

ATTACHMENT 5 –  
CONSISTENCY WITH IRWM PLAN STANDARDS

**San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Watershed  
IRWM Implementation Grant, Step 1**

## **Section A – Regional Water Management Group**

The Regional Water Management Group for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Watershed Region (Regional Group), operating under the lead agency of the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA), is developing an Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan.

The WCA, created on April 17, 2003, is a joint powers authority consisting of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD).

In November 2004, the WCA initiated the formation of the Regional Group that would work together to develop an IRWM Plan for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Watershed Region (Region), as well as coordinate for the submission of planning and implementation grant applications under the Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Program. The Regional Group is comprised of many agencies and organizations, including seven local public agencies, five of which have statutory authority over water management. A full listing of the Regional Group members can be found in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 1.3, Page 5*.

The Regional Group members have approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) proposing to set up a governance structure, develop an IRWM Plan, and make regional decisions in areas related to integrated water management. These agencies and organizations are currently in the process of seeking formal adoption of this MOU, which is included in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix E*. Several agencies and organizations have provided letters to the State, included in *Attachments 6 and 10*, indicating their support of this IRWM implementation proposal as well as their support of the WCA as the regional lead agency. This MOU established the intent of the Regional Group to encourage integrated regional strategies for the management of water resources and provide funding, through competitive grants, for projects that protect communities from drought, improve water reliability, protect and improve water quality, and improve local water security by reducing dependence on imported water.

## **Section B – Region Description**

The IRWM Plan will cover the Region defined as the complete San Gabriel River Watershed along with the easternmost subwatersheds of the Los Angeles River Watershed, including the subwatersheds of the Rio Hondo, Compton Creek, and the Lower Los Angeles River. A figure showing the boundaries of the Region is included in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 1.2, Page 2*. A complete description of the Region is discussed further in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 2, Page 8* and includes:

- Basis for Regional Boundary;
- Benefits of Defining Region by this Boundary;
- Major Water Related Infrastructure (including: Major Dams and Reservoirs, Spreading Grounds, Water Reclamation Plants);
- Land Use;
- Water Supply;
- Water Quality (including: Drinking Water, Surface Water, Groundwater);
- Environmental Resources and Ecological Processes; and
- Population and Demographics.

## **Section C – Objectives**

Regional planning objectives have been grouped by Water Management Focus Areas, which are classifications that combine similar water management strategies. These objectives were derived from various stakeholder-driven watershed management planning efforts throughout the Region, including the

multi-objective and water resource plans, developed to address the water management needs of the Region shown in the table in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 4.2, Page 70*. To the extent feasible, major water-related objectives and conflicts in the Region are identified in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 2.3.3, Page 34*.

The objectives presented in each Water Management Focus Area will be reviewed, refined, and integrated to complete a comprehensive list of regional objectives addressing all water-related issues including, but not limited to, water supply, surface and groundwater management, habitat, ecosystem restoration, and water quality, as discussed in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.2, Page D-3*.

### **Section D – Water Management Strategies**

In *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 3.2, the Document Matrix, on Page 64*, provides a complete listing of applicable documents and the water management strategies addressed by each of the documents. The Regional Group has an internal IRWM Plan website that contains electronic copies of many of the documents in the matrix as well as plan review forms for the documents with references to relevant water management strategies addressed in each document. The plan review forms are included in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix A*.

As described in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.3, Page D-4*, subcommittees for each of the Water Management Focus Areas will review and compile documentation for the Region related to the specific Focus Areas. Technical memorandums will be prepared for each of the Focus Areas to identify data gaps, and aid in the integration of strategies and the completion of the IRWM Plan.

### **Section E – Integration**

Documents that form the foundation for integration of water management strategies are listed in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 3, beginning on Page 51*. These documents address water supply reliability, groundwater management, conjunctive use, water quality protection and improvement, as well as a number of other water management strategies.

