



Regional Water Management Group

LOCATION: Online (ZOOM)

MINUTES

Monday, August 24, 2020 1:30 pm

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm, by Tom Wheeler, chairman.

Those present included:

Tom Wheeler – Madera County BOS
Carl Janzen – MID
Al Solis – SEMCU
Jeannie Habben – Madera County
Stephanie Anagnoson – Madera County
Kristi Robinson – Water Wise/Triangle T
Robert Macaulay – Madera BOS Staff
Jacob Roberson – RWMG Coordinator
Keith Helmuth – City of Madera
Angela Islas – SHE
Dina Nolan – MID
Eddie Mendez – Madera Public Works

Phil Janzen – MWD/MAWA
Jack Rice – MAWA
Patrick Konersman – Penny Newman
Matthew Nicoletti – Penny Newman
Igal Treibatch – SEMCU
Gretchen Heisdorf – Root Creek WD / P & P
Laurel Angell – Madera/Chowchilla RCD
Jay Bellach – Madera/Chowchilla RCD
Don Roberts – Gravelly Ford WD
Julia Berry – Root Creek WD
Christina McDonald – North Fork Rancheria

2. Review & Approval - Agenda & Minutes

- A motion to approve the August agenda was made by Carl J; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to approve the July minutes after listing Phil J being with MWD and MAWA, and the correction of the miss spelling of Coarsegold was made by Carl J; Keith H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment

- Items of Interest were mentioned by Jacob R (for more information, reach out to Jacob):
 - Upcoming free Capacity Building (online) workshops available from the Yosemite/Sequoia RCD:
 - Financial Management Best Practices: Wed., August 26th, from 10 am – 12 pm.
 - Navigating and Leading Change: Wed., September 23rd, from 10 am – 12 pm.
 - Introduction to Grant Writing, October 6th, 7th and 8th from 8:45 am – 12:30 pm daily.
 - The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, along with DWR and other agencies, is hosting the 2020 Disadvantaged Communities and Tribal Involvement Lessons Learned Summit from 8:30 am – 1 pm on October 8th, 13th and 14th.
 - There will be a “Pre-Summit Orientation” on Thurs., September 10th from 10 am – 11:30 am, and a Tribal Session from 11:30 am – 12:15 pm. This is a great refresher course for IRWM, and also a great course for people new to IRWM to help them understand what IRWM is, what it isn't, and the benefits of participating.

- Emergency Water Program funds are still available from the state. Call the SHE drought hotline at 559-802-1685 and leave your name and phone number on the voicemail.
- Prop. 68 Implementation Workshop is scheduled for September 3rd from 10 am – 12 pm. This will be focused on DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program.
- SGMA Watershed Coordinator Grant Program applications are due September 15th.
- WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grant Program applications are due September 17th.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Discussion & Action - Financial Report/Warrant Approvals

- Carl J commented that the group had started off the month with \$32,169. No income for the month but MAWA has been billed for their membership and we expect them to pay at some point. We spent \$2,919 this month. Our end of the month balance is \$29,249, which leaves us in good shape for the remainder of the year.
- Move to accept the financial report by Carl J; Jeannie H second; all voted; motion passed unanimously.

