

Tulare Kern Funding Area
Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM)
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP)
Project Advisory Committee (PAC)
June 15, 2018, 9am-12pm
Location: 130 N. Garden St, Visalia

Attendees

Project Advisory Committee Members

Mike Camarena, Kaweah IWM
Neyba Amezcua, Kaweah IWM
Ralph Gutierrez, Tule IWM
Soua Lee, UKIRWMA
Jim Maciel, UKIRWMA
Stephanie Hearn, Poso IWM
Jeff Eklund, Kern IWM
Bobby Kamansky, Southern Sierra IWM
Andrew Garcia, Westside San Joaquin
Danny Wade, Tranquility Irrigation District
Israel Sanchez, Westlands Water District
David Hoffman, Tule River Basin

Project Team

Denise England, Tulare County
Maija Madec, Provost & Pritchard (P&P)
Stephanie Lucero, Facilitator -- Consensus and Collaboration Program (CCP), CSUS
For others in attendance, see Appendix A.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Stephanie Lucero, CCP introduced herself and reviewed the agenda. Ms. Lucero is the neutral facilitator provided by a grant from the Department of Water Resources (DWR). PAC members and members of the public introduced themselves. Ms. Lucero affirmed the ground rules agreed to in the Charter with the group.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CHARTER

Ms. Lucero confirmed that PAC members reviewed the 5.14.2018 version of the Charter. PAC members affirmed that the 5.14.2018 version of the Charter was consistent with the intent of the PAC. Specific provisions reviewed included voting to ensure that each IRWM and each DAC member gets one vote each. PAC members also affirmed that alternates may attend meetings, but do not vote unless sitting in as members. Ms. Lucero confirmed whether the PAC Charter was ready for affirmation and recommendation for approval by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (County).

PAC Action: Recommendation to County for Approval of Charter

Motion: Ralph Gutierrez moved to recommend the Charter for approval, Jim Maciel seconded the motion.

All PAC members were in favor.

3. FINALIZE AND APPROVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SCOPE

Ms. Lucero introduced the Needs Assessment Scope Agenda item, she reminded PAC members that this needs assessment scope was discussed at the PAC workshop held in May with P&P and the current version incorporates comments made at that meeting. Ms. Madec provided an overview of the Needs Assessment Scope (Scope) and took questions to clarify intent and details assumed in the Scope budget. (See Presentation for further details).

Ms. Madec discussed the Scope based on tasks identified, and affirmed that the draft Needs Assessment will be done by January 2019. There will be progress updates to the PAC scheduled in the fall. PAC members commented that useful information for the assessment may include groundwater level, waste water systems, and where water facilities exist. Other PAC members also discussed the value of mapping communities relying on private wells. Ms. Madec clarified that this data is not necessarily incorporated into current Needs Assessment, but will depend on whether that data exists in initial sources identified.

On Task 2 one PAC member requested an assessment of surface water available in the Tulare Kern Funding Area (TKFA) and an assessment of opportunities to import and use surface water for drinking water. Ms. Lucero clarified the purpose of this was to ensure options to provide additional drinking water either through treated surface water or exchanging treated surface water for groundwater for drinking purposes. Ms. Madec provided that the assessment could map and identify communities currently with surface water, but that was not outlined in the current Scope. Ms. Madec also emphasized that this may be something to consider for the DAC Engagement and Education Program (DACEEP). PAC members also discussed that DAC communities may not be able to afford surface water treatment and associated Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs. It was cautioned that any analysis of opportunities include these considerations.

Action Item: Ms. Madec will develop a draft scope/budget for the surface water documentation requested before next PAC meeting.

PAC members also discussed the need to identify the locations of septic tanks, specifically a mapping and/or analysis of areas with a high density of septic tanks and/or drinking water wells near septic tanks. One PAC member recommended a well per X acre analysis. This data can then be used by IRWMs for further planning. Ms. Madec also mentioned that this analysis can help communities identify potential neighboring sewer systems to connect with. This item was identified as an additional possibility for consideration depending on available data, but may require a draft scope/budget to conduct the proposed density analysis. Ms. Madec discussed how much of the Scope and assessment activities will correlate with the DACEEP, and clarified that most Scope activities will happen in coordination with the DACEEP to develop surveys to request information from DAC communities, disseminate these surveys and collect data in addition to data collected directly by P&P and posted to the web portal.

Ms. Madec then reviewed Task 3 of the Scope which includes optional data to gather for incorporation into the web portal. These data sets were requested by PAC members during the May workshop. These items were discussed and reviewed for confirmation and inclusion in the Scope.

