

DRAFT

**Minutes of the
Feather River Regional Water Management Group
December 3, 2009**

A meeting of the Feather River Regional Water Management Group was held on December 3, 2009, at the Quincy Library. The meeting was attended by:

Tim Beals, Sierra County
Burkhard Bohm, Plumas Geo-Hydrology
Bill Copren, Sierra Valley Mutual Water Company
Emily Creely, Sierra Institute for Community and Environment
Mike Filippini, Sierra Valley Mutual Water Company
Dave Goicochea, Sierra County Board of Supervisors
John Hafen, Trout Unlimited
Brian Hermo, Greenville Rancheria
Joe Hoffman, Plumas National Forest
Ian Kanair, Mountain Meadows Conservancy
Dan Martynn, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Gia Martynn, Feather River Coordinated Resource Management
Brian Morris, Plumas County Flood Control & Water Conservation District
Frank Motzkus, Plumas Eureka CSD and Grizzly Lake Resort Improvement District
Cindy Noble, Sierra County Fire Safe & Watershed Council and Trout Unlimited
Russell Reid, Upper Feather River Watershed Group
Gary Romano, Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District
Terri Rust, Feather River Resource Conservation District
John Sheehan, Plumas Corporation
Jim Wilcox, Feather River Coordinated Resource Management
Leah Wills, Plumas County Flood Control & Water Conservation District
Andrew Winberry, Sierra County

I. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. and a quorum was declared to be present. Upon a motion made by Russell Reid, seconded by Jim Wilcox, and unanimously carried, the minutes from the meeting of April 23, 2009, were approved as presented.

II. Update on Region Acceptance Process and Prop. 84

Brian Morris reported that the Department of Water Resources had issued the final determinations for the Region Acceptance Process and that the boundaries and organization of the Feather River Regional Water Management Group had received State approval. Regional approval establishes eligibility for Prop. 84 funding under the Integrated Regional Water Management Program. Draft grant guidelines are expected to be released by the Department of Water Resources before the end of the year, and grant application will probably be due sometime in the middle of 2010.

III. Acceptance of New Members

Brian Morris reported that membership in the newly-configured regional water management group had been formalized with an initial cutoff of June 1 to meet the deadline to submit materials to the State for the Region Acceptance Process. After June 1, three additional entities had approved membership in the group: Sierra County; the Sierra Valley Mutual Water Company; and the Feather River Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Brian Morris explained that after execution of the original MOU, the addition of new members to the group required the approval of the existing members or the Steering Committee. Russell Reid asked about the mechanism for member organizations to designate their official representatives to the group. Brian Morris responded that the signature page for the MOU included a place to name the organization's representative. Supervisor Goicochea stated that he had been designated as the representative of Sierra County. Bill Copren stated that he had been designated as the representative for the Sierra Valley Mutual Water Company. Cindy Noble stated that she had been designated as the representative for Trout Unlimited. Upon a motion made by Dan Martynn, seconded by Jim Wilcox, and unanimously carried, membership in the regional water management group was approved for Sierra County, the Sierra Valley Mutual Water Company, and the Feather River Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

IV. Prop. 84 Project Criteria and Development of New Projects

The group reviewed the provisions of the IRWM Planning Act and Prop. 84 addressing requirements and priorities that the Department of Water Resources would apply in evaluating new grant applications, a copy of which is attached as **Exhibit A**. Brian Morris distributed a sample project evaluation form used by the Plumas Watershed Forum and a description of the Resource Advisory Committee structure that was used to prioritize projects under the Title II program. Bill Copren suggested looking at the process used by the Tahoe-Sierra IRWMP to solicit and evaluate projects. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the group that the first effort should focus on the collaborative development of a group of projects that would address regional priorities and be competitive in the state grant process, rather than simply soliciting project proposals and using some process for scoring and ranking them.

Anyone with an interest in a new project should contact Brian Morris to work on developing a concept proposal.

V. Update of 2005 IRWM Plan and Relation to Other Plans

The original IRWM plan for the Upper Feather River region was developed in 2005, and an update of the plan is necessary to meet new statutory requirements for future grant funding. Plumas County is in the process of updating its General Plan, and it is likely that the update will include a separate water element. One of the IRWM requirements gives priority to projects that are shown to be consistent with a county general plan, and it is important to coordinate the update of the IRWM plan with the new Plumas County general plan so that both plans are consistent and reinforcing. Work on the IRWM update should begin once the Department of Water Resources releases the new program guidelines.

