

# Coachella Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Program Planning Group

Wednesday May 19, 2010  
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board  
73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

## DRAFT NOTES

### Attendees:

#### Planning Group

Doug Wylie, Colorado River RWQCB  
Robert Perdue, Colorado River RWQCB  
Lynda Kerney, Riverside County  
Bob Lyman, Riverside County  
Mike Gialdini, Riverside County  
Mike Shelter, Riverside County  
Yvonne Parks, City of Desert Hot Springs

#### CVRWVG

Arden Wallum, MSWD  
Marilyn McKay, MSWD  
Mark Krause, DWA  
Katie Ruark, DWA  
David Tate, DWA  
Dan Parks, CVWD  
Patti Reyes, CVWD  
Paul Giera, IWA  
Andrea Riesgo, IWA  
Tom West, RMC  
Roselyn Stewart, RMC  
Daniel Cozad, IPM

### Meeting Objectives:

- A. Create a common understanding/expectations of the Coachella Valley IRWM program, including schedule, key milestones, and stakeholder involvement.
- B. Obtain feedback on regional water resource issues to make sure issues are covered and articulated appropriately.
- C. Confirm involvement in and commitment to future meetings and to providing input to IRWM Plan development. Confirm key points of contact. Identify other potentially important participants.
- D. Share/capture other relevant thoughts and ideas for future discussion.

### Meeting Notes:

#### Introduction to IRWM Program

Tom West, RMC Water and Environment, provided an overview of the State's IRWM program and its goals/objectives, upcoming Prop 84 funding opportunities, and the activities considered relevant to IRWM planning. He provided an overview of the CVRWVG and the Coachella Valley

IRWM region. Finally, he reviewed the proposed work plan and schedule for development of the Coachella Valley IRWM Plan.

- IRWM is a primary mechanism for communication of water-related needs to the State Department of Water Resources, regulators, etc.
- County recommends discussion with other 3 IRWM efforts in the Colorado River Funding Area to limit competition and allocate Prop 84 funding (\$36M)
  - Mojave IRWM Plan has been adopted. They straddle the Lahontan and Colorado River Funding Areas and could potentially apply for funding from both.
- Is there a need to develop governance with stakeholders or form an advisory committee? Can this Planning Group serve to advise Plan development?

## **Issues Identification**

Rosalyn Stewart, RMC Water and Environment, provided an overview of the water-related issues identified to date through a review of local water management plans and studies. She invited additional feedback and clarification on the issues.

### Regional Demands

- How are population projections coordinated by water purveyors?
  - Some agencies question the SCAG projections for 3 million by 2020. Much of new growth in Riverside County is expected to occur in Coachella Valley.
  - 100,000 roofs over the next 10-15 years (brand new projections via Compass process) – driven by affordable housing component
- DWR looks for planning coordination with land use agencies.

### Water Quality

- Concern in Lower Valley regarding heavy metals (arsenic) in groundwater. Affordable housing (in particular mobile housing) uses this groundwater supply; some residents buy bottled water.
  - Riverside County Environmental Health and EPA (tribal lands) are both monitoring.
  - Size of system is key to management (<14 regulated by County vs. 15-200 both State and County vs. >200 regulated by State).
  - CDPH focuses on drinking water. RWQCB focuses on surface and groundwater.
  - 50 PPM and above in Torres/Martinez reservation. System treatment cost is high. Resources are significantly limited.
  - Arsenic MCL was recently decreased to 6 PPM – created a sudden groundwater quality issue.
- Organizations addressing water quality – DACE (Desert Alliance for Community Empowerment), USDA Rural Development Office, CDPH grants, Torres/Martinez Tribes with RCAC, Pueblo Unido
- Fluoride and other contaminants are also of concern.
- Salinity issues associated with regenerative water softeners and recharge activities.
- Bacteria TMDL is being developed for the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel (sources = illegal discharges from housing/recreation). Agencies responsible for management measures include CVWD, RCFCWCD, and cities.

