

# Upper Feather River IRWM Regional Water Management Group

## **FINAL SUMMARY MINUTES**

January 19, 2018

*Approved by RWMG April 27, 2018*

Recordings of the meeting are available here:

Video #1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmlwW6PzHrY&feature=youtu.be>

Video #2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pn5XDVG62nk&feature=youtu.be>

Video #3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAq-10M1yPU&feature=youtu.be>

Video #4: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXg\\_lxYI4EI&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXg_lxYI4EI&feature=youtu.be)

Video #5: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKNskRkz5jE&feature=youtu.be>

Video #6: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icKkPFootQo&feature=youtu.be>

Video #7: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGC5IcYMU3M&feature=youtu.be>

Video #8: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hg-ajweeWaU&feature=youtu.be>

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

**(Video#1 0:30)**

Sherrie Thrall called the meeting to order on January 19, 2018 at 1:03 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

Jeff Engle, Plumas County Board of Supervisors

Russell Reid, Feather River Resource Conservation District

Roger Diefendorf, Plumas County Community Development Commission

Trina Cunningham, Maidu Summit Consortium

Jim Roberti, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District

Nancy Francine, Plumas National Forest (Advisory) (for Joe Hoffman)

Doug Teeter, Butte County Board of Supervisors

Jeffrey Greening, Public Member

### Members Absent:

Paul Roen, Sierra County Board of Supervisors

Rick Roberti, Sierra Valley Resource Conservation 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

### **Additions or Deletions from the Agenda**

**(Video#1 1:15)**

None noted

### **Public Comment Opportunity**

**(Video#1-1:21)**

None noted

**Announcements / Reports**

**(Video#1-1:50)**

Trina Cunningham expressed the success of the Uplands Water Gathering, co-sponsored by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, at Genesee Valley Ranch. The purpose of the gathering was to collaborate on ways to create an urban bridge between headwater communities and urban areas. A number of additional efforts are continuing from that but Trina has been working on a state-wide Tribal forum that addresses the inequities that tribes have in interacting with local, state, and Federal governments involving water and environmental issues. Currently, boundaries for this project begin at the Oregon border south to the Kern River. They are looking at ways to tie this into the disadvantage community outreach process.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. RWMG Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 19, 2016**

**(Video#1-6:17)**

Upon motion by Trina Cunningham and seconded by Roger Diefendorf, the RWMG Meeting Minutes for October 13, 2017 were unanimously approved as presented.

**ACTION AGENDA**

**1. Integrated Regional Water Management Regional Coordination**

**(Video#1-6:46)**

Uma Hinman stated we received notice the Upper Pit River Watershed has finished their update to the 2016 IRWM standards. Their IRWM Plan has been adopted and is currently under review by the DWR. They are in the process of initiating a solicitation for additional projects. The Upper Feather River RWMG received a notice and an invitation to be involved in that process.

The DWR has been present at the last two Roundtable of Regions (RoR) meetings. The meeting held on October 16, 2017 encouraged the DWR to continue to support the IRWM program. On December 7, 2017, the RoR met with DWR to go over some portions of the California Water Plan Update. A summary of that meeting will be sent out to the RWMG. Promoting the IRWM program is on the agenda for the next meeting. DWR staff discussed the IRWM atlas, which is a web-based program that summarizes the makeup of IRWM's throughout the state and highlights their challenges and successes in those regions. It has been restarted after funding issues to help inform the California Water Plan 2023 Update process. The IRWM Atlas is still in the design process and will use the information gathered in 2014 from the IRWM regions and dig further into the IRWM projects that have already been completed. Once that is completed, they will send it out to the IRWM Regions for feedback.

The IRWM surveys sent out last year show that only 43% of the IRWM regions have secure funding over the next two to three years. DWR, again, was urged to continue to provide technical assistance to the IRWM regions and to also coordinate the IRWM and the SGMA programs. The goal of the RoR meetings is to gain a stronger leadership role in an effort to keep the IRWM program going.

Sherrie Thrall agreed that a stronger leadership role is needed and followed by asking what steps they are looking at taking to accomplish that goal. Uma added they are an all-volunteer group and have not, at this point, figured out what that leadership role will encompass. The next meeting is supposed to address that question.

Upon further discussion, Russell Reid questioned whether or not DWR was sitting on any funds that could possibly go towards IRWMs. Although no one could respond with a firm answer, Randy Wilson added that the focus has been turned over to sustainable groundwater management in California and is what DWR

has been focusing on, which is more SGMA than IRWM. Sherrie questioned why they separate watersheds and groundwater. Groundwater is essentially part of watershed management.

