

# Upper Feather River IRWM Regional Water Management Group

## FINAL SUMMARY MINUTES

March 28, 2025

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Paul Roen called the meeting to order on March 29, 2024 at 1:10 pm at the Plumas County Planning Conference Room, 555 Main Street, Quincy, California.

#### Members Present:

Paul Roen, Chair, Sierra County Board of Supervisors  
Trina Cunningham, Vice Chair, Maidu Summit Consortium  
Dwight Ceresola, Plumas County Board of Supervisors  
Russell Reid, Feather River Resource Conservation District  
Rick Roberti, Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District  
Doug Teeter, Butte County Board of Supervisors  
Roger Diefendorf, Plumas County Community Development Commission

#### Members Absent:

Einen Grandi, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District  
Rob Thorman, Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District  
Kurt Sable, Plumas National Forest (Advisory)  
Rachel Hutchinson, Tahoe National Forest (Advisory)  
Russel Nickerson, Lassen National Forest (Advisory)

#### Staff Present:

Tracey Ferguson, Plumas County Planning Director  
Uma Hinman, Hinman and Associates Consulting, Inc.

### ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

None.

Upon motion by Doug Teeter and second by Roger Diefendorf, the agenda was unanimously approved as presented.
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### PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Trina Cunningham commented that she is the staff contact for the [Feather River Redbud Resource Group](#), a Tribal group in the Oroville area, and will be participating in the [Feather River Advocacy Project](#).

### ANNOUNCEMENTS / REPORTS

#### 1. Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District Groundwater Sustainability Plan Grant Updates

Tracey Ferguson provided a brief update on the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District's grant awards of nearly \$7.5 million to implement the Sierra Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The funding includes three grants: DWR SGMA Implementation Round 2 (\$5,445,000), Plumas Watershed Forum (\$1,220,000), and CDFW Restoration Grant Programs: Nature Based Solutions (\$809,076).

The Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) must demonstrate sustainability by 2042, and DWR requires check-ins every five years. The next update of the SVGMP is due in 2027.

- Include project budget/scope, updates and outcomes on the demonstration and pilot projects with the RWVG quarterly reports.

2. Plumas Watershed Forum Grand Funded Project

The Taylorsville Mill Race Farmer’s Dam Spillway Resurfacing and Renovation Project was awarded \$520,000 of Monterey Settlement funds. The project is an implementation project identified in the 2016 UFR IRWM Plan. The project sponsor is in the process of creating a public benefit corporation to meet eligibility requirements for the funding contract. The Requests for Proposals to conduct the work are ready to distribute.

3. Grant Close-Out February 13, 2025 – Proposition 1 Round 1 and Round 2 IRWM Implementation Grant and 2021 Urban and Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Grant Program (JMBDRP) Project

The Upper Feather River Water Resiliency Project consisted of Grant Administration (Plumas County; \$98,061), Project 1 Alternative Water Source Development (Sierraville Public Utilities District, \$1,132,660), and Project 2 North Main Water Use Efficiency, Reliability and Extension Project (Indian Valley Community Services District, \$440,512). All projects were completed within the grant schedule, the final project and grant completion reports and invoices were submitted, and we received the grant close-out report on February 13, 2025.

4. Coordination with Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) for IRWM Plan Implementation Possible Project Funding Source

Staff is conducting outreach to RCAC to start discussing potential funding connections and will provide a report to the RWVG at the next meeting.

5. Post-Wildfire Recovery and Water Quality Testing Information

Trina Cunningham requested information about fish die-off due to nutrient loading in the waterways resulting from burn scar erosion; is there data available? Staff will research.

6. Roundtable of Regions Updates

Staff provided an update on the quarterly Roundtable of Regions meetings and activities. The Roundtable of Regions is continuing to develop a Transition Plan, which will be shared with member regions in mid to late spring. The Roundtable is also recruiting several Steering Committee members.

- RWVG directed staff to submit Uma Hinman for consideration as a member.
- Uma to send Kamie Loeser, Butte County, the Steering Committee information.

7. Plumas County Flood Control & Conservation District

The Plumas County Board of Supervisors approved a contract between the District and the Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District for the sale of 2,025 acre-feet of carryover water. Any future sales will require additional approvals.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Regional Water Management Group Business**

1. RWVG Meeting Summary for the regular meeting held on March 29, 2024.
2. Support Services financial report.

Upon motion by Russell Reid and second by Doug Teeter, the Consent Calendar was unanimously approved as presented.

## **ACTION AGENDA**

### **1. REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP ADMINISTRATION**

#### a. Memorandum of Understanding

Upon request from the RWMG, staff provided a copy of the 2014 UFR Integrated RWMG Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The RWMG briefly discussed the MOU and agreed to update the MOU to bring it current would be beneficial.

Upon motion by Dwight Ceresola and second by Russell Reid, staff was directed to propose changes to the MOU to bring it current; recommended revisions will be distributed to RWMG members and the draft scheduled for consideration at the next general meeting.

- Staff will review the MOU, recommend changes, and distribute to RWMG members for review. The draft changes to the MOU will be included in the next agenda.

#### b. Confirm Membership and Representation

##### *Almanor Basin Representative*

A public member was originally included on the RWMG to ensure representation from the Almanor Basin area, which was underrepresented at the time. The MOU states that the public member will be an individual from the Almanor Basin appointed by the County Supervisor representing District 3, and ratified by the RWMG. The seat has been vacant since 2019. Paul Roen suggested Tracy Holt and agreed to contact her to ascertain interest.

