

Coachella Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Program West Valley Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Outreach

Wednesday, March 16, 2011
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Carl May Community Center
11711 West Drive
Desert Hot Springs

DRAFT NOTES

Italics denote action items.

Attendees:

DAC Issues Group

Jeff Hays, Desert Alliance for
Community Empowerment (DACE)
and SWRCB
John Rodriguez, Inland
Congregations United for Change
(ICUC)
Jennifer Wong, DWR

CVRWVG

Curtis Aaron, CWA
Dan Parks, CVWD
John Soulliere, MSWD
Katie Ruark, DWA
Marilyn McKay, MSWD

Mark Krause, DWA
Patti Reyes, CVWD
Paul Toor, CWA
Sara Toyoda, IWA
Roselyn Prickett, RMC

Meeting Objectives:

- A. Keep participants up-to-date on the Coachella Valley IRWM program.
- B. Review Planning and Implementation Grant submissions and DAC Outreach Contract status.
- C. Identify and understand DAC needs and potential projects in the West Valley.
- D. Plan West Valley outreach and coordination, by season.

Agenda:

Welcome and Introductions

Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment, welcomed and introduced everyone. She gave an overview of the Coachella Valley IRWM Program, and passed out an informational handout to stakeholders. She described the current IRWM effort to date, including an overview of the Planning Grant (which was awarded by DWR in February), the adopted IRWM Plan, and the Implementation Grant Application that was sent to DWR in January. She also discussed CVRWVG resources such as the website and online project list.

Participant noted that water purveyors need to reach out to DAC stakeholders regarding water supply projects for low income housing associated with the 2010 Urban Water Management Plan Updates.

West Valley Community and Representation

Water purveyors have water supply fees; they cannot provide infrastructure for free. In the West Valley, mobile home parks (MHPs) have transitioned from having a tourist base to semi-permanent residents who are mostly seniors with inadequate water and wastewater facilities.

Participant asked how the State funding situation and special election affects this program? It does not affect the IRWM Program directly, because IRWM funding is provided by bond sales, not the General Fund. However, the State budget situation may delay grant payments to local agencies.

Participant asked if there is any consideration of a trunk system (water/wastewater) for East Valley new/recent growth? No, the region intends to focus on addressing existing deficiencies, not serving new growth. In addition, these projects are very large and expensive.

Participant asked how are we going to leverage funding in between grant cycles to address critical water/wastewater issues? Through collaboration with other “regions” in the Colorado River Funding Area to ensure funding certainty (reduce competition), and by addressing replacement affordable housing in MHPs in the East Valley.

Agencies are trying to reverse engineer the land use-water relationship: how do we decide where to extend infrastructure? In the East Valley, MHPs are not hooked up by owners and they are now degrading. The issue, however, is that those residents are unwilling to move due to other social factors. Participant suggested lobbying DWR to add a program preference for provision of infrastructure for affordable housing units.

Participant suggested that there is a high cost associated with flood control in East Valley areas. Also, in the West Valley (Desert Hot Springs and Thousand Palms) they are having trouble selecting affordable housing sites due to liquefaction and flood zones (alluvial fan flooding). This is an issue from Mission Lakes to I-10 as well.

Participant noted that most social service organizations in the West Valley are addressing food/shelter issues, not water/wastewater or housing. Riverside County Environmental Health Department and the EDA (identify cited projects) need to talk with the County about housing approvals: that is where these issues (flooding-related) stem from. They need to be better at enforcing as well, and need input of folks that are affected.

Participant noted the transient populations associated with farmworker populations (3-6 months from November to July) in the East Valley. These populations have different issues than the tourist population in spa communities with hot water pools. Many East Valley residents are also low-income “snow birds.”

Next Steps

Rosalyn Prickett suggested combining the East Valley and West Valley DAC outreach meetings in the future; the group agreed. The CVRWGM will convene another DAC outreach meeting once DWR has authorized the DAC Outreach Program to begin.