1. Capacity of Wells (as available from DACEEP Surveys)
2. Capacity of Surface Water Supplies (as available from DACEEP Surveys)
3. Metered Systems (as available from DACEEP Surveys)
4. Well Depth (as available from GSA efforts)
5. Water Rates (as available from Counties and DACEEP Surveys)
6. Sewer Rates (as available from Counties and DACEEP Surveys)
7. Private Well Locations (based on Well Completion Reports and/or GSA Efforts)
8. Private Well Depth and Water Quality (as available, provided by others)
 - a. No Confidential Data will be Collected or Included
9. WWTF Issues or Insufficiencies (Cause of Violations) – specifically whether violations have occurred

and what the issues were.

10. Type of Wastewater System (WDRs, Regional Water Quality Control board- RWQCB)
11. Storm Water Facility Information (Yes/No, Responsible Entity) (as available from DACEEP Surveys and Counties)
12. Project Development and/or Funding Status (Funding Agencies; Local Knowledge) – Specifically identifying those that already have projects or are in process for project, but require support. The intent is to identify projects that can be moved along faster
 - a. Communities with successful solutions completed
 - b. Communities with funding in process
13. System Expenses and Revenues (as available from DACEEP Surveys)

A PAC member asked if there was an efficient way to identify funding available for projects. Ms. England shared that funding options change so frequently, so it is difficult to track available funding and requirements. She outlined some options but stressed that accessing individual State Agency sites was a more efficient way to access possible funding. Ms. Madec and Ms. England both shared that the Rural Community Assistance Corp (RCAC) also does funding fairs, but those do not always include all funding opportunities.

Action Item: Ms. England will share links to state agencies regularly providing funding (e.g. State Board, DWR, and RWQCB) to the Tulare Basin Alliance website.

PAC members also discussed issues with waste water treatment funding available since operators of these systems are hesitant to request support and inform funders about deficiencies in their systems for fear of RWQCB enforcement actions. Other PAC members referenced that the RWQCB are responsive to requests for support, but identified concerns with enforcement as an issue hindering the availability of funding.

In terms of Scope Task 4, a PAC member sought clarification of whether the budgeted amount considered participation in meetings and other avenues as part of the specified coordination with other regional efforts related to IRWM and SGMA. PAC members referenced multiple watershed coalitions, the irrigated lands program, and other activities within the Central Valley that could be included for regional coordination. Members of the public in attendance stressed the need to clarify how this effort shares data with other activities, identifies data gaps, and how SGMA efforts on groundwater levels connect with project activities. Ms. England pointed out that while this level of coordination could be beneficial based on the DACIP schedule and the SGMA schedules, data may not be available to incorporate. Ms. Madec clarified that the coordination referenced in Task 4 included coordination of available data only, it did not incorporate meeting attendance or education materials beyond those coordination activities outlined in the DACEEP. PAC members shared some internal IWM activities to update internal plans based on AB 1249 whose data could be utilized for Task 4. Additionally PAC members referenced early assessments under SGMA that may be coordinated earlier in the Needs Assessment and referenced Task 1 as an opportunity to identify some of these activities with potential follow-up based on later SGMA data.

PAC members reviewed the cost allocations in the Scope for each of the Task 3 optional activities. A couple of PAC members referenced private well identification conducted in Poso IRWM and referenced concern that the budgeted amount in the Scope may not be sufficient to identify all private wells. Ms. Madec confirmed that the level of effort in the Scope will not be the same as done on an individual IRWM basis, but focus on collection of data consistent with Task 2 and affirm private well communities through the DACEEP program. PAC members stressed that separating private wells from other types of wells that may be included in available data sources is a significant effort.

PAC members asked whether well depths data collected under Task 3 included level of groundwater available, and how that will be identified. Ms. Madec clarified that the depth of wells will be based on construction level, not depth to groundwater sampling. PAC members also referenced that DWR data on regional groundwater

elevation and capacity of water wells may be a useful resource to consider.

PAC members also discussed how to collect data on well capacity. Ms. Madec clarified that design features from construction documents can illustrate well capacity. PAC members stressed that well capacity reduces 1-2 years after initial construction, this can be addressed by including year of construction in well capacity data.

Action Item: Ms. Madec will add construction date to well capacity data collected.