VI. Organization and Function of Steering Committee and Workgroups

Brian Morris reviewed the structure of the Steering Committee and workgroups under the regional MOU. The Steering Committee consists of eight members:

- 1 – Appointed by agreement of the County Members
(representing local government and disadvantaged communities)
- 2 – Appointed by agreement of the County Members
(representing local government and disadvantaged communities)
- 3 – Appointed by agreement of the Feather River Resource Conservation District and the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District
(representing watershed issues and private landowner interests)
- 4 – Appointed by agreement of the municipal water and wastewater members
(representing municipal services and disadvantaged communities)
- 5 – Appointed by the Maidu Summit Consortium
(representing tribes and Native American interests)
- 6 – Appointed by agreement of the Upper Feather River Watershed Group, Plumas-Sierra Cattlemens Association, and Plumas-Sierra County Farm Bureau
(representing production agriculture)
- 7 – Appointed by the Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group
(representing watershed group)
- 8 – Appointed by the agreement of all non-agency parties to this MOU that are not otherwise represented on the Steering Committee

Brian Morris stated that the goal of the workgroup structure was to be as efficient as possible by formally recognizing ongoing organizations and promoting coordination through the IRWM process. Rather than create new, redundant bodies, the objective is to increase participation in existing forums or organizations if that is needed to ensure regional representation:

- (a) Community Watershed Education & Outreach: The Community Watershed Workgroup shall address issues including public education, public affairs, public relations, private landowner education and financial assistance, and community involvement and opportunities for volunteer participation in watershed activities. (Coordination between the education component of the Feather River CRM, the RCDs, ABWAC, and education groups)
- (b) Floodplain & Meadow Management: The Floodplain and Meadow Workgroup shall address stream and meadow restoration projects as well as coordination with County general plans to manage floodplains and recharge areas. (Feather River CRM)
- (c) Irrigated Lands: The Irrigated Lands Workgroup shall address matters related to the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, including coordinating any required water quality monitoring with other monitoring programs; identifying and assisting in the implementation of best management practices; and providing assistance to private landowners with irrigated lands. (Upper Feather River Watershed Group)

- (d) Municipal Services: The Municipal Services Workgroup shall address municipal water and wastewater services and groundwater management, including supply and demand management, water use efficiency, and coordination of the provision of municipal services with County general plans. (Plumas County Special Districts Association)
- (e) Project Prioritization: As project proposals are advanced by other workgroups, the Project Prioritization Workgroup shall consider project prioritization across the Upper Feather River IRWM Program.
- (f) Science & Monitoring: The Science & Monitoring Workgroup shall serve as a venue to share information and research and identify and prioritize information and research needs in the region.
- (g) Uplands & Forest Management: The Uplands & Forest Management Workgroup shall address issues and projects related to the interconnection between upland and forest management and water supply and water quality. (Quincy Library Group and Sierra and Plumas County Fire Safe Councils)

EXHIBIT A

IRWM Project Development and Prioritization

In ranking IRWM grant applications, the Department of Water Resources is required to give preference to “regional projects or programs,” meaning projects or programs identified in an IRWM plan that accomplish any of the following:

- a. Reduce water demand through agricultural and urban water use efficiency.
- b. Increase water supplies for any beneficial use through the use of any of the following, or other, means:
 1. Groundwater storage and conjunctive water management.
 2. Desalination.
 3. Precipitation enhancement.
 4. Water recycling.
 5. Regional and local surface storage.
 6. Water-use efficiency.
 7. Stormwater management.
- c. Improve operational efficiency and water supply reliability, including conveyance facilities, system reoperation, and water transfers.
- d. Improve water quality, including drinking water treatment and distribution, groundwater and aquifer remediation, matching water quality to water use, wastewater treatment, water pollution prevention, and management of urban and agricultural runoff.
- e. Improve resource stewardship, including agricultural lands stewardship, ecosystem restoration, flood plain management, recharge area protection, urban land use management, groundwater management, water-dependent recreation, fishery restoration, including fish passage improvement, and watershed management.
- f. Improve flood management through structural and nonstructural means, or by any other means.

Under Prop. 84, projects must provide multiple benefits, including one or more of the following:

1. Water supply reliability, water conservation and water use efficiency.
2. Storm water capture, storage, clean-up, treatment, and management.
3. Removal of invasive non-native species, the creation and enhancement of wetlands, and the acquisition, protection, and restoration of open space and watershed lands.
4. Non-point source pollution reduction, management and monitoring.
5. Groundwater recharge and management projects.
6. Contaminant and salt removal through reclamation, desalting, and other treatment technologies and conveyance of reclaimed water for distribution to users.
7. Water banking, exchange, reclamation and improvement of water quality.
8. Planning and implementation of multipurpose flood management programs.
9. Watershed protection and management.
10. Drinking water treatment and distribution.
11. Ecosystem and fisheries restoration and protection.

