

# 2012 REGIONAL LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE HIGHLIGHTS

## DWR DIVISION OF INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

In October and November 2012, the Division of Integrated Regional Water Management, California Department of Water Resources, hosted a series of four Regional Leadership Exchanges across the state. The goal of the exchanges was to provide opportunities for members of diverse Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) groups to explore and enhance their capacity for collaborative leadership, and to support peer-to-peer networking among these leaders. In the afternoon sessions, participants discussed the key transitions that they faced in their individual groups, the key needs that multiple groups in a larger area or “waterhood” had in common, and the roles they could play as collaborative leaders to help their individual groups and waterhoods manage change and strengthen their networks. This document summarizes the highlights from the afternoon discussions at each Regional Leadership Exchange, and was prepared by the Center for Collaborative Policy, CSU Sacramento.



\*NOTE: Concepts herein were captured/articulated by Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) participants, not DWR.

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# Individual IRWM Transitions and Collaborative Leadership

## Northern Region

- A. What are the major transitions that you anticipate for your IRWM in the next two to five years?
- Planning to project implementation
  - Funding (transition from grant funding to long-term sustainable funding)
  - Governance (as stakeholders change over time)
  - Leadership (as board and staff turn-over or move on)
  - Stakeholders (as stakeholder fatigue sets in or priorities change)
  - Climate change
  - Impact to private land
- B. How can collaborative leaders help their groups through these transitions?
- Prepare planning processes that assess and adjust to change.
  - Inform IRWM members and leadership of likely transitions and the processes to address them.
  - Develop and update charter to memorialize agreements, decision-making protocols, membership requirements and expectations.
  - Determine what assurances are needed by stakeholders and develop a memorandum of understanding that memorializes those assurances and the underlying principles.
  - Engage all affected parties in the IRWM process.
  - Create a succession plan to accommodate changes in stakeholders and leadership.

## North Central Region

- A. What are the major transitions that you anticipate for your IRWM in the next two to five years?
- Moving from planning to implementation
  - Moving from a focus on projects to a focus on an integrated plan
  - Rapidly changing regulations, policies, and program and grant requirements
  - Leadership retirement
  - Expanding the scope of work beyond infrastructure and water supply to water resources
  - Emphasizing integrated projects
  - Post-plan updating, including maintenance and monitoring needs, and new project prioritization
  - Maintaining the participation of diverse stakeholders
  - Finding funding other than bond money

- Loss of some historical participants
- Moving from grants to partnerships, in-kind support, ability to pay, and loans
- Developing new incentives for participation and funding
- Developing long-term financing
- Considering not just regional but interregional needs
- Coordination with flood regional planning (central valley)

B. How can your RWMG best prepare for these transitions?

- Make the network visible – foster an online community of leaders and partners
- Highlight how diverse people benefit.
- Broaden participation by emphasizing projects that benefit the whole IRWM.
- Develop creative new projects, not just the “same old” projects.
- Link and leverage funding across projects.
- Train members how to think through a full project, from planning through construction and maintenance.
- Increase outreach, maintain accountability, and demonstrate success.
- Strategize about how to keep critical stakeholders involved.
- Step away carefully to create a space for new leaders.
- Purposely alternate leadership over time.
- Bring meetings to the people, rather than expecting remote communities to come to you.
- Train partners for implementation and strengthen the network.
- Be clear that a longer planning horizon is necessary.
- Clarify shared institutional ties and mandates, recognize and foster these relationships.
- Find the balance between a sophisticated yet simple IRWM structure, and corresponding levels of public participation.
- Anticipate trends through strategic planning and create a “living plan”.
- Better address administrative needs and modernize websites.
- Strategize about how to get federal agencies more involved.

