

## *No. 15 - Kern Integrated Regional Water Management Region*

### Region Acceptance Process Summary

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#### **General Description of Region**

The Kern Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) region was granted conditional acceptance in the 2009 Region Acceptance Process. The conditions were as follows: (1) Kern IRWM region is to explore options with neighboring IRWM regions, including the Poso Creek IRWM region, on how best to structure the regional boundaries in the area; (2) to consider incorporation of several existing gap areas into an IRWM region; and (3) to continue coordination efforts with the Southern Sierra IRWM region.

Kern Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) has continued in its efforts to communicate and coordinate with the overlapping Poso Creek region to avoid competing planning efforts. To formalize coordination with Poso Creek IRWM region, a draft letter of agreement for co-management of the common area awaits signing by both regions. It is anticipated that the Letter of Agreement will be signed once the RWMG has appointed new co-chairs to the Executive Committee. The possibility for both IRWM submitting the same project for IRWM grant funding was discussed. Kern RWMG representatives stated that they will take care to coordinate development of grant proposals with Poso Creek to avoid double submittals. Ongoing coordination is accomplished through attendance by Kern IRWM representatives in Poso Creek IRWM meetings and workshops. Coordination with Poso Creek and with other IRWM regions in the Tulare Basin Hydrologic Region is also accomplished through regular attendance of the Tulare Lake Basin Integrated Regional Planning Group meetings, which are held monthly.

The Kern RWMG has indicated that Disadvantaged Community (DAC) representatives will be allowed to continue to work with the Kern IRWM region even though they have, through the Group of Four Cities, been admitted to the Poso Creek RWMG. The DAC group has voluntarily opted to remain active in both RWMGs.

The Kern IRWM boundary has not been modified to cover gaps areas that existed in 2009; through discussion with the Poso Creek, Kaweah, Tule River, and Southern Sierra RWMGs, the Tulare County gap areas have been incorporated into these IRWM regions. The gap area to the northwest, in Kings County, has not been closed. The entity within that gap area, the Tulare Basin Water Storage District, has opted not to join an IRWM region at present; thus, this area remains uncovered.

#### **Interview Conclusions - Approved**

The Kern RWMG has shown adequate progress toward resolving conditional acceptance criteria applied in the 2009 RAP. The RWMG is encouraged to continue to seek cooperation and coordination with neighboring IRWM regions to ensure that IRWM planning and implementation efforts progress in a complementary and coordinated manner.