5. Review & Approval – Bylaw Changes

- Bylaws 5.5 and 5.6
 - Carl J commented that when these bylaws were written 10 years ago, the group was first being formed. Recently, the group has not been following these bylaws very closely. Carl suggests that these two bylaws be completely rewritten, with some of the language for 5.5 to remain the same. Instead of the language stating the list to be reviewed twice per year, change it to once per year. People/agencies can submit project proposals whenever during the year, but we can have one official call for projects per year.
 - Jeannie H said the only exception for the one call per year for projects would be if we are doing a plan update for the Madera Region.
 - Kristi R commented that it might be best to not state a month in the bylaws, that way it gives the group more flexibility on when to have the call for projects on a year-by-year basis. Carl is worried that if we do not state a month in the bylaws, then we might forget about the call for projects one year and let it slip by.
 - Tom W asked Carl to get his bylaw change recommendations to Jacob R so he can send them to the group members to review prior to our September meeting to vote on the bylaw changes.
 - Carl J that for 5.6, the group has never really prioritized projects in the past. Jeannie H corrected Carl and said that projects are prioritized when funding becomes available. Tom W would like to leave prioritizing projects in bylaw 5.6 since most funds secured have to be used in a certain way to satisfy the grant requirements.
 - Keith H commented that without a methodology for prioritizing projects, everyone's opinion will be different on which projects to fund when the funding is available. The group needs to come up with a goal when prioritizing projects (are we looking for recharging, are we looking to save water, are we looking to create programs, what are we trying to do). For the new project proposals, instead of listing them #'s 1 – 96, Keith broke them in to 5 different categories and ranked them within each category.
 - Jeannie H wanted to make clear that first, there is a call for projects. This gets the projects on the list, not in any particular order for priority. The was the IRWM

works is that you have to have your project on the list before it can even be looked at for funding. For our call for projects, we are just asking for anything to put on the list for possible funding. It doesn't matter what it is. To get on the list, the projects need to meet the requirements/guidelines of the IRWM for the Madera Region. For project prioritization, this does not happen until there is funding available. When we get funding, we take a look at the whole list and see which project is ready to begin now since there are quick turn-around deadlines for grant applications. Once those projects are narrowed down, we then prioritize those projects based off of the goals for the grant funding that they achieve.

- Carl J also mentioned that for prioritization of projects, groups that have grant writers and the financial ability to write up the project, do the engineering and do the whole thing. Our group is not going to do that for the groups that submit project proposals.
- Igal T agrees with how projects are currently being prioritized within the group. Igal asked about prioritization for projects that meeting multiple requirements for different funding opportunities, and Jeannie H commented that the prioritization for those projects would be addressed when funding announcements are made by the entire group.
- Tom W agrees as well with how Jeannie H explained the way projects are prioritized within the group.
- Keith H said it can become difficult at times when prioritizing the projects due to the variation in project costs (\$100,000 for this project, \$250,000 for another project, \$50,000,000+ to do these other things, etc.). A lot of projects have recharge checked as something the project will do, so how do we determine which project is doing more per dollar than the others.
- Julia B commented that the IRWMP is like the Stormwater Resources Plan, where there is scoring methodology for prioritization on projects. Projects get scores based off of meeting criteria that has already been established. A lot of the questions today could possibly be answered by reviewing projects that were approved in the past and how they were scored based off of the criteria (Keith H commented that the criteria for grants is not readily available in advance).
 - Jeannie H said this is correct. A scoring criterion was created by the consultants when they wrote the plan, so it is actually in the plan.
- Tom W asked for any change recommendations to these bylaws to be sent to Jacob R so he can get them sent to the group members prior to September's meeting. Tom does not want to vote on any changes today because he does not think we can come up with the language we need without taking too much time. Everyone agrees.

6. Review & Approval – IRWM Project Proposals

- Adding Project Proposals to Project List for IRWMP update
 - Jacob R commented that if anyone has a question about any project proposals to be added to the list, now is the time to ask it. If not, the group will vote to add all 36 project proposals to the project list.
 - Tom W is worried about the projects with high project costs. We will address those issues when funding becomes available.
 - Jeannie H commented that a lot of these proposals have come from GSPs. Projects can still be added to the list after this meeting. They need to be put on the agenda for each meeting ahead of time.
 - A motion to approve adding all new project proposals to the project list was made by Carl J; Igal T second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

