



Regional Water Management Group

LOCATION: Online (ZOOM)

MINUTES

Monday, January 24, 2022 1:30 pm

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:33 pm, by Tom Wheeler, chairman.

Those present included:

Tom Wheeler – Madera County
Jeannie Habben – Madera County
Kristi Robinson – Water Wise/Triangle T
Jacob Roberson – RWMG Coordinator
Keith Helmuth – City of Madera
Angela Islas – SHE
Jason Rogers – City of Chowchilla
Brandon Tomlinson – Chowchilla WD
Carl Janzen – Madera ID
Gretchen Heisdorf – Root Creek WD
Don Roberts – Gravelly Ford WD
Stephanie Anagnoson – Madera County
Christina Beckstead – Madera Farm Bureau
Sam Cunningham – Madera County
Robert Macaulay – Madera County
Melanie Aldridge – Madera WD

Dina Nola – Madera ID
Jennifer Morales – DWR
Celeste Wheeler – Indian Lakes
Clyde Wheeler – Indian Lakes
Joe Fiss – Greystone Equities
Al Solis – SEMCU
Jack Rice – MAWA
Marliez Diaz – SHE
Nicole Wynd – SHE
Elijah Banda – Fresno State
Laura Ramos – Fresno State
Mary Sholler – North Fork Rancheria
Eddie Mendez – Madera County
Jenny Nunez-Rodriguez – Madera County
Emily Garcia – Madera County
Russ Shaw – Shaw Real Estate

2. Review & Approval - Agenda & Minutes

- A motion to approve the January agenda was made by Carl J; Gretchen H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to approve the November minutes after fixing the spelling of Robert Macaulay's name was made by Gretchen H; Carl J second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval – Resolution No. 2022-01

- A motion to approve meeting resolution no. 2022-01 was made by Jason R; Gretchen H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

- Items of interest were mentioned by Jacob R (for more information, reach out to Jacob):
 - CAL FIRE recently announced up to \$240 million in grants to help private landowners and local governments prevent catastrophic wildfires, protect our communities, and cultivate healthy forest management.

1st opportunity is the [Forest Health Grants Program](#), and applications will be due by 3 pm on March 3rd.

2nd opportunity is the [Fire Prevention Grants Program](#), and applications will be due by 3 pm on February 9th.

- DWR released the final 2021 SGMA Implementation [Guidelines \(2021 Guidelines\)](#) and [Proposal Solicitation Package \(PSP\)](#). More information about this funding opportunity can be found on [the grant program's website](#).

With this release, the Round 1 grant solicitation for Critically Overdrafted (COD) basins has opened. Those potential applicants located within COD basins will be contacted by a SGM Grant Program team member to provide the required templates for applicants to use while applying for the grant program. The Round 1 solicitation will end on February 18, 2022.

For more information, please visit [the grant program's website](#) or email the SGM team at sgwp@water.ca.gov.

- The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is currently accepting applications through January 31st for their [2022 Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program](#). This program seeks to create more-resilient forest landscapes, reduce wildfire risk, and accelerate recovery from recent wildfires. There are \$25 million in estimated available funds for this round of funding.
- 3 virtual public workshops will be held by DWR regarding the draft materials for the Prop 1 – Round 2 IRWM Implementation Grant Program (which we will go over in more detail during agenda item # 12). Comments are currently being accepted on the draft materials until 5 pm February 18th. Original deadline of February 8th was extended due to COVID. All 3 meetings will be identical, and the 1st meeting will be recorded and posted on their website after the workshops.

1st workshop – February 1st from 9:30 – 11:30 am.

2nd workshop – February 3rd from 10 am – 12 pm.

3rd workshop – February 8th from 1 – 3 pm.

*Registration is required to attend the webinars. Please reach out and I can email the registration information.

- The Bureau of Reclamation has announced 3 new funding opportunities under its WaterSMART Program. The 1st 2 opportunities are for water reclamation and reuse projects, and the 3rd opportunity is for desalination construction projects. These opportunities are available to help Western communities create or expand clean, new water sources. These funds will help drought-impacted communities develop longer-term solutions to climate change.

