FERC License 2105. Discussion ensued regarding the proposal to pull cold water from Lake Almanor for a cold water fishery and identifying the most technically feasible location to put-in and take-out salmon, potentially including the North Fork of the Yuba River above New Bullards Bar Reservoir. Discussion ensued regarding the potential for Native American involvement in this process. Trina asked the group for information regarding contacts for engineering on the James Lee School project. Discussion ensued regarding the need to address the potential for increased vandalism if this area becomes more visible to those driving by as a result of this project.

2. Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Project (Video #2 - 5:22)

Uma Hinman presented on the March 30, 2018 Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement (DACTI) Workshop. Uma noted that the morning session focused on Community Capacity and Needs Assessment and more clearly identifying the DACs in the region and the afternoon session focused on Water and Wastewater Needs Assessment. Uma explained that the main outcome of the afternoon session was identifying the need for additional outreach to include private water companies to get a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the water needs within the region. The UFR workshop was a pilot that will be used for each of the 10 IRWM regions within the Mountain Counties Funding Area (MCFA) and once this process is complete late spring or early summer of next year they will start drafting the Needs Assessment for the entire MCFA. Discussion ensued regarding the Community Capacity rating exercise in the morning session, the importance of building capacity in order to be successful in obtaining grant funding and managing project implementation, and the benefit to providing the questionnaire in advance of the workshop to allow more time to think about the responses and to receive broader feedback since not everyone can attend workshops. Discussion continued regarding the Upper Feather River IRWM Plan being the first Prop 1 compliant plan in the State providing a model to other regions and public agencies and the future implications of SGMA in the region.

3. Upper Feather River IRWM Support Funding (Video #2 - 18:16)

Uma Hinman presented the update from RWMG members regarding funding contributions for administrative support and coordination for the Upper Feather River IRWM Program. Uma reported that the Butte County Board of Supervisors voted to provide the funding support that was identified in the estimated funding contributions (\$3,975). Uma also noted that page 15 and 16 of the agenda packet includes a projected cost for support services expenses estimated through the end of the current contract

(June 30, 2018), including one more RWMG meeting and reviewing additional projects, and asked for direction regarding the need for support services in Fiscal Year 2018-19. Discussion ensued regarding the scope of future support services and associated costs, future ability of RWMG members to provide funding contributions, the approach for putting forward an application for the next funding round, and the possibility of getting administrative support funds through the grant process. The RWMG directed staff to add this item to the agenda for further discussion at the next meeting.

4. IRWM Plan Implementation Project Proposals (Video #3 - 4:34)

Uma Hinman noted that a total of eight applications were submitted to be considered for inclusion in the Upper Feather River IRWM Plan as implementation projects and staff was informed that two applications will be submitted for the next round of consideration. Uma also noted that this is an open solicitation and the application is available on the website. Uma briefly presented the following eight proposed IRWM Plan Implementation Projects.

- a. Berry Creek Forest Health and Watershed Protection Project, Butte County Fire Safe Council.
- b. Concow Forest Health and Watershed Protection Project, Butte County Fire Safe Council.
- c. Feather Falls Forest Health and Watershed Protection Project, Butte County Fire Safe Council.
- d. Forbestown Ridge Forest Health and Watershed Protection Project, Sacramento River Watershed Program and 34 North.
- e. Community Water Tank Inspection, Indian Valley Community Services District.
- f. Crescent Mills Raw Water Iron and Manganese Treatment Project, Indian Valley Community Services District.
- g. Wolf Creek Sewer Crossing Replacement Project, Indian Valley Community Services District.
- h. District-Wide Leak Survey and Pipeline Replacement/Repair, Sierra Water Works District #1 - Calpine.

Jeffrey Greening noted that most of the lands involved are brush country which is why the costs are so high. Trina Cunningham commented that it would be helpful to see how these areas relate to fire history over the last ten years, if there is a fire map already available. Discussion ensued regarding these being high vegetation growth areas and the importance of protecting evacuation routes.

Chris Gallagher from the Indian Valley Community Services District provided more details regarding the Wolf Creek Sewer Crossing Replacement Project which is proposed to replace a sewer line that crossed Wolf Creek and was destroyed during the flooding in early 2017 with a foot bridge and attached new sewer line to prevent future similar issues. Chris provided more details regarding the Crescent Mills Raw Water Iron and Manganese Treatment Project which is proposed to remove these minerals at the source instead of the treatment area in order to remove more of the mineral content and improve water quality. Chris clarified that the distance between the source and the treatment is approximately 300 yards and the type of water source. Chris more details regarding the Community Water Tank Inspection project including the water storage capacity of the water tanks.

Paul Rose from Sierra Water Works District #1 – Calpine Community provided more details regarding the District-Wide Leak Survey and Pipeline Replacement/Repair project including the age and length of the pipelines. Approximately 2-3 miles of pipeline would be inspected and lengths identified for replacement.

Uma presented the review factors used for considering these proposals and clarified that these applications went through a more simplified review process than the projects included in the 2016 Upper Feather River IRWM Plan. Discussion ensued regarding the status of Forbestown not being a DAC, whether the review factors not yet considered for these proposals, including Tribal integration and Climate Change/greenhouse gas emissions analysis, need to be addressed. The RWMG recognized the importance of equal treatment and equal assistance provided to project sponsors in capacity building for their

projects. The RWMG directed staff to work with project sponsors in preparation for the June meeting to provide additional information in order to assist staff in more fully evaluating these (and any newly submitted) proposals consistent with the proposals in the 2016 Upper Feather River IRWM Plan and to improve the competitive nature of these proposals for future grant applications.

5. Grant Opportunities

(Video #4 - 19:49)

Uma Hinman presented the update on Department of Water Resources' next round of Prop 1 funding and summary of current grant and loan opportunities and technical assistance opportunities. Uma clarified that all sponsors of the 2016 Upper Feather River IRWM Plan receive email notification of these grant opportunities. Discussion ensued regarding the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) \$10 million in Proposition 1 funding to provide technical assistance to DACs to develop, fund, and implement Prop 1-eligible drinking water, wastewater, storm water (limited), or groundwater capital projects. Discussion continued regarding the methods for performing leak detection studies. Uma noted that Lynn Campbell and Christine Hoffman with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy are offering to support project sponsors in finding funding to complete CEQA work in order to be ready for the next round of Proposition 1 funding. Uma also noted that page 77 of the agenda packet includes the Proposal Solicitation Process and Schedule for the next round of the DWR Prop 1 IRWM funding for implementation projects.

6. Next Steps

(Video #5 - 3:07)

Next meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2018 at 1pm at the Plumas County Planning Conference Room, 555 Main Street, Quincy, California.

Rick Roberti asked what message he should give to his District Board at their next meeting regarding the delay in finding funding for IRWM Plan Implementation Project Proposals. Uma Hinman mentioned the benefits of being included in the Upper Feather River IRWM Plan to enhance grant eligibility for various funding opportunities. Roger Diefendorf noted that if there are specific grant opportunities identified, his office could possibly assist with grant development and management, provided administrative fees could be recovered through the grant. Discussion continued regarding urban investment in headwaters communities, using State funding for Federal projects, and the priority of watershed restoration and forest management projects versus projects to purchase conservation easements. Sierra Nevada Conservancy is a good local resource with an office in the Plumas County Planning building.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 pm.