Included in these documents are a series of multiple objective documents in *Attachment 3, Section 3.1.2 on page 54*, that focus heavily on the integration of water management strategies in conjunction with habitat, land use, recreation, and stakeholder involvement. These components are significant to the development and implementation of the plan.

Integration is also demonstrated through the six comprehensive, primary documents, which are listed in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 3.3, Page 68*.

The Regional Group will further integrate these multi-objective plans and documents and fill any resulting planning gaps during the development of the final IRWM Plan for the Region. By implementing projects and related water management strategies outlined in these various plans, the Regional Group will successfully meet the statewide priorities, program preferences, and regional objectives. The integration of multiple water management strategies is further discussed in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.4, Page D-8*.

### **Section F – Regional Priorities**

As part of the development of the final IRWM Plan, the objectives presented in each Water Management Focus Area will be reviewed, refined, and integrated to develop a comprehensive list of regional objectives addressing all water-related issues including, but not limited to water supply, surface and

groundwater management, ecosystem restoration, and water quality. This will be accomplished through additional input from agencies with authority over water-related issues and other stakeholders in the Region.

Regional Group meetings and workshops will be held to modify priorities in response to regional needs. This will be accomplished through a consensus-driven process and will maintain compliance with Statewide Priorities.

### **Section G – Implementation**

The Regional Group developed a preliminary list of proposed Implementation Projects as shown in the table in *Attachment 6, Section 1.4, Page 12*, by prioritizing the projects according to their ability to meet IRWM Plan Objectives. The agencies responsible for the implementation of these projects are indicated in this table. The prioritization criteria are shown in *Attachment 3, Appendix C*. While the proposed Implementation Projects complement each other by addressing all of the water management strategies, additional work is imperative to develop an integrated regional approach to implementation.

An implementation strategy will be developed for future projects and will be included in the IRWM Plan to ensure additional regional objectives are met, as described in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.5, Page D-9*.

*Attachment 8* shows a schedule that depicts the timeline for implementation of the projects that are included in this proposal.

### **Section H – Impacts and Benefits**

Implementation of area plans has fostered coordination, collaboration, and communication among agencies and organizations in the Region. Through consensus driven efforts, adopted plans in the Region have promoted a shared vision for stakeholders within the various watersheds, basins, and/or river corridors. Planning efforts that are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines have closely examined the impacts and benefits that the implementation of those plans would have within various areas in the Region.

In addition, within the prioritization criteria, points were allocated to implementation projects that have a direct benefit to disadvantaged communities. Environmental justice issues will be addressed in the development of the IRWM Plan and in conjunction with the proposed projects.

The Regional Group recognizes the need to identify and address potential impacts at a regional level. Potential impacts and benefits will also be presented at stakeholder workshops for feedback and comment by the Regional Group and other regional stakeholders. *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.6, Page D-10* provides further information on how the IRWM Plan will address the potential impacts and benefits associated with implementation.

### **Section I – Technical Analysis and Plan Performance**

Each of the existing plans includes technical studies and references that broaden the knowledge base, data, and technical merit of the plans even further. A variety of technical studies have been conducted throughout the Region that will assist in the implementation of the IRWM Plan.

Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping applications will be used to clarify the areas covered by local plans and proposed projects. GIS will be used to: 1) determine if any geographic overlapping exists between proposed projects; 2) illustrate where water management strategies are being addressed across the entire Region; and 3) identify other areas where water management strategies need to be considered. If a gap is identified for a specific area based on the existing data and technical analyses, then the Regional Group will determine if a study is currently planned for that area or if the IRWM Plan needs to be modified.

Local agency and regional performance measures will be compiled and reviewed to identify those that are most relevant to the IRWM Plan. For additional information, please see *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.7, Page D-11*.

### **Section J– Data Management**

Data is currently housed by individual agencies relative to studies reviewed for the IRWM Plan. Based on the existing and proposed technical studies and programs, the Regional Group will develop a database by which data, including regional and project related monitoring efforts, can be tracked. This information would be made available through agency websites as well as through periodic stakeholder meetings that would occur during the IRWM Plan implementation. The development of this regional database will be formatted to facilitate integration into the State Water Resource Control Board's statewide data management efforts. For further details, please see *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Appendix D, Section 1.8, Page D-12*.