Applications for all 3 opportunities are due no later than 3 pm on March 15th through grants.gov. Please reach out if you would like more information on these funding opportunities.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Election of Officers

- Tom W asked if anyone had someone to elect to replace the current officers, which include Tom Wheeler as the Chairperson and Carl Janzen as the Vice Chair. Jacob Roberson acts as the Secretary for the group, which is a contract position renewed annually, and Madera ID acts as the Treasurer for the group.
- A motion to keep the Chairperson as Tom Wheeler was made by Carl J; Gretchen H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to keep the Vice Chair as Carl Janzen was made by Tom W; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- Carl J mentioned that group members need to think of those to nominated next January as the officers due to Tom W retiring and Carl J looking to retire in the next few years.
- Stephanie A asked Tom if there are group members that Tom has in mind to be the replacement officers to mentor this year to take the role next January. Tom mentioned he does not have anyone in mind yet, but Carl J mentioned that there will be a new supervisor for the County, as well as new board members for other groups that may be elected as the replacement officers for the Madera RWMG next year.

6. Discussion & Action - Financial Report/Warrant Approvals

- December 2021 and January 2022 Financial Reports
 - Carl J reported that we ended December 2021 with a balance of \$22,645.05. Madera ID paid their 2022 membership dues in January and invoices have been sent out to the other group members. \$2,400 was spent in January, with \$400 to Madera ID for bookkeeping fees for the year, and \$2,000 to Jacob for administrative duties. This leaves us with a balance of \$22,745.05.
 - A motion to approve the financial report was made by Carl J; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

7. Discussion – Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding

- San Joaquin Valley
 - Self-Help Enterprises and Chowchilla Management Zone – Projects 12 and 13
 - Kristi R reported that they are continuing to test domestic well water and provide clean drinking water for residents in the rural areas. If anyone wants their domestic well tested for nitrates and other constituents, please reach out to Kristi R.
 - Jacob R commented that he put in the extension request with DWR for these two projects and he is waiting to hear back. Jacob also mentioned that there was some confusion regarding a Data Sharing Agreement which is a deliverable for the grant. Jacob has a call

with Contra Costa WD tomorrow morning about this to clarify the confusion and see what needs to be done to meet that deliverable.

8. Discussion – Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Funding

- Mountain Counties and San Joaquin Valley Counties
 - Indian Lakes and Parkwood
 - Eddie M commented that the order for materials has been in for quite a few months now, but they are still dealing with supply issues to fulfill the order. They were expecting a long lead time for the order to be fulfilled when discussing it with the vendor. The vendor is putting a “hold” on the order until the entire shipment comes in before charging Madera County for the order.
 - Eddie M has also been talking with DWR since the order for Madera County has been significantly delayed and they are working on getting these projects extended ahead of time. Eddie has submitted the paperwork for the extension already.
 - Celeste W asked when the grant was awarded, and Eddie mentioned he thinks it was towards the end of 2019.
 - City of Madera
 - Keith H reported that they are still in the design stage and the inspections have been completed. Their consultant is working on a report regarding the inspection results. Tom W asked if there is a start date estimate yet and Keith said he does not have an estimate right now. The report and acceptance are probably about a month and a half or two months out. Keith is not sure what the actual design will look like due to the existing complex cross connections between some meters. Not sure on the begin date for installation, but they will be within the established grant timeline.
 - Parksdale
 - Eddie M reported that the video inspection of the well has been completed. No major issues were found. They are now working on spec'ing the pump and the rest of the equipment that they will be using for the well rehab. They're looking at something that can approximately put out 150 GPM which is what they are expecting once the rehab is complete. They will be putting in a pump that can perform up to 400 GPM, but a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) will be installed to bring it down to 150 GPM. The GPM can be increased if the well can handle it.
 - City of Chowchilla
 - Jason R reported that they just received a draft funding agreement from the state for this project. Jason has a meeting with them on February 9th to go over the funding agreement and they will work on getting the agreement executed as soon as possible so they can move into the design phase and get the project out to bid by next year.

