

# Upper Feather River IRWM Regional Water Management Group

## FINAL SUMMARY MINUTES

October 9, 2025

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Paul Roen called the meeting to order on October 9, 2025 at 9:00 am at the Mineral Building, Plumas County Fairgrounds, 204 Fairgrounds Road, 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  
Rob Thorman, Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District  
Russell Reid, Feather River Resource Conservation District  
Rick Roberti, Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District  
Matt Kilmurray, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District  
Cindy Ramsey, Plumas County Community Development Commission  
Leigh Johnson, Plumas National Forest (Advisory)  
Rachel Hutchinson, Tahoe National Forest (Advisory) @9:24am

### Members Absent:

Doug Teeter, Butte County Board of Supervisors  
Russel Nickerson, Lassen National Forest (Advisory)

### Staff Present:

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

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

Add for discussion a "Letter of Notice from Local Stakeholders in the Feather River Watershed" dated October 1, 2025, on behalf of Indian Creek Decree Water Rights Holders & Agricultural Producers in Plumas and Sierra Counties considered by the Indian Valley Community Services District (IVCSD) Board at the Board meeting of October 6, 2025, under Announcements/Reports, Item 8.

Upon motion by Dwight Ceresola and second by Rick Roberti, the agenda was unanimously approved with the noted addition.

### PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

None

### ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

1. Welcome and introduce incoming RWMG members.

Staff announced new representatives to the RWMG: Matt Kilmurray, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District, and Cindy Ramsey, Plumas County Community Development Commission.

2. Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District Groundwater Sustainability Plan Grant Updates:

Tracey Ferguson provided a brief update on the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District's Upper Feather River IRWM Program

(SVGMD) grant awards of nearly \$7.5 million to implement the Sierra Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The funding consists of three grants:

- California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation Round 2 Grant (\$5,445,000).
- Plumas Watershed Forum Funding (\$1,220,000) Synergistic Sierra Valley Groundwater Recharge and Irrigation Efficiency Project.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Restoration Grant Programs: Nature Based Solutions – [Wildlife corridors/ Wetlands and Mountain Meadows] (\$809,076).

3. Plumas Watershed Forum Grant Funded Project Update:

Tracey Ferguson provided an update on the Taylorsville Mill Race Farmers' Dam (Spillway) Resurfacing and Renovation Project (\$520,000) project. The execution of the grant agreement with the Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District occurred on October 7, 2025, which allows the project scope of work to now move forward after some delay.

4. Feather River Stewardship Coalition. *Zach Browning, Sierra Institute for Community and Environment.*

Michael Hall reported that Zach Browning, on behalf of the FRSC, is coordinating a database and mapping of all forest projects in the watershed. Both products will be available on the FRSC website when ready.

5. Implementation of the Recommendations of the UFR IRWM Strategic Planning Working Group:

Jamie Little, Interim Manager for IVCS, advocated for keeping burned communities at the forefront of disaster recovery and funding efforts, noting the Greenville residents continue to pay water and sewer rates for burned lots. The conundrum is the ability of the IVCS to operate depends on property owners continuing to pay their rates, whether or not their residence or business burned.

Paul Roen and Trina Cunningham noted that the RWMG supports communities recovering from disasters and directed staff to add it to the Strategic Planning list (below).

- Solicit new projects in the region, focusing on those consistent with state priorities and funding sources.
- Focus on supporting disadvantaged communities and small municipal service providers.
- 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.
- Collaborate with agency stakeholders/partners in the region and support ongoing projects, as appropriate.
- Identify potential funding solutions to support needs not otherwise being addressed (Prop 4, USDA rural grant development program, RCAC, Blue Forest).
- Support post-wildfire community disaster recovery.

6. Feather River Watershed Working Group.

In addition to the request for information related to fish die-off due to nutrient loading in the waterways resulting from 2021 Dixie Fire wildfire erosional effects, Trina Cunningham requested information about whirling disease, which is showing up in the Yellow Creek drainage. A 2016 UC Davis study tied whirling disease to sediment and temperature conditions.

7. Forest Resilience Bonds – Blue Forest.

Amber Moore, Blue Forest, participated by Zoom and provided a brief summary and PowerPoint by way of an update on Blue Forest activities in the region and adjacent regions.

Blue Forest has several Forest Resilience Bonds (FRB) in the Tahoe, Plumas and Lassen Forests. Local partners include Sierra Institute for Community and Environment, Yuba Water Agency, and the South Yuba River Citizens League.

