

CHAPTER 6: PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS AND INTEGRATION

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The Santa Cruz Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) will be implemented through the specific actions, plans, projects and programs proposed by the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) and stakeholders. The Plan includes a wide range of project types including urban and agricultural water use efficiency, infrastructure, water supply, conjunctive use, aquifer recharge, drinking water treatment, wastewater treatment, recycled water, watershed and habitat restoration, flood and stormwater management, low impact development, groundwater quality, and education and outreach. This chapter describes the process that was used for submitting, reviewing and scoring projects and provides the final list of projects to address the objectives and strategies of the IRWM Plan. The methodology for evaluating projects serves as a tool to help project proponents, stakeholders, and the state to categorize, describe, and assess the status, benefits, feasibility, and costs of the projects in the Santa Cruz IRWM Plan. This chapter also describes the processes in place to coordinate and integrate separate efforts to promote a more unified regional planning approach and promote greater institutional, stakeholder, resource, and project integration.

6.1 BACKGROUND

The 2005 IRWM Plan was adopted with 55 projects that were proposed from stakeholders across the region, which were scored based on consistency based on a set of local and statewide planning objectives and criteria. Through the evaluation and prioritization process 17 high-priority projects were identified. 15 projects of those projects, as well as the grant administration, were included in a successful funding proposal to the State Water Resources Control Board, resulting in a \$12.5 million IRWM Implementation grant award. These 15 high priority projects are more accurately referred to as components because several of the included multiple individual projects. This IWRM grant award, paired with in local funding, and enabled the completion of high priority projects from the initial IRWM Plan. From 2008 – 2013, implementation of the 15 high priority “components” resulted in the completion of 65 projects at more than 80 sites throughout the County.

In June 2010, at the recommendation of the IRWM Steering Committee, the RWMG had an open solicitation for projects to update the IRWM Plan project list. In addition, updated information was sought for the projects contained on the 2005 project list that were not implemented under the IRWM Implementation grant. A solicitation form was developed for this purpose with the intent of standardizing the information collected from each project proponent. The form also provided an opportunity for project proponents to self-score their projects against a suite of local and statewide planning objectives.

The process for developing the 2014 IRWM Plan Update project list and how these prior efforts were incorporated in described below.

6.2 GOALS OF THE 2014 PROJECT SOLICITATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The goal of the project solicitation and project review process is to provide a transparent methodology that is objective and fair, and one that can be systematically applied to all projects with the end result being an impartial project comparison. The process serves as a tool to help project proponents, IRWM Plan stakeholders, and the state categorize, describe, and assess the status, benefits, feasibility, and costs of the numerous projects that ultimately make up the Santa Cruz IRWM Plan.

The Santa Cruz IRWM Steering Committee developed the following project selection and prioritization process for the 2014 Plan Update with three objectives in mind:

- Update previously submitted projects from the 2009 solicitation to address the 2012 Guidelines requirements. Incorporate the work that Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) entities have already done to prepare projects for the Plan.
- Implement a process that meets the requirements described in the 2012 Proposition 84 and 1E IRWM Guidelines (<http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/guidelines.cfm>).
- Gather the project specific information using a uniform format (template) to enable an evaluation of the project both for inclusion in the Plan and to support future funding applications.

Consistency with IRWM Plan Standards

The Santa Cruz IRWM Project Review Process was developed based upon the 2012 DWR IRWM Plan Standards, which require RWMGs to:

- Develop and implement a process by which projects are reviewed and prioritized for inclusion in the IRWM Plan
- Describe procedures for submitting a project, reviewing projects and communicating the list of selected projects to stakeholders
- Evaluate the extent to which a project might contribute to achieving local and statewide planning objectives, including IRWM plan objectives and the California Water Plan resource management strategies selected for use in the IRWM plan
- Evaluate the technical feasibility of the project
- Identify specific benefits to disadvantaged community water issues and environmental justice considerations
- Document project costs and financing, economic feasibility, project status, and strategic considerations for IRWM plan implementation
- Evaluate the project's role in adapting to the effects of climate change in the region and/or contribution of the project in reducing greenhouse gas emissions as compared to project alternatives
- Promote and prioritize projects in the selection process, while keeping in consideration the unique goals and objectives of the IRWM Region

This processes established by the Santa Cruz IRWM Steering Committee to address these requirements as part of the 2014 Santa Cruz IRWM Plan update are described below.

6.3 PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING A PROJECT

To facilitate the submittal of information in uniform format and to ensure adequate information was requested in order to conduct a comprehensive project review, the IRWM Steering Committee and staff developed the following process and materials.

6.3.1 PROJECT TEMPLATE

A project template was developed to include all the relevant project information (Appendix C). Project projects were encouraged to input project information directly into a web-based form that was linked the Region's website (www.SantaCruzIRWMP.org). Information was posted to website regarding the project submittal submit process. Contact information for IRWM program staff was provided on the website for any stakeholder that wished to submit a project but could not utilize the online form.