9. Discussion – Domestic Wells – Prop 68 Funding

- Stephanie A reported that there are 2 projects for this, one in the Madera Subbasin (\$400,000) and another in the Chowchilla Subbasin (\$500,000). The

grants pay for domestic well inventory which is a giant inventory of all the wells that provide drinking water to residences. It compared domestic well completion reports as well as Assessors records and County well records. The remaining funds pay for the installation of nested monitoring wells. The Chowchilla Subbasin has some potential well locations that were sent out to the Chowchilla Subbasin representatives to look at last week. The Madera Subbasin well locations have not been drafted or finalized yet. There will be a technical memo sent out to that group. The memos will be completed in the next couple of months, the wells may or may not be drilled in the next few months depending on the well drillers availability.

- Carl J asked if the group that did this well inventory did some field work to see if they were getting the right information regarding the number of domestic wells. Stephanie answered that they got that information from Assessors records which has home locations. They basically were merging three different data sets (completion reports from DWR, Assessors records, and Madera County well permit records). If homes are not receiving water from a public water source or a mutual water company, they must be getting water from somewhere, so they most likely have a well. Carl commented that the Assessors records are probably more complete than the other two data sets used for comparison.
- Jeannie H reported that they are working on a Prop 68 grant for the foothills. This is to do rehab on the Oakhurst River Parkway. The rehab will be about a mile stretch from the Oakhurst Park all the way up to near the Boys and Girls Club area along the Fresno River. They will be cleaning out vegetation, shoring up the sides, working on erosion issues, and other things for flood and safety throughout the community right there. They will be applying for about \$1.6 million. They passed the step where they submitted a concept proposal which DWR approved so now they are putting in a full application which is due February 9th.

10. Discussion – Creek Fire / Forest Management / Watershed

- Jacob R commented that the Madera RWMG hosted a tour back on December 4th. Jacob will be sending out a newsletter / one-page flyer of what we did that day and include a few photos as well. Jacob also mentioned that he got one photo where there was a burnt log on the ground from the Creek Fire at the Mammoth Pools Overlook along the Sierra Vista Scenic Byway. Next to the burnt log, about a foot or two away, was a little pine tree starting to grow back. Tom W commented that there were about 10 new pine trees about 6” tall popping up there which was really nice to see.
- Tom W commented that it will be interesting to see what happens up there if we get any more rain or snow. They received about 15.73” in Ahwahnee last month but it’s been dry for three weeks now. There’s still snow on the ground up at Sky Ranch and over the pass going from Oakhurst to North Fork. It’s been cold enough to where the snow hasn’t melted away which is a big plus.

11. Discussion – Drought Working Group

- Jacob R quickly introduced Elijah B with the California Water Institute to share an ArcGIS map that he created to show the water tank installation locations done by SHE throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Here is a link to the interactive map:

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=377849cbc9c54046917d864a635e9674&extent=-120.0525,34.8083,-117.2593,36.0392>

- Elijah B added that he is a project assistant with the California Water Institute (CWI) and is currently a senior at Fresno State pursuing his bachelor's in City and Regional Planning. Elijah mentioned that SHE reached out to CWI and asked for help with creating a map of their water tank participants. All 8 counties in the San Joaquin Valley are included on the map.
- Elijah did a quick live demonstration of the map for the group. The map can be found on the link above, or by [clicking here](#). It is an ArcGIS map meaning it is web-based map, so nothing needs to be downloaded to use the map (software, files, data, etc.). SHE provided CWI with information about water tank installations and where they were installed and will continue to get the information from SHE regularly so new participants can be added to the map. The map is very simple to use with basic tools to make it more user friendly.
- Elijah pointed out some "hot spots" on the map where clusters of water tanks were indicated with colored dots for the different counties in the valley and reminded the group that this map only indicates where water tanks were installed for households whose private domestic wells have been affected by the drought. The map also allows you to see one county at a time or multiple counties at a time.
- Elijah commented that this map is based off latitude and longitude coordinates, but an address could be used. You can also click on each individual colored dot (which represents a water tank installation) and enter in more information for that location. SHE is using this map to indicate where participants are located, but the map could be used to also upload other information for each participant (family size, groundwater level, application, etc.).
- Kristi R asked for clarification on whether the locations on this map indicate that the wells have dried up for those participants, and therefore had water tanks installed, or were water tanks installed for another reason. Marliez D answered that the wells are either dry or were failing, so that's why the participants on this map shared by Elijah were put on the water tank program. They are current active water tank participants.