## **2. Sacramento River Watershed Data Portola**

**(Video#1-17:00)**

Uma Hinman introduced Holly Jorgensen with the Sacramento River Watershed Program. Holly reviewed some of the items that were discussed in her phone conference at the October 2017 RWMG meeting before introducing Amy Osty with 34 North, the software developer for the IRWM Atlas. Their purpose today is to gage interest and gain feedback about the portal. Holly proceeded to demonstrate how the portal works, factors that can be filtered for information gathering, and special features the portal offers. Amy created a project for the group and demonstrated the ways in which the portal can be used by the UFR IRWM.

Holly added after the presentation was completed, the portal is in phase one and its purpose is to provide one location from which to access data. The Sacramento River Watershed Program will be meeting next month with the State Water Resource Control Board to discuss phase two, what that will look like, as well as the priority data sets and information that should be pulled in and made available.

## **3. Disadvantaged Community Involvement Mapping Project**

**(Video#4- 1:24)**

Lauren Miller and Lauren Burton from the Sierra Institute shared updates from the Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement (DACTI) Program which included a demonstration of the draft map of DAC communities in the UFR. The purpose of the mapping exercise is to identify DACs based on social characteristics for the nine participating IRWMs. Major components of this project are outreach, engagement, community capacity/needs assessment, which will include technical assistant workshops and tools to enable these communities to address water related needs.

Lauren Burton gave the RWMG a demonstration of the mapping exercise and how they decided to form block groups to identify communities. Using the block groups as the basis for the mapping exercise, Lauren sent out instructions to planners, longtime residents of the communities, and specialists to the region to pick and/or merge block groups and created a map based on their feedback. They are going to make numerous versions, which will be brought to a meeting for general consensus. Along with this, the determining factors of block groups will include more than just household income. It will consider seasonal residents, second homes, percentage of home owners, education levels, and other socio-economic factors. This will be brought to community capacity assessment workshops where they are looking for two to three people who are experts in each of these communities. These experts will speak on the capacity of those communities to form the first layer of mapping. The second layer will be comprised of block group data consisting of five socio-economic factors.

Randy Wilson asked Lauren Miller to explain their definition of capacity. The way they are looking at capacity is with five different forms of capital:

- 1) Physical Capital – includes physical aspects such as infrastructures
- 2) Social Capital – includes capabilities and willingness of the community to collaborate
- 3) Financial Capital – includes available funding to take on new projects within the community
- 4) Human Capital – includes skills, education, experience, and capabilities of the residents to maintain projects in the long run
- 5) Cultural Capital - includes the traditions, beliefs, and customs of the organization/group have to facilitate their existence

Once the mapping exercise is completed, the Sierra Institute will facilitate the community capacity workshops with each of the IRWMs and at that time will reach out for experts to speak on each form of

capital for the different communities. Sherrie Thrall added a comment and suggested that they need to be specific on who they pick as their experts.

The group had questions regarding the boundaries of the block groups and shared concern for the size of some them. Lauren Miller explained that if changes were to be made, specifically to smaller block groups, diversity would be lost.

The next steps will be outreach to the regions that are not represented in the mapping exercise, continuing to work with the maps, and hold community capacity workshops. Sherrie Thrall asked about the capacity for the long run. A continuing issue the county has faced is getting the funding but not the personnel to maintain the project. Prop 1 allows funding for technical support so with that and more collaboration with the experts, the goal is to determine how to answer the longevity of project and to build capacity.

#### **4. Upper Feather River IRWM Support Funding (Video#5 – 18:40)**

Following up on the conversation from the October 13, 2017 RWMG meeting regarding financial contributions from the three different counties, Sherrie Thrall reminded the group that everyone was in agreement with dividing it by geographical area. Uma Hinman started by sharing how the Northern Sacramento Valley IRWM, which consists of 6 counties, funds staff. They use a staffing contribution system from each of their counties with no specific amounts or requirements: they do not have outside consultants. Sherrie Thrall added that although she very much liked the idea, for our particular IRWM, that plan would not work. This year, Plumas County will be paying \$25,000 towards Hinman & Associates Consulting, but that does not include the work of the staff.

Doug Teeter mentioned that Butte County had already stated that although they may be able to contribute a small amount this fiscal year, they will not be able to contribute anything next year. Doug Teeter suggested that we reach out to Sierra Nevada Conservancy about SB5 and Merrill bonds to discuss how they support IRWMs and additional funding. Doug also asked if his county was able to put money this year, would that money be rolled over to next fiscal year for their support. Sherrie believes it can be done but will confirm with the county auditor.