- Carl J commented that the groups that submitted these projects believe they fall with the IRWMP for the Madera Region. Some Carl does not agree with, but that's OK.
- Review of Current Project List
 - Jacob R mentioned that Igal T had submitted a proposal to update project #98 that is currently on the project list.
 - Igal T commented that the proposed update is to just clean up some details on the project. Most important to know is if MID is going to participate, they will be the most beneficial with their stakeholders to this because most of the water that will be transmitted will be through the 6.2 canal and MID is going to be the water delivery of it to 215 water when available. Installing dry wells in the recharge basins will allow them to increase their input much faster. We are simply trying to update everything for this proposal. We have the money for the 25% matching funds required. The project is shovel ready and all of the engineering has been completed. The proposal currently shows 39,000 Acre-Feet of rainwater, but it is not talking about more than 175,000 Acre-Feet that can be derived from 215 water. Infrastructure is already there too to help measure water.
 - Dina N wanted to clarify that this is not a MID sponsored project. Madera County is the sponsor, with SEMCU listed as the co-sponsor. MID is not affiliated with this project. Igal is fine with not including MID as a sponsor/co-sponsor for this project. Carl agreed with what Dina had to say about project #98.
 - Tom W asked Jacob to update project #98 to show SEMCU and Madera County as the sponsors/co-sponsors.
 - Dina N asked for clarification on a few projects with MID listed as a sponsor/co-sponsor.
 - Jacob R mentioned that at the July meeting, information for project #31 was still needed to be pulled before any discussion could be made on that project. For project #s 28, 87, 88 and 89, MID was removed from those projects as a sponsor/co-sponsor after being approved by the group in July. More information will be pulled for project #31 by Jeannie and included for further discussion on the September meeting agenda.
 - Dina mentioned project #30 as well. Carl J said MID is somehow technically involved with this grant since the funds for this project were originally awarded to MID. At this point, removing MID from the project does not make any difference since the project is in progress and will be finished by the end of this year. Dina agrees to leave project #30 as it is.
 - Stephanie A had asked people for more information on project #31, and no one had more information to give. Tom W asked who would have the original proposal form for this project. Jeannie H mentioned that there should be a project proposal form for this project, unless it was part of a plan update and it was voted in to add to the list verbally. This project is from the Stormwater Resource Plan. Jeannie will look and see if it is in one of Dario's (ex-employee for the County) binders.
 - Tom W asked Jacob to send the original proposal to everyone when it is found.
 - Carl J asked for the project #s on the list to remain the same forever, that way they can easily be addressed in the future.

- Jacob R brought to the group's attention that Julie K had asked what the responsibilities for the Coarsegold RCD is for project #86 (illegal marijuana grow site clean-up).
 - Tom W commented that when we got the grant, we were a part of it (Tom was on the board at this time for CRCD) and we got money to do those clean-ups. We worked with the High Sierra Trail Group to complete this grant. We should keep this on the project list in case there is any money again for this type of project, and involve all of us again (Madera County, CRCD, YSRCD). If Julie K has any further questions, she can call Tom.
 - Jeannie H mentioned that originally CRCD had managed the grant. There have been a couple of those that have gone through. Tom said at least 3. When CRCD changed hands on the board, they gave it to YSRCD but all 3 of the agencies listed on the project list have always been involved with those projects. When the funding becomes available, we offer it to CRCD as administrator or YSRCD. This would be for the Mountain County FA.

7. Review & Approval – Madera RWMG Meeting Spanish Translation

- Tom W commented that until we have a handful of Spanish speakers showing up to the monthly Madera RWMG meetings, he cannot see this group spending money on Spanish translation services due to the cost (roughly \$225/meeting). If we were to do Spanish translation, the partners of the group would need to help cover the cost, however that may be. Of all the years Tom has been with the group, there has been no need for Spanish translation at a meeting. Carl J has been with the group as long as Tom and cannot recall a time when Spanish translation was needed. Tom also said that when this starts becoming an issue (Spanish speakers attend the meetings), then we will address it.
- Christina M asked Tom W if providing translation is a requirement through state programs. Is there a legal issue with that? Tom has never heard of it being a legal issue.
 - In the future, Christina mentioned it may be a good idea to look into funding sources, like DAC funding, and see if translation services can be included on the budget as a line item (if needed).
 - Christina also mentioned that the partners of the group that are Spanish speakers and are willing to translate for the Spanish speaking community, should cover this request from the public.
- This request was brought up during a Self-Help workshop held for a DAC in Madera County, and Angela I commented that she appreciated seeing this item on the agenda and that it is being addressed. If DACs in Madera County form a coordination group of community members to be more involved with water issues for DACs, then the translation at meetings may become more of a demand. SHE does have a relationship with a translation service/agency that they have used in the past for SGMA and IRWMP related work.
 - The only issue Angela can foresee is that in the current contract it does not state anything about providing translation with funds for project 9. This can be discussed later when the outreach for this project begins (very soon). Once the coordination group is formed, Angela can get a head count on how many Spanish speakers there are and would need translation at Madera RWMG meetings.
 - Tom W agrees and commented that we should write these services in to grants in the future. Angela commented that on past funding opportunities, there is space on the budget to allow for translation services.
- Everyone agrees with what was mentioned above (as of now, translation is not needed. When it becomes needed, funding will be written in to grants for translation).