PAC members and the public discussed how well capacity data may also be available through community surveys and DACEEP. Members of the public also referenced the importance of clarifying whether well meters were used in the DACEEP surveys. PAC members discussed the issues with tracking meter use. Water rates were referenced as a possible tool to analyze use of water meters based on what rates are, whether they are tiered, whether rates are monthly, etc. Members of the public discussed using the Needs Assessment to evaluate the viability of using water meters (whether they were functional, whether staffing was available to check meters, knowledge and funding to operate meters, etc.) A member of the public shared the concept of a regional metering project proposed, to hire someone to track and read meters for multiple groups. Another PAC member discussed that water rates may not provide enough information since some water providers offer low income assistance and others do not. It was suggested that this component should be analyzed as well. A PAC member shared how this information could help with identifying connection options. Ms. Madec confirmed that the data collected will relate solely to residential rates.

Action Item: P&P will ensure that as part of the metering surveys, a question will be added to address the condition of meters (i.e. are they functional) and whether they are utilized.

Action Item: P&P will adjust scope to incorporate analysis of whether low income assistance is offered in the analysis of water rate structures. Scope, budget and surveys will be adjusted accordingly.

PAC members further discussed the scope elements relating to well depth and water quality. Ms. Madec confirmed that analysis will focus on residential well depth and quality data from GSAs (as available), IRWMs, Self-Help surveys, and the DACEEP. PAC members shared that a significant percentage of water goes to environmental uses and agriculture, emphasizing that this information is needed for water resource planning. Ms. Madec clarified that the well data (depth and quality) was not for determining water extraction, but to identify sources and availability of water. GSA efforts will handle the well extraction information. A PAC member discussed that when the original project scope was developed with Self-Help, there was limited to no funding for small and private well users to improve their wells or address water quality. This well data will help identify community needs and whether communities can connect with public water systems or larger systems instead of relying on private wells.

PAC Members discussed waste water treatment facility (WWTF) issues or insufficiencies, waste water system, and storm water facility information generally. Ms. Madec clarified that much of the data collected will focus on whether systems or facilities exist, and whether there have been issues or insufficiencies. PAC members recommended focusing on existing County data on storm water systems. PAC members also discussed clarifying whether some systems have expenses or funding issues. Members also reiterated earlier discussions relating to facility hesitance to share data on issues for fear of repercussions from RWQCB for violations.

Ms. Madec then clarified reporting and updates to the PAC as the Scope progresses will occur roughly every two months, with three updates scheduled in the meeting framework before the January presentation. These time frames assume the PAC approves the Scope, P&P will present the revised Scope to the County Board of Supervisors for approval on July 10. The Preliminary Needs Assessment Report is anticipated in January 2019 with ongoing updates through January 2020. There were no other questions or comments relating to the Scope.

Ms. Lucero confirmed that PAC members felt comfortable recommending the existing scope (with comments and clarifications noted in the above discussion) to the County for approval.

***PAC Action:** Recommendation to County for Approval of Needs Assessment scope of work.*

***Motion:** Stephanie Hearn moved to recommend the Needs Assessment Scope of Work, David Hoffman seconded the motion.*

All PAC members were in favor.

4. **OVERVIEW OF DAC ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAM PROPOSAL (DACEEP)**

Maria Herrera with Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) provided a presentation of the vision of the DACEEP based on what was developed for submission to DWR as part of the initial TKFA DACIP funding proposal. She clarified that the DACEEP objective was to develop a regional involvement program that builds understanding regarding community water needs and the IRWM process, and encourages DAC engagement in IRWM. (See DACEEP presentation for further details).

The DACEEP program is structured to include a DAC coordinator for the funding areas to support outreach and engagement with DACs. Included in this portfolio of tasks is capacity building to DACs. The DAC coordinator will prepare and distribute materials and serve as a regional hub of information between individual DACs and their respective IRWMs. The DAC coordinator will assist in identifying common goals and whether interests are speaking together or if they require facilitation support to identify common goals. Specifically the DACEEP is designed to ensure that project activities can facilitate long-term engagement of communities with IRWM. The DACEEP coordinator will also help in distribution and response rates for the P&P needs assessment surveys. Additionally, the DAC coordinator will offer assistance to DACs for grant administration and filing.

Ms. Madec clarified that the next steps based on the DACEEP presentation was to ensure approval of the vision from the PAC. If the DACEEP is approved to occur through SHE, P&P will subcontract to SHE. Ms. England clarified that a subcontract to SHE by P&P is permitted under existing contracting mechanisms. If there are no requested revisions to the DACEEP vision, or with SHE doing those services, this is the most time efficient next step.

A PAC member requested clarification that SHE had staffing capacity for this work. Ms. Herrera clarified that SHE just established their community engagement group and they are assigning staff as needed for activities. They are also in the process of recruiting additional staff for these projects, once funding is confirmed. Ms. Herrera also clarified that as the regional manager she can support staff brought into this effort, but that the goal is to have a full time person for the Tulare Kern funding area.