## South Central Region

A. What are the major transitions that you anticipate for your IRWM in the next two to five years?

- New organizations and groups desire to participate
- Expanding scope of work to include stormwater and flood issues
- Climate change

- More and more data to manage and integrate
  - Need to develop regional funding priorities
  - Post-bond funding
- B. How can your RWMG best prepare for these transitions?
- Recognize that process is evolutionary and new policies will need to be created.
  - Expand the network and leverage existing groups, relationships, and expertise.
  - Establish foundational policies and build out and invite participation from this foundation.
  - Recognize that outreach needs to be repeated and ongoing.
  - Promote successes and show benefits in terms of dollars, beneficial projects, and leveraged resources.
  - Share workloads and purposely build capacity within RWMGs.

## Southern Region

- A. What are the major transitions that you anticipate for your IRWM in the next two to five years?
- Funding
    - The Proposition 84 funding cycle is uncertain – Proposition 84 bond money will run out in 2014.
    - It will be necessary to find other funding sources to maintain sustainability.
    - To continue, IRWM efforts will need local funding.
    - The purpose of IRWMs will have to progress beyond “grant shopping.”
  - Plan Organization
    - Several regions will transition from a planning to an implementation organization.
    - Some still need planning funds, while others are maturing as a large region.
    - There will be a new dynamic with new membership and new interests.
    - There may be a change in governance structure to reflect a transition to a locally funded plan and political decision-making.
    - New partnerships may evolve.
    - Need to accommodate smaller and non-profit organizations.
    - Plans need to be updated, with more emphasis placed on issues such as climate change.
- B. How can your RWMG best prepare for these transitions?
- Funding
    - Explore other grant opportunities.

- Explore funding by members.
- Bundle work with other current efforts (e.g., stormwater planning).
- Use lack of funding to prioritize integrated projects.
- Explore non-traditional funding – beyond water grants.
- Develop an integrated funding strategy.
- Continue project implementation after State funds are depleted.
- Plan Organization
  - Maintain a stable governance structure with a deep bench of representatives.
  - Develop partnerships for integrated transition planning.
  - Maintain strong vehicles for communication.
  - Maintain public visibility, involvement, and awareness.
  - Empower non-government organizations (NGOs) and disadvantaged communities (DACs) to be involved.
- Keep communication alive, keep groups informed.
- Assess the effectiveness of your group and improve as you go forward.
- Maintain transparency, for example, in project selection.
- Foster internal relationships among groups.
- Conduct more outreach to DACs.

## How to Strengthen Regional “Waterhoods”

### Northern Region

- Request to DWR to convene quarterly or semi-annual “waterhood” meetings to encourage cooperation and sharing of best practices, problem-solving and networking.
  - This could begin in the spring of 2013.
  - Broaden the list of invited guests.
  - Be clear in the email what action is required (e.g., Sign Up Today!)
- Request to DWR to create an email listserv for “waterhood” leaders to allow for the development of relationships and sharing of knowledge and best practices.
- Request to DWR to facilitate a meeting to discuss how to share DAC resources.
- Mention these exchanges and the opportunity for resource sharing in DWR’s Water News.
- Obtain help to understand tribal sovereignty and learn ways to interact with tribes.
- Request to DWR to create a standard invoicing process and invoice training materials.
- Request to DWR to create templates for grant applications.

- Request to DWR to highlight example IRWM Plans and share groundwater management plans across the region.
- Need for a shared library, including literature reviews, that is easily accessible (e.g., using Dropbox software).
- Sharing groundwater management plans across the regions would be useful.
- Request to DWR to standardize deadlines and timelines for major projects.
- If DWR convenes any workshops in the future, the email invitation list should be broadened.
- Emphasize to local governments the importance of the IRWM Plan – DWR needs to do this as well.