8. Discussion – Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding

- Mountain Counties
 - Jeannie H commented that the North Fork Rec Project is moving right along. Everything is going well. The project will be finished in October. Everything is installed, the only thing left is to build the shelter structure to cover the pump, equipment, and tanks to protect them from weather/theft/vandalism.
 - Jacob R mentioned Julie K has sent him photos of the project to send to the Roundtable of Regions. Jacob is just waiting for a photo of the shelter structure so everything can be sent to the Roundtable of Regions together.
 - Tom W said that a lot more was done for this project than what the funding allowed for. Outback Cement donated the cement to us for this project which saved this project a lot of money. North Fork is very happy with being able to have water for the people that visit the Rec Center.

- San Joaquin Valley Counties
 - Angela I updated on the Coordination Group for Project #9 in the SJRFA. Angela has begun to make calls this week to see if starting the group up right now would work, or at a later date. SHE is also working on getting materials together for the Coordination Group so it can get started right away when ready. Pilot virtual meetings are also ready to begin since in person meetings are not possible right now. Angela will have more updates on this at the September meeting for the Madera RWMG.
 - Angela I also updated on the water sampling program for Project #13 in the SJRFA with Contra Costa WD. Jeannie H worked on the agreement amendment in July to increase the number of samples in the project. Internally, SHE would like to get their emergency services to join their efforts with the extension of the water sampling program. She Emergency Services is the main department that is helping out with the drought services. This will allow SHE to not hire a consultant for the water quality sampling portion. SHE has developed a one-page agreement and will share it with the Madera RWMG to review and approve some of the tasks that SHE Emergency Services will be working on with the water sampling program extension. More updates on this during the September meeting.
 - Angela asked if the approval from the group needs to be done during the September meeting, or if it can be done offline. Jeannie H thinks we can take this offline. We can talk about this later outside of the meeting. We can setup a meeting online to talk about this. Angela is finalizing the details and will reach out when it is ready to review. SHE's CEP needs to review and sign before it is sent over to the Madera RWMG to review and approve on their end. Madera RWMG approved the original application for this project,
 - Jeanine H mentioned that we had a meeting with Contra Costa about this and how the funding is going to be distributed and reported.
 - Angela I commented that for the water sampling program agreement, one of the directors for the SHE emergency services department doesn't know some of the specifics for the sampling program. Are the program/testing services intended to be county wide or is it specific to DACs in the Madera Region for the IRWMP? Just asking for clarification on that.
 - Jeannie H answered that it would be the San Joaquin River Funding Area (SJRFA) so just the valley, not county wide, and within the Madera Region because that is what the finding is for. Angela will let the director know. Tom W mentioned there are two primarily two sources of funding; one for the San Joaquin River

area and one for the Mountain Counties area. We have to keep it separate or the funding will be taken from us.

9. Discussion – Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Funding

- Mountain Counties and San Joaquin Valley Counties
 - Eddie M will be talking about these projects together since the two projects are working conjointly and are basically under one agreement. Over the past month, Eddie has been working on meeting all of the requirements that were outlined in the award notification letters. The first two required items are taken care of, which were the award acceptance and the authorization for electronic signatures. Eddie drafted a letter and Matt Treber signed it before sending it to the DWR, which has officially accepted it. The rest of the requirements are just basic information, which is the county information, eligibility requirements, and collecting documents that the DWR is asking for. The final components are the revisions to the work plan budget and schedule which is on track to be finished this week. Eddie has sent an updated plan over to the city since there was an update to some of the requirements that the DWR made Eddie aware of so they will not be surprised of any changes in the future that they might need to sign off on. DWR will also require progress photos to be submitted as part of monthly reporting. After all of this is taken care of, we should be good to go as far as what DWR requires. DWR has been requesting other items here and there but nothing too difficult that will create any issues/delays with the projects.
 - Jeannie H thanked Eddie for all of the work that he is doing on this.