- a. Yuba Aspen and Meadow I FRB, South Yuba River Citizens League: The forestry project is being implemented in the Packer and Haskell Lake region, near Bowman Lake in Nevada County.
- b. North Feather I FRB, Plumas National Forest (PNF), North Fork Forest Recovery Project: Sierra Institute is a partner for this project that is being implemented in the Taylorsville area. DWR is providing in-kind monitoring and is anticipating state funding for additional project support.
- c. Plumas Community Protection I FRB, Blue Forest: The proposed project is located on PNF lands in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas around Plumas County.
- d. Butte Fire Safe Council FRB, Blue Forest: The Butte County Fire Safe Council has proposed the project in the Paradise, Forest Ranch and Oroville areas of Butte County.
- e. Upper Butte Creek FRB, Blue Forest: Lassen National Forest, Butte Fire Safe Council and the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) are partners on the proposed treatment of 20,000 acres of Dixie Fire burn scar in the Upper Butte Creek watershed.
- f. Yuba II FRB, Blue Forest: In partnership with Yuba Water Agency to treat 8,000 acres of forestland in the Yuba River watershed.

Trina Cunningham expressed interest in the methodologies used for the FRB projects and requested expanded project descriptions and partnerships.

Dan Kearns expressed concern that the restoration efforts might result in monoculture of pines, with no oak tree replacement occurring.

8. Indian Valley Community Services District.

Dan Kearns, IVCS Board Member, stated the Board received a letter dated October 1, 2025, entitled Letter of Notice from Local Stakeholders in the Feather River Watershed from Heather Kingdon and signatory, Brian Kingdon, representing the Indian Creek Decree Water Rights Holders & Agricultural Producers in Plumas and Sierra Counties, requesting the IVCS Board consider also being a signatory with attachments including the 1950 Indian Creek Decree, Pluma County Resolution No. 11-7685, and the Plumas Sun Article “Forest Resilience Bond Finances Restoration Activities” in which the letter requests increased transparency and distribution of information concerning watershed planning and issues that may affect water rights. Kearns explained the IVCS Board on October 6, 2025, chose to table the item without taking action.

Paul Roen directed staff to increase distribution of information to stakeholders, noting that Sierra County empowers the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District to weigh in and report on measures and legislation that affects Sierra County.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A) REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP BUSINESS**

1. Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) Meeting Summary for the regular meeting held on March 28, 2025.

2. RWVG Meeting Summary for the special meeting held on May 29, 2025.
3. Support Services Financial Report (July 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025).

Upon motion by Dwight Ceresola and second by Rick Roberti, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

## **ACTION AGENDA**

### **1. UPPER FEATHER/LOS ANGELES WATERSHED FRAMEWORK TEST-DRIVE UPDATE**

- a. October 8-9, 2025 meetings. The purpose of the October 8-9 meetings coordinated by Watershed Solutions Network (WSN) is to identify projects with synergies with the intent to package projects for greater impact and interest from large investors.

Joan Clayburgh, with WSN, announced that the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) is conducting its annual tour of the State Water Project in early November 2025, which typically begins at Lake Oroville. However, this year the MWD Board members and member agencies will be starting their tour in Sierra Valley on November 11, 2025 and touring the Calpine fuels reduction and meadow restoration project before heading down to Lake Oroville on the 12<sup>th</sup>. WSN is coordinating with the MWD on logistics and to host a lunch gathering in the region.

- b. January 22-23, 2026 Southern California Site Visit. The MWD has invited a limited number of members of the Upper Feather River RWVG and watershed leaders to visit and tour Southern California water facilities and conservation efforts as an exchange of information and understanding. Attendees to the Southern California Site Visit anticipated for late January 2026 will be Paul Roen, Trina Cunningham, Rick Roberti, Tracey Ferguson, and Uma Hinman.

Paul Roen recommended the tour group generate a list of questions and bring them back to the UFR stakeholders after the site visit.

Trina Cunningham urged transparency and local participation and involvement throughout the process. She noted that millions are being spent to train foresters and fire technicians to do what local timber experts already know. The local forest industry has long-suffered and the forest resilience work is an opportunity to rebuild the local economy, using local experts and work force, which will benefit every layer of capacity and community health in the watershed. She stressed the importance of work force development and municipal infrastructure improvements.