#### **5. Updating the Plan's Implementation Project List (Video# 6 – 15:40)**

Since the solicitation for implementation projects in early 2015, numerous entities have inquired about adding projects to the UFR IRWM Plan. DWR is planning to release the draft project solicitation package, PSP, in the next few months. However, they are behind due to staffing changes and the PSP deadline is expected to be pushed back to early 2019, which will allow time for another regional solicitation round to accept more projects into the Plan. Uma also shared that the Northern Sacramento Valley IRWM Board continuously accepts applications for updates to their adopted project lists. Project proposal applications can be submitted any time and are reviewed by the technical advisory committee each month. From there, the committee recommends them to the board quarterly and the board considers them for inclusion on the project list. The board does not have much involvement in grant application preparation after that point. Uma noted that DWR is trying to create more coordination of the projects because of the limited funding. Also, staff from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board reviewed our agenda packet and encouraged including multi-benefit water quality projects when possible, noting they will score higher as grant applications.

The RWMG requested staff look into simplifying the project application forms for the next solicitation process. Uma provided a draft application form based on the form Upper Pit River IRWM utilizes. She added a few things to make it more specific to our area such as the objectives. Uma requested feedback on the form as well as a discussion on whether or not to leave the solicitation open, allow submittals at

any time with staff doing the initial vetting and bringing them forward to the management group at the quarterly meetings.

Jeff Greening asked her opinion on the application form from her experience. Randy Wilson commented that it is a more simplified version. Uma added that it is less explicit on the objectives as well as the budget. This new form would be used for new projects and current project updates especially if they could tie in water quality components to their projects. Roger Diefendorf shared he and Russell Reid identified some NRCS money that might fit into some of the projects. It is a nation-wide conservation innovation agricultural grant. One of the issues that was discussed was there was not enough project detail to submit a grant application within the given timeframe. Sherrie Thrall added the reason we asked for so much detail last solicitation was for the project proponents to realize the difficulty and true realities of applying for grants and that the application would be further along towards an actual grant application. Russell added that the RWMG is all in agreement to bring on more projects but doing so creates more funding burdens for an extended amount of time. Roger suggested that if we cannot be successful in the long term with obtaining funding for administrative help, it may not be worth the trouble. Randy stated that the goal of the solicitation is not to get a grant per se, but rather to be included in the IRWM Plan so as to be eligible for grant funding opportunities.

Sherrie asked Uma how she would like to accept project application forms since she will be the one vetting them beforehand. Uma stated she would favor keeping the solicitation open. This would allow her to work with project sponsors to review, address questions and fill in missing information, and bring the projects that are ready to the quarterly RWMG meetings. Russell added by leaving the application process open, it would enable us to control the process better in light of available support funding. At the point support funding becomes low, we have the ability to stop accepting applications. Trina Cunningham asked how this would change working with tribal communities. Uma stated that there will be no change.

Upon motion by Jeff Engel and seconded by Doug Teeter, the RWMG will allow additional project proposals for the 2016 IRWM Plan, received on the draft application form proposed, and subject to availability of support funds were unanimously approved.

**6. Grant Opportunities (Video#7 – 16:55)**

Uma Hinman provided a list of grant opportunities. She pointed out a few grants offered through CalFire and a reminder that round two PSP for Prop 1 for IRWMs will be available in the next few months. She offered additional information on any of the grants mentioned in the agenda packet to anyone interested via email. Roger Diefendorf has identified a few municipal projects that may be eligible for grants. They are currently waiting on follow up information. Gold Mountain CSD mentioned that they have the capacity for grant writing but need assistance with locating grant opportunities. Nancy Francine added the Plumas County Fire Safe Council are in the process of getting two more Prop 1 grants.

**7. Next Steps (Video#7 – 21:50)**

Next meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2018 at 1pm at the Plumas County Planning Conference Room, 555 Main Street, Quincy, California.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 pm.

**Attendees:**

Susan Coffi, Westwood Community Services District  
Melissa Burger, Hinman & Associates Consulting  
Tiana Bradley, Gold Mountain Community Services District  
Frank Motzkus, Chester Public Utilities District  
Rich McLaughlin, Gold Mountain Community Services District  
Evan Hasse, Plumas County  
Nancy Francine, Plumas National Forest  
Gia Martynn, Plumas Corporation  
Lauren Miller, Sierra Institute  
Lauren Burton, Sierra Institute  
Holly Jorgensen, Sacramento River Water Program