- High uranium concentrations in MSWD service area.
- Septic systems create water quality issues related to health and safety.
- Need for municipal drainage system when agricultural uses transition to urban development (drains are only ag-based.)
  - This issue is addressed through the NPDES MS4 program for developments.
  - Drainage system is key for maintaining salt balance in the region. Need drainage improvements within the unincorporated areas.

### Water Supply

- Groundwater availability, source substitution, and water conservation are issues
- Irrigators are anticipating the Mid-Valley Pipeline because of declines in groundwater levels and associated pumping costs.
- Because of geology in Valley, West Valley subbasins may continue to appear in overdraft when the rest of Valley conditions appear to be getting better.
  - Mecca area is returning to artesian conditions (due to changes at fish farm) and well hydrographs are returning to mid-80s levels.
- Lower Valley faces greater subsidence risk/condition. Subsidence risk must be balanced with liquefaction due to earthquakes.
- Suggestion to capture additional surface runoff for recharge. Collaborate w/RCFCWCD to develop stormwater capture facilities.
- Have not looked into identifying recycled water systems “zones” to cost-effectively use recycled water supplies (strategic partnerships among agencies)
  - Opportunity to exchange supply based on location of treatment facilities and customers (i.e., golf courses).
  - Recycled water energy costs are similar to potable water treatment.
  - Localized recycled water treatment plants can be developed for big irrigators both within and outside Districts.
  - Challenge in East Valley related to recycled water = no customers.
  - While agriculture could be a demand, there are big concerns about perception of using recycled water on food crops.
- Matching Quality to Use – Should place emphasis on source substitution for non-potable uses (e.g. Mid-Valley Pipeline)
  - Golf courses, parks, schools, agriculture can all use non-potable supply

### Flooding

- Flood managers may not get as much interaction with land use planning agencies to ensure provision of facilities in development review.
- Whitewater River Stormwater Channel needs levee stabilization.
- Flooding issues in Thousand Palms. USACE is proposing system of levees to go east into the Rio del Sol to Warner.
  - East of Washington is key area of concern.

- Current lack of flood control in East Valley prevents higher density development and associated water demands. Affordable housing demands may drive flood control.
- Need planning for East Valley flooding – South Valley Implementation Plan was begun but abandoned.
- MSHCP requirements and alluvial flooding issues making development very difficult for the City of Desert Hot Springs.
- Mission Springs area is in need of a flood master plan. A County Master Drainage Plan (MDP) or Area Drainage Plan (ADP) not being done for the Coachella Valley.
- Hwy 111 between Palm Springs and Cathedral City (Eagle Canyon) also experience flooding.
  - Flooding across the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel closes Palm Springs roadways (Vista Chino-Gene Autry and others).

### Regional Priorities

- Priorities to be addressed in IRWM Plan → Water Supply
  - Coachella Valley economy is driven by: 1) recreation/resorts, 2) agriculture, and 3) construction/development – All of which need water supply
  - Emphasis on development and ease of complying with WSAs + UWMPs.
- Prioritization should distinguish between urgent and important. Highest priority is the need to provide and protect water supplies.
- Suggestion to combine multiple projects together for greater benefits. Create regional programs for supply/quality reliability.
  - May be good approach for: A) septic conversion or B) arsenic remediation.
- Climate change – Not a key issue, but needs to be addressed per DWR’s IRWM Plan Standards.
- Salt/Nutrient Management may be incorporated as part of the Planning Grant.

### **Stakeholder Outreach**

Tom West provided a summary of the proposed stakeholder and public outreach strategy, including several more meetings of this Planning Group to guide development of the IRWM Plan. He also described the Disadvantaged Communities Outreach Demonstration Project proposal that the CVRWMG has submitted to DWR for additional funding.

- Agricultural interests should be involved – Farm Bureau or others