12. Discussion – 2022 IRWM Implementation Grant Prop 1 Round 2 Funding

- Jacob mentioned that the comment period for draft guidelines and proposal solicitation package has been extended to February 18th. No application deadline available yet on the program's website, but Jacob will continue to check for a deadline date. Jacob is expecting the application to open sometime in April or May.
- Roughly \$192 million available for round 2 (final round), with \$8,578,248 for the SJRFA (\$8,278,248 for the general projects fund and \$300,000 for the DAC projects fund) and \$5,899,612 for the MCFA (\$5,054,612 for the general projects fund and \$845,000 for the DAC projects fund). Funds from the general fund can be pulled and used for DAC projects if the DAC funds run out. An average local cost share of not less than 50% of the total project costs is required. Cost share may include federal funds, local funding, donated services from non-state sources, and others. The cost share may be waived or reduced for projects that

directly benefit the water management needs of a DAC or EDA. GIS Map Tool available to help identify projects benefiting DACs and/or EDAs.

<u>DAC/EDA Benefit</u>		<u>Percent (%) Cost Share Required</u>
75% - 100%	=====→	0%
50% - 74%	=====→	12.5%
25% - 49%	=====→	25%
Less than 25%	=====→	50%

DAC projects include only those projects that provide at least 75% of their primary benefit directly to a DAC. General projects include all other eligible projects.

- Statewide priorities: 1) utilize natural infrastructure such as forests and floodplains, 2) encourage regional approaches among water users sharing watersheds, 3) drought preparedness, 4) climate resilience, and 5) strengthen partnerships with local, federal, and Tribal governments, water agencies and irrigation districts, and other stakeholders.
- Eligible grant applicants include: 1) public agencies, 2) 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, 3) public utilities, 4) federally recognized Indian Tribes, 5) state Indian Tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission’s Tribal Consultation list, and 6) mutual water companies.
- Projects must be included in an adopted IRWM Plan that is consistent with the 2016 IRWM plan standards. Also, applicants must demonstrate that the project is listed in the IRWM Plan project list.
- A call is scheduled for this Wednesday at 3 pm for coordinating a proposal package for the MCFA. Jacob has a call with CCWD tomorrow morning about our current Prop 1 Round 1 project and he’ll ask about a coordinating call for Round 2.

13. Review & Approval – Urban & Multibenefit Drought Relief Application Budget

- Jacob R mentioned that this application is part of the \$5.1 million set aside by DWR for the MCFA in the Urban & Multibenefit Drought Relief Program. The \$5.1 million was split up evenly in the MCFA among the nine regions, which left each region with \$525,000 to apply for after taking out some administration costs and other overhead costs for Sierra Institute as the lead agency for the MCFA. Projects could be an implementation project or a planning project as long as it is for a DAC.
- This project would be in an area covered by an Urban Water Supplier ([California American Water Company](#)). They supply water up the highway 41 corridor to several communities, including Goldside (Ahwahnee), Oakhurst, Raymond, and Indian Lakes. They currently have 1,000+ connections to their water supply line. This project would be a planning grant to extend the pipeline supply roughly 9,000 linear feet to allow for more connections to be made to take homes off domestic wells for their water supply.
- The project would engineer and design the pipeline extension to California American Water Company’s design requirements. Future funds would need to be secured to implement the work, but this planning project would be the background work needed to implement the pipeline extension. Max amount of

\$525K is being requested. Ran this project summary by DWR and they do not see any issue with this planning grant.