## North Central Region

- Create a statewide online reference repository (perhaps DWR could do this): templates, grant examples, lessons learned, communication material examples, funding information, frequently asked questions, federal resources, and best practices.
- Create a speakers bureau to promote IRWM.
- Promote state-federal alignment in terms of integrated resource management and complementary programs.
- Advocate for revised formulas for point scoring in state grants (beyond DWRs IRWM grants) that reflect the importance of IRWM.
- Webcast workshops on alternative funding, stewardship projects, and disadvantaged community best practices.
- Conduct strategic visioning and financial planning that goes beyond state bond funding.
- Conduct median income surveys to obtain detailed information about disadvantaged community status and eligibility.
- Emphasize projects that benefit the full watersheds.
- Share the funding information that members have obtained over the years, including partnership opportunities.
- Identify economies of scale and share associated resources (e.g., consultants).
- Ensure that IRWM plans are known and used by legislature, and conduct education, strategic planning, and coalition building with this goal in mind – establish a common voice.
- Educate the public about climate change and water resources.
- Identify larger “waterhood” boundaries to identify larger common interests and goals.
- Conduct regular, perhaps semi-annual, “waterhood” webinar/meetings.

## South Central Region

- Request to DWR to provide grant money expressly for communication and outreach regarding regional IRWM successes.
- Request to DWR to map out its program activities (e.g., IRWM grants and strategic planning, Water Plan regional forums, regional flood management, Regional Office activities) and show coordination, sequencing of planning or programs, and fit with larger context (e.g., other state agency initiatives, legislative discussions, court rulings).
- Request to DWR to host a Funding Area workshop to investigate regional needs and common IRWM benefits, and support multiple IRWMs in strategizing how to obtain funding (i.e., identify funding opportunities and objectives, qualification criteria and eligibility, benefits, agency priorities, inter-regional coordination).
- Request to DWR to develop IRWM-related templates, especially for grant applications.
- Create local funding for participation in inter-regional forums.
- Develop common performance measures and metrics (e.g., riparian habitat, water quality) and common evaluation forms to better highlight successes across IRWMs.
- Take legislative action, both in terms of advocating for desires and responding to proposals.
- Collaborate on large-scale issues like stormwater, population growth, NEPA/CEQA, Endangered Species Act, etc.
- Regarding climate change, share information and integrate existing information and processes in IRWM planning (e.g., studies being conducted by the US Geological Survey, develop a regional forum for climate change adaptation strategies).
- Develop a common model for sharing data.
- Create a united voice to advocate to DWR and other State agencies to continue supporting IRWMs and removing institutional barriers to cooperation.
- Develop regional funding priorities.

## Southern Region

- Share knowledge, expertise, information, and resources.
  - Conduct collaborative workshops, (ex. on climate change), joint meetings.
  - Share a data portal.
  - Improve networking, establish email list for information sharing.
  - Set up meetings of appropriate stakeholder parties.
  - Continue communication and collaboration.
  - Continue multi-party representation.
  - Convey ideas to group and encourage attendance.

- Continue to inspire team, complete plan, encourage projects that meet plan goals.
- Develop trust among partners/regions.
- Promote an MOU between planning regions.
- Participate more actively with adjacent IRWM groups.
- Increase awareness of boundaries and surrounding regions, especially pockets of need that are not currently covered.
  - Develop income surveys to identify DAC pockets of need.
  - Communicate with neighboring IRWM regions.
  - Expand methods of reaching DACs, both through government agencies and through generating positive press.
- Coordinate outreach efforts.
  - Share Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority process for DACs
  - Keep public educated about IRWM Plans.
- Continue IRWM collaboration within same funding region.
  - Coordinate implementation of cross regional boundary projects.
  - Pool resources to complete regional projects.
  - Partner to complete monitoring studies.
  - Note shared infrastructure, shared groundwater basins.
  - Leverage non-IRWM efforts already in process.
  - Encourage interregional projects through joint meetings, discussions, and communication tools
- Establish fair funding splits in a funding area – sign an MOU, for example.
  - Continue collaboration in funding area.
  - Plan interregional funding projects.
  - Seek alternative funding.
  - Develop cross IRWM coalitions for exploring funding opportunities.
- Respond to legislative mandates.
- Request to DWR to make the grant application process less onerous and costly, including the involvement of DACs (who may have difficulty writing their own grant application or hiring a grant writer).
  - Request to DWR to defer to local project selection as long as the application meets the basic requirements of the water code.