Rachel Hutchinson noted that industry contractors and non-profit partners are working to integrate the workforce. Further, while the NEPA scoping requirements have been reduced under the new NEPA requirements, the Tahoe National Forest is continuing to integrate a public input process into project development and implementation.

A number of attendees noted the importance of local participation and control of land and water management decisions and projects – place-based management that is community driven.

John Sheehan noted that the National Forests are going through a lot of change at the administration level – NEPA requirements have lessened, decreased staffing has led to more outsourcing and partnerships with NGOs, etc. – the USFS needs help to implement landscape scale projects. He also noted that the MWD’s focus on water quality improvement rather than quantity is highly beneficial to the UFR Watershed.

Greg Hinds expressed that the lack of capacity in the region is a concern, noting that the IRWM Program should be expanded to incorporate all needs and needed more frequent and robust gatherings to make real progress on implementation.

## 2. REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP ADMINISTRATION

### a. Working Draft Revisions to the RWMG Memorandum of Understanding.

Staff directed to schedule the draft revisions to the RWMG Memorandum of Understanding for consideration at the next meeting.

### b. Membership and Representation

i. The Almanor Basin Public Member vacancy was briefly discussed, and whether to expand the geographic area of representation. Potential changes to the membership will be considered with the MOU at the next meeting.

ii. Staff was directed to outreach to Lassen County to ascertain interest in representation on the RWMG Board.

### c. Proposition 1 Post Performance Reports

i. Alternative Water Source Development Project; Sierraville Public Utility District (PUD). The second Post-Project Monitoring Plan is due to DWR by the end of the year (2025). Staff will coordinate with Sierraville PUD to submit the second of three required annual PMPs.

ii. North Main Water Use Efficiency, Reliability, and Extension Project; Indian Valley Community Services District (IVCSD). The first PMP for the IVCSD project is required by the end of the year (2025). Staff will coordinate with IVCSD to submit the first of three required annual PMPs.

## 3. UPPER FEATHER RIVER IRWM PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

### a. IRWM Plan Implementation Project List.

Staff was directed to continue updating the current project list and to identify projects with synergies so as to package projects to pursue larger funding opportunities.

### b. IRWM Implementation Project Application (2018 Form)

Staff was directed to continue revising the 2018 form to meet current California Water Plan strategies and Proposition 4 guidelines, which have not yet been released.

## 4. ROUNDTABLE OF REGIONS REPORT

### c. Roundtable of Regions Steering Committee Update.

Staff reported that the Roundtable of Regions has been in transition and that the Steering Committee vacancy appears to have been filled. Further, contractors, such as Hinman and Associates Consulting, Inc., are not eligible to be members of the Steering Committee.

### d. Roundtable of Regions Letter to DWR: Recommendations for Proposition 4 Funding

Staff reported that the Upper Feather River Region's comments developed and submitted by Tracey Ferguson and Uma Hinman were voted on by the Roundtable's general membership and included in the Letter to DWR. Recommendations included were 1) the addition of wastewater facilities to infrastructure needs, and 2) Tribal monitoring activities as an eligible reimbursement for pre-construction and post-construction monitoring costs.

### e. Adopted IRWM Transition Plan: A Proposal for Regional Leaders and Policy Makers.

Staff reported that the Roundtable's IRWM Transition Plan was approved by the general membership and adopted by the Steering Committee.

f. Proposition 4 Update.

DWR shared with the Roundtable’s general membership that the roll-out of Proposition 4 is taking a different route than recent Propositions, which requires a different process for development of guidelines and grant proposal solicitations. It will likely be spring 2026 before these necessary initial components are public.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Other Attendees:

Joan Clayburgh, Watershed Solutions Network  
Keli Ward, Plumas County Disaster Recovery Coordinator  
Dan Kearns, Indian Valley Community Services District  
Greg Hinds, Hinds Engineering  
Michael Hall, Feather River Resource Conservation District  
Kane Russell, University California Cooperative Extension  
John Sheehan, Feather River College  
Jamie Little, IVCSA Interim Manager (via Zoom)  
Susan Doran, Indian Valley Community Services District (via Zoom)  
Jim Huntman, Butte County Fire Safe Council (via Zoom)  
Paul Rose, Rose Water Engineering (via Zoom)  
Amber Moore, Blue Forest (via Zoom)  
Kim Quesnel Seip, Blue Forest (via Zoom)