- Jacob R added that the budget needs to be approved today, and the application will need to be approved in the next few weeks. Originally Sierra Institute was requesting applications in mid-March which would have allowed the group to meet one more time to approve the application, but Sierra Institute is asking for applications by February 18th now.
- Carl J asked if with this type of water company, what involvement do they have? Tom W answered that the company could fund the extension of this waterline if they want to, but it takes quite a bit of money for the planning and designing of it. The benefit would be a lot of households being taken off private domestic wells for drinking water. Also, more water would be able to flow down to the valley with less households pumping water. Tom also mentioned that with this planning project being completed and hopefully showing the extension as feasible to the water company, they would be willing to extend the waterline through private funding or through other grants the company could apply for. Russ S added that with the planning and designing being completed, the stakeholders may have some individuals who would help fund the implementation of the waterline extension. If governmental funding is available, that would assist as well with the extension. The water company won't pay for 100% of the cost, they would require assistance financially wherever it may come from. Carl J commented that he just did not want these funds to go to a private company. Russ S mentioned that the water company is a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulated company. They're not a high profit company, but they're also not a non-profit company. All their rate cases must be vetted with the CPUC, meaning they don't make a lot of money and they service the community which we are looking out for with this project.
- Keith H added that on the summary for the project, he did not see if meters would be installed. Keith expects that meters would be installed, but he just wanted to clarify. Russ answered that meters will be installed. Keith mentioned that the budget associated with the meters can assist with paying back with those water lines or the infrastructure that's been installed if that goes forward as part of the rates. When residents are allowed to connect to the City of Madera's system, they assume it's an all-in or all-out type of scenario where they will hopefully be asked to abandon their existing well. Otherwise, you could have an expensive system going up to a house that may have other things going on and they're only intent is to take their drinking water off the supply line.
- A motion to approve the application budget was made by Celeste W; Keith H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

14. Report – Sustainable Groundwater Management – SGMA

- Stephanie A reported that the GSAs in Critically Overdrafted (COD) Subbasins submitted GSPs 2-years ago and this is the week when they will receive feedback on most of those GSPs. The Delta-Mendota Subbasin had a series of plans (six), and they did receive a letter that said it needed to coordinate better, potentially write about the coordination more. It was deemed incomplete. The Chowchilla Subbasin will receive a letter that also suggested an incomplete

determination, but Stephanie doesn't think that letter has been received yet. The Madera Subbasin is on a different timeline and probably won't receive a letter till October.

- Stephanie also reported that for the Madera County GSA they have spent a lot of time and energy completing reports that show peoples allocations for 2021 and their evapotranspiration of applied water. Those are going out this week but only to those within the Madera County GSA.
- Tom W asked how long the GSAs can review, revise, and resubmit the GSPs when the plans are deemed incomplete. Stephanie A answered that you get 6-months to revise them. In some cases, you may not need to make giant revisions. Some of the feedback in Chowchilla seemed like it was a matter of showing the thinking behind what was in the plan. The GSP is 1,300-pages which is a lot for anyone to read and understand where everything is.

15. Chowchilla Nitrate Control Program – Report

- Kristi R reported on this item under agenda item # 7. Jacob R asked if he should combine the two items (item #s 7 and 15), and Kristi mentioned to do that for now and they can be split in to two items again if anything changes.

16. New/ Suggested Members for the Madera RWMG

- No new members suggested. Tom W mentioned for people to reach out to himself, Jacob R, or Carl J if anyone has suggested members throughout the year outside of the scheduled group meetings, or items to add to the agenda. No need to wait to the meeting and potentially forget about it.

17. Future Agenda Items

- Jacob R mentioned that the 2022 Call for Projects will be coming up on March 3rd to start the 40-day period as stated in the group's guidelines making the deadline April 12th. The Call for Projects is to allow project proposals to be submitted to add the project to the current IRWM Project List which makes projects eligible for different funding opportunities. Tom W asked Jacob to include the Call for Projects as an agenda item through the next few months to help remind people to submit a proposal before the deadline.

18. Next Meeting

- Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 28th, 2022, at 1:30 pm on Zoom for now until COVID restrictions are lifted and allow us to meet in person.

19. The meeting was adjourned at 2:36 pm.