### **Section K– Financing**

The plan will describe a proposed stable and long-term funding mechanism to finance the proposed projects and programs. Additionally, the plan will detail the amount of revenue anticipated from the funding mechanism, why the revenue is necessary, potential sources of matching State and Federal funding, and how the revenue is to be used.

In addition, the implementation strategy will identify the lead Regional Agency and the institutional structure and funding mechanism that is in place to ensure the various priority projects will be implemented, as well as, operated and maintained for the life of the projects. Several of the agencies and organizations within the Regional Group have approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) proposing to set up a governance structure, complete development of the IRWM Plan, and make regional decisions in areas related to integrated water management. These agencies and organizations are currently in the process of seeking formal adoption of this MOU, which is included in Attachment 2.

The commitment of the Regional Group members is further exemplified by their commitment of over \$400,000 to date to continue the development of the IRWM Plan for this Region.

### **Section L– Statewide Priorities**

The IRWM Plan objectives will be further refined based on additional stakeholder input through workshops attended by representatives from key agencies with authority over water-related issues and other stakeholder groups in the Region. The Regional Group will refine these objectives to gain consensus among the stakeholders in the Region, while maintaining compliance with Statewide Priorities.

In addition, Statewide Priorities will be linked to Regional Objectives. *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 4*, lists the Statewide Priorities and regional objectives. All of the Statewide Priorities are met by the proposed implementation projects included in this proposal, as shown in *Attachment 12*.

### **Section M – Relation to Local Planning**

The IRWM Plan will incorporate components of the existing local planning documents. The development of an IRWM Plan and its relationship to local planning is addressed in several arenas including water supply, water quality, and watershed planning, as discussed in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan, Section 2.1.1, Page 9*. The document matrix in *Section 3.2, Attachment 3, Framework IRWM Plan* identifies the local planning efforts that will help shape the IRWM Plan development, as well as identifying the plans' relationship with water management strategies. During the Plan development, the Regional Group will coordinate with appropriate land use planning decision makers.

### **Section N – Stakeholder Involvement**

The Regional Group has invited stakeholders to attend bimonthly meetings aimed at building coordination and collaboration within the Region. Significant stakeholder programs have already been developed in the Region, which were necessary in order to develop and adopt the multitude of water resource plans, watershed management plans, baseline documents, land use/habitat/recreation plans, and supporting documents that form the basis for the IRWM Plan. The preliminary multi-objective documents described in *Attachment 3, Section 3, Page 54*, give examples of stakeholder programs that have been developed.

Because the Regional Group will have ongoing influence on which water management strategies will be developed for the Region, their involvement will ensure that the Statewide Priorities are met.

Currently, the City of El Monte and the City of Long Beach, both of which are considered disadvantaged communities, are Regional Group members. The Regional Group will continue to develop a comprehensive list of stakeholders to be included in the IRWM Plan process, including representation from disadvantaged communities within the Region which will help to identify and address environmental justice needs and/or issues. This process is outlined in *Attachment 3, Appendix D, Section 1.9, Page D-13*.

### **Section O – Coordination**

Many agencies have participated in development of the Framework IRWM Plan for this Region. Regional Group meetings were held bimonthly to discuss the steps of the IRWM planning process. Attendees were asked to review preliminary draft sections of the IRWM Plan, project criteria for ranking projects, the MOU, the Planning Grant proposal, as well as other available data and documents.

The WCA is acting as the lead coordinating agency for the Regional Group, as discussed in *Attachment 3, Framework IRWM plan, Section 1, Page 1*. The creation of this joint powers authority between the RMC, which is one of nine State conservancies, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, is an example of progressive cooperation and coordination. The goal of the WCA is to enter into joint projects, which focus on providing multiple benefits, such as open space, habitat restoration and recreational opportunities.