A PAC member shared that it is preferable to go to communities themselves, individuals, in addition to the boards who run the community water systems. Ms. Herrera commented that SHE usually speaks with the water boards that oversee the community systems and the individuals operating the systems. Likewise, SHE maintains contacts lists with all existing community leaders and engaged citizens.

A PAC member asked for clarification on how the DACEEP will identify those that qualify as severely disadvantaged. Ms. Herrera confirmed that income surveys falls within the community water assessment MHI. Since SHE already completed various income surveys and MHI to update IRWM plans within the funding area, most of the work will be verifying the accuracy of that work. Ms. Herrera encouraged PAC members to identify the types of questions and information they proposed for the DACEEP surveys.

PAC members sought clarification between the DACEEP surveys and those referenced in P&P Task 3 Scope surveys. Ms. Madec clarified that P&P will create the surveys referenced in the Scope and SHE through the DACEEP will work with getting responses from communities.

One PAC member discussed the importance of identifying what educational tools DAC communities need to encourage participation in IRWM. She pointed out the need to promote multi-benefit projects serving multiple stakeholders, and emphasized the Needs Assessment as a method to accomplish this by identifying opportunities. She also discussed the importance of site visits to sample projects. She also discussed the long-term management and expertise challenges experienced at a community level, where most systems are overseen by volunteers with other full-time jobs. She recommended looking at community advisory committees or shared seats to share responsibilities to engage in governance structures. Another PAC member supported the statement that there will always be gaps in DAC representation due to limited time and resources, he suggested that SHE fill that gap to represent information gained during outreach. Ms. Herrera stressed that filling the gap is not SHE's preference, where they work to enable engagement directly by communities. Discussion continued emphasizing the need to: identify community members willing to serve and providing them with resources (capacity building, travel stipends, time allowances, flexible meetings schedules, etc.) to better serve.

Ms. Herrera then reviewed the project timeline including ongoing DAC engagement, submission of the formal DACEEP proposal to the DAC in July/August, updates to the PAC in October and interim milestones tracked from October 2018 through March 2020.

PAC members stressed the need to communicate with both community members inside DAC city limits and the city officials to ensure open communication and prevent misinformation. Ms. Herrera confirmed that all relevant stakeholders (including relevant city officials) are included.

PAC members shared efforts they have completed to date on DAC engagement and issues. Ms. Herrera confirmed that the DACEEP will be reviewing existing IRWM plans and chapters.

PAC members requested specific estimates of funding allocated to the under the program for each of the discussed components. Ms. England shared the following numbers:

- Grand administer by County = \$150,000
- Developing Proposal to DWR = \$40,000
- Project Management and Reporting = \$185,000
- Spanish Translation = \$15,000
- DAC Engagement = \$550,000
- Needs Assessment = \$350,000
- Projects Development = \$2,200,00

Ms. England confirmed that there were two budget amounts protected in the overall budget (project development funds and DAC engagement) any funds left over from the other budget items are intended to go to Projects Development.

Action Item: CCP/P&P shall share the full grant proposal submitted to DWR for the TKFA to the PAC.

***PAC Action:** Recommendation for SHE to proceed with developing a specific scope and budget for proposed DACEEP work.*

***Motion:** Jim Maciel moved to recommend SHE to proceed as discussed, Frank Gutierrez seconded the*

motion.

All PAC members were in favor.

5. NEXT STEPS & ADJOURN

The PAC then discussed the overall structure and discussed the need to incorporate tribal representatives consistent with the Charter. PAC Member, Mr. Kamansky shared ongoing discussions with Tribes within his IRWM and their interest to stay informed but hesitance to officially engage in PAC meetings as a member until project discussions proceeded. Ms. Lucero also shared that Dirk Charley (former USFS tribal liaison) and council member for the Dunlap Band of Mono Indians has agreed to participate in PAC discussions, but not to fill the PAC tribal seat at this time.

The PAC then reviewed proposed meeting dates and affirmed the revised meeting schedule. CCP will follow-up with calendar invites and reminders for next meetings. PAC members reviewed the items identified for later discussion and confirmed all items were either addressed or appropriately deferred to later meetings within the schedule.

Appendix A. Public Attendees

#	NAME	AGENCY
1.	Jessi Snyder	Self-Help Enterprises
2.	Michael Taylor	Provost & Pritchard
3.	Maria Herrera	Self-Help Enterprises