10. Discussion – Domestic Wells

- Prop 68 Funding
 - Stephanie A stated that there are two pots of money for this. One for the Chowchilla sub-basin (\$500,000) and we have the grant agreement amendment for this. We have signed that, and we have issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) and have chosen a consultant, Luhdorff & Scalmanini. The other pot of money is for the Madera sub-basin. We have met with the 7 agencies in this sub-basin and we made a budget which we have sent back to the DWR. This is for a grant we were awarded after turning in a coordination agreement.

OLD BUSINESS

11. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act – SGMA – Report

- Stephanie A will let the other GSAs on the call today chime in for any updates within the boundaries. We are moving ahead with implementation of projects which includes a lot of recharge. The County GSAs were also evaluating a different approach and Stephanie is going to bring the approach to the Board of Supervisors as the Board of Directors for the County GSAs on September 1st and then there is an Advisory Committee for the County GSAs where we will go a little further in to the approach and that is on September 3rd at 2 pm. This will be a Zoom meeting and Stephanie will send out an invite shortly after today's meeting.

12. Implementation Grant Project Updates – Report

- Round 1 – Arundo/Sediment Removal Project
 - Tom W asked if anyone is moving any sediment yet.
 - Igal T said he has an order for 50 truckloads. Igal is waiting to hear from the county on when they are going to have the equipment to load the trucks. Igal will then be able to order at least 50 trucks to go and pick up sediment. Tom said to contact him, and he can put them in contact with someone at the county. Igal mentioned that Scott had called Tom, and

Igal can have him call Tom again if needed. Tom is trying to get in touch with someone at the county about this. Tom is not sure who the person to talk to would be.

- Jeannie H mentioned that the biological studies need to be done first and we have associates going out starting this week to do the study. They need a few weeks to do the survey and walk the area. The remaining area is on Ash Slough; we have the maps made and have the 1602 hold which is still good. But to be in compliance with the 1602 permit, we have to make sure that the survey is done. Hopefully we will start having the applications filled out starting September 1st.
 - Igal T asked when is the soonest he can pick up sediment. Jacob R asked if water is still in the slough, and Jeannie answered that the flow has been stopped, but not sure if it has dried up yet.
 - Jeannie told Igal they are hoping to be able to start in the beginning of September, and they have until the end of December to remove sediment.

13. New/ Suggested Members for the Madera RWMG

- Jacob R commented that he attended a Madera/Chowchilla RCD meeting this month and they would like to join the Madera RWMG but would like to see what it is all about first by attending a few meetings.
 - There was confusion at the Madera/Chowchilla RCD meeting after Jacob presented on the two types of memberships. Laurel A commented that the Madera/Chowchilla RCD was not asking to be able to join the group as a DAC but were under the impression that there was a non-paying membership (NGO) for agencies to join the group. Jacob will clear up this confusion with the Madera/Chowchilla RCD outside of this meeting.
 - Tom W asked Jacob to invite the Madera/Chowchilla RCD to the Madera RWMG's monthly meetings.
 - Jeannie H commented that RCDs have been members in the past, but they were all paying members.

14. Future Agenda Items

- Project #31 – continued discussion
 - Igal T mentioned that this may be a great spot to sink 3 – 4 recharge wells.
 - Dina N and Stephanie A will talk more about this outside of the meeting.
- Project #98 update proposal

15. Next Meeting

- Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 28 at 1:30 pm on ZOOM for now, unless we can meet in person. If we can meet in person, meeting will be held at the Chowchilla location.

16. The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 pm.