- Chair Roen will contact Tracy Holt to ascertain interest.
- Staff will coordinate with Plumas County Supervisor Tom McGowan to identify a public member before the next RWMG meeting.

##### *Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District*

Due to multiple absences of the assigned representative, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District will be asked to make a new assignment.

- Tracey Ferguson will contact the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District regarding assignment of a new representative.

##### *Lassen County*

There is no current representation from Lassen County. The previous contact has been replaced by a new Lassen County District 1 Supervisor (Mike Scanlan); outreach should be conducted to ascertain interest in participation in the UFR IRWM Program.

- Uma Hinman will contact the new District 1 Supervisor Mike Scanlan and invite participation in the UFR IRWM Program.

##### *Plumas County Community Development Commission*

Roger Diefendorf announced his retirement effective July 2025 and introduced Cindy Ramsey who will be replacing him.

- Update the representative for the Plumas County Community Development Commission.

#### c. Support Services for Fiscal Year 2025-26

The Support Services contract is managed by Plumas County and is funded by contributions from the four main counties in the Upper Feather River Region (Plumas, Sierra, Butte, and Lassen). County contributions are calculated based on percentage of each county's geographic area included in the Region. The work

scope for the contract includes administrative tasks for the RWVG, grant research, information sharing with region stakeholders, Plan implementation activities, and tasks related to representing the RWVG to the IRWM Roundtable of Regions and the State. The Support Services contract has been with Hinman & Associates Consulting since completion of the Upper Feather River IRWM Plan.

Doug Teeter noted that the Prop 4 funding seems to be heavily weighted towards disadvantaged communities and infrastructure, and there is no municipal service providers located in the Butte County overlap area within the UFR Region. To continue to receive Butte County funding for the support services it will be helpful to express benefits of partnership.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UPPER FEATHER RIVER IRWM STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP**

Staff provided a summary of the Strategic Planning Working Group meetings held on September 23, 2024, and October 28, 2024. The RWVG agreed with the following recommendations of the Working Group:

- a) Solicit new projects in the region, focusing on those consistent with state priorities and funding sources.
- b) Focus on supporting disadvantaged communities and small municipal service providers.
- c) Update the UFR IRWM Plan implementation project list with current contacts and assist with focusing the project scope and descriptions to meet new state priorities.
- d) Collaborate with agency stakeholders/partners in the region and support ongoing projects, as appropriate.
- e) Identify potential funding solutions to support needs not otherwise being addressed (Prop 4, USDA rural grant development program, Blue Forest).

Discussion encouraged bundling projects for more regional approach and to make sure the UFR IRWM remains relevant for Butte and Lassen counties.

Blue Forest is a non-profit conservation finance organization that is currently working on a forest resilience project in the UFR with Sierra Institute and Metropolitan Water District (MWD) and hopes to do more in the region.

- Staff directed to implement the recommendations above.

## **3. WATERSHED SOLUTIONS NETWORK ENGAGEMENT**

Debbie Franco, Watershed Solutions Network (WSN), provided an overview of the WSN efforts since the March 25, 2024 initial gathering in the UFR region. The goal is to connect funding from end users with projects in the headwaters.

Debbie provided an overview of Blue Forest and the work they are doing in the region. Blue Forest is hosting a site visit on June 10-11 related to the Forest Resilience Bond being implemented by Plumas National Forest and Sierra Institute. Additionally, she suggested the RWVG host a meeting with Blue Forest in May 2025, prior to the June 2025 meeting, to introduce the RWVG as the appropriate regional group to conduct outreach and coordination through.

Trina Cunningham expressed the importance of conducting meaningful outreach and engagement with local Tribes rather than relying on outside Tribal liaisons.

Debbie suggested the RWVG connect with participants during the June 2025 site visit and discuss developing integrated projects with benefits downstream to seek funding through Blue Forest, which provides up to \$250,000 that can be used as leverage for large scale projects.

Blue Forest and MWD's focus are on forest health. The RWMG could advocate for infrastructure improvements but will need to demonstrate nexus.

- Schedule a two-day meet-n-greet in May 2025 with RWMG, Blue Forest, Watershed Network Solutions, and MWD. The first evening an informal gathering/dinner, the second day an RWMG meeting.
- Participate in the June 10-11, 2025 Forest Resilience Bond site visit with Plumas National Forest, Sierra Institute, Blue Forest, and MWD.

#### **4. UPPER FEATHER RIVER IRWM PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

The IRWM Plan's implementation and reporting component (Plan Chapter 11) specifies annual implementation reports be provided to the RWMG. The *Upper Feather Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Performance Annual Report 2024* is the third Plan performance report. Upon acceptance the report will be uploaded to the website.

Upon motion by Dwight Ceresola and second by Doug Teeter, the RWMG unanimously accepted the *Upper Feather Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Performance Annual Report 2024* for filing and posting on the website.

#### **5. FUTURE ITEMS**

RWMG members identified the following future agenda items:

- Engagement with the Watershed Solutions Network
- RWMG engagement with the counties; develop a protocol for RWMG review of projects seeking grant funding
- Review the UFR RWMG Memorandum of Understanding
- Presentations by USDA and the RCAC on funding opportunities for the remaining implementation projects
- Identify regional projects and funding opportunities to implement

The RWMG will hold biannual meetings; the next will be scheduled in fall 2025.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

#### Other Attendees:

Cindy Ramsey, Plumas County Community Development Commission  
Debbie Franco, Watershed Solutions Network