Under Prop. 84, the Department of Water Resources must give preference to:

1. Proposals that effectively integrate water management programs and projects within a hydrologic region identified in the California Water Plan; the Regional Water Quality Control Board region or subdivision or other region or sub-region specifically identified by the department.
2. Proposals that effectively integrate water management with land use planning.
3. Proposals that effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions.
4. Proposals that contribute to the attainment of one or more of the objectives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.
5. Proposals that address statewide priorities.
6. Proposals that address critical water supply or water quality needs for disadvantaged communities within the region.

IRWM Plan Requirements

Water Code § 10540(c) - All IRWM plans must address:

1. Protection and improvement of water supply reliability, including identification of feasible agricultural and urban water use efficiency strategies.
2. Identification and consideration of the drinking water quality of communities within the area of the plan.
3. Protection and improvement of water quality within the area of the plan, consistent with the relevant basin plan.
4. Identification of any significant threats to groundwater resources from overdrafting.
5. Protection, restoration, and improvement of stewardship of aquatic, riparian, and watershed resources within the region.
6. Protection of groundwater resources from contamination.
7. Identification and consideration of the water-related needs of disadvantaged communities in the area within the boundaries of the plan.

Water Code 10541(e) - Grant guidelines shall require IRWM plans to address:

1. Consideration of all of the resource management strategies identified in the California Water Plan, as updated by department Bulletin No. 160-2005 and future updates. (**see next page**)
2. Consideration of objectives in the appropriate basin plan or plans and strategies to meet applicable water quality standards.
3. Description of the major water-related objectives and conflicts within a region.
4. Measurable regional objectives and criteria for developing regional project priorities.
5. An integrated, collaborative, multibenefit approach to selection and design of projects and programs.
6. Identification and consideration of the water-related needs of disadvantaged communities in the area within the boundaries of the plan.
7. Performance measures and monitoring to demonstrate progress toward meeting regional objectives.
8. A plan for implementation and financing of identified projects and programs.
9. Consideration of greenhouse gas emissions of identified programs and projects.
10. Evaluation of the adaptability to climate change of water management systems in the region.
11. Documentation of data and technical analyses used in the development of the plan.
12. A process to disseminate data and information related to the development and implementation of the plan.
13. A process to coordinate water management projects and activities of participating local agencies and local stakeholders to avoid conflicts and take advantage of efficiencies.
14. Any other matters identified by the Department of Water Resources.

California Water Plan - Resource Management Strategies
Bulletin 160-2009

A full description of each strategy is available at:

<http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/cwpu2009/index.cfm>

1. Reduce Water Demand
 - a. Agricultural Water Use Efficiency
 - b. Urban Water Use Efficiency
2. Improve Operational Efficiency and Transfers
 - a. Conveyance – Delta
 - b. Conveyance -- Regional / Local
 - c. System Reoperation
 - d. Water Transfers
3. Increase Water Supply
 - a. Conjunctive Management & Groundwater
 - b. Desalination
 - c. Precipitation Enhancement
 - d. Recycled Municipal Water
 - e. Surface Storage – CALFED
 - f. Surface Storage – Regional / Local
4. Improve Water Quality
 - a. Drinking Water Treatment and Distribution
 - b. Groundwater Remediation / Aquifer Remediation
 - c. Matching Water Quality to Use
 - d. Pollution Prevention
 - e. Salt and Salinity Management
 - f. Urban Runoff Management
5. Practice Resources Stewardship
 - a. Agricultural Lands Stewardship
 - b. Economic Incentives (Loans, Grants, and Water Pricing)
 - c. Ecosystem Restoration
 - d. Forest Management
 - e. Land Use Planning and Management
 - f. Recharge Area Protection
 - g. Water-Dependent Recreation
 - h. Watershed Management
6. Improve Flood Management
 - a. Flood Risk Management
7. Other Strategies
 - a. Crop Idling for Water Transfers
 - b. Dewvaporation or Atmospheric Pressure Desalination
 - c. Fog Collection
 - d. Irrigated Land Retirement
 - e. Rainfed Agriculture
 - f. Waterbag Transport/Storage Technology