6.3.2 PROJECT SOLICITATION

The 2014 call for projects was initiated electronically by updating the website include information about the solicitation and notifying to the entire Santa Cruz IRWM stakeholder listserv by email on January 28, 2014. The email containing instructions and a link to an online project solicitation form. Any stakeholder could submit a project; however, project proponents were encouraged to coordinate with Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) entities on potential submissions to identify opportunities for coordination and avoid duplication of effort.

A workshop was conducted on February 4, 2014 to inform the RWMG and stakeholders of the solicitation process. This included a demonstration and instructions on the online project submittal form, as well as a presentation on the project information requested the submittal deadline and the review and notification process. The Steering Committee and staff were available to answer questions and guide stakeholders in developing projects for inclusion in the IRWM Plan. The initial project submittal deadline was March 14, 2014; this was extended to March 28 in response the 2014 IRWM Drought Funding opportunity to provide stakeholders time to submit additional projects.

6.4 PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA AND RANKING

The Santa Cruz IRWM Steering Committee and staff developed criteria to guide the evaluation of projects with a transparent methodology that is objective and fair, and can be systematically applied to all projects. Projects that were submitted through the 2014 solicitation were first evaluated to determine if they supported at least one Santa Cruz IRWM Plan objective and were an eligible project type.¹ Projects that failed to meet either of these criteria were excluded from the IRWM Plan. Projects that passed the initial screening were then prioritized using a scoring scheme developed by the Steering Committee and derived from the 2012 IRWM Program Guidelines and the most recent Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) provided by the Department of Water Resources (Round 2, IRWM Implementation).

As with the 2010 solicitation, projects were compiled into a matrix that summarizes basic project information (including costs, status, and sponsor information) as well as how the projects contribute to the priority strategies identified in the conceptual framework. To remain in the Plan, projects submitted in 2010 were updated to include information required in the 2012 IRWM Plan Guidelines, such as economic and technical feasibility, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and benefits to disadvantaged communities.

¹ Public Resources Code §75026.(a).

For the 2014 IRWM Plan, the Steering Committee sought to update the existing project list using a similar process to the 2010 solicitation, while incorporating high and medium priority strategies identified through the development of a conceptual framework for the Santa Cruz IRWM Plan, which occurred during the 2014 planning process (see Chapter 4, Goals and Objectives, for a full description of the “conceptual model” process). This approach has allowed the Steering Committee to identify the most influential actions for achieving IRWM objectives and to select appropriate performance measures to characterize how actions incrementally contribute to achieving those objectives. Accordingly, the 2014 project solicitation form was modified to include these high and medium priority strategies. The priority strategies are intended to ensure that projects with the greatest benefit are targeted for implementation.

The prioritization process seeks to identify projects that:

- Address multiple high and/or medium priority Santa Cruz IRWM Plan strategies
- Demonstrate partnership, geographic, and resource management integration
- Effectively employ Resource Management Strategies
- Will be ready to proceed within a reasonable timeframe
- Demonstrate technical feasibility
- Will be able to demonstrate an effective cost/benefit ratio
- Will be able to demonstrate project effectiveness
- Assist the region in adapting to effects of climate change or in mitigating effects
- Directly address a critical water supply or water quality need of a DAC or Tribal interest, and or address an environmental justice issue
- Address strategic considerations for IRWM implementation

The scoring scheme for the project prioritization process is outlined in Table 6-1 below.

Table 6 - 1 Project Ranking Matrix

| Category | Criterion | Methodology | Max Points | Weighting |
|---|---|---|------------|-------------|
| Principles of IRWM Planning and Integration | Supports high and medium-level priority objectives identified in the SC IRWM Conceptual Framework | 10 points per high-priority strategy; 5 points per medium level strategy per objective - Max 40 points per objective; scores for each objective will be added to achieve total criterion score | 200 | 43% |
| | Supports regional partnerships | 20 points for 2 or more partners, 30 points for 3, 40 for four; 5 bonus points if an NGO is involved | 45 | 10% |
| | Strategic considerations for IRWM Plan Implementation | 1 point per each IRWM resource management strategy implemented | 30 | 6% |
| | Land Use | Max points for when project increases coordination between water resources agencies and land use planning agencies | 10 | 2% |
| Project Status and Feasibility | Technical Feasibility | Max points for documenting technical feasibility based on similar, successful past projects, site conditions known; fewer points no existing or known technology, but proponent has adequately documented project and site conditions are known | 60 | 13% |
| | Economic Feasibility | Max points for economic assessment that can document and monetize benefits, and demonstrate that benefits exceed costs, and is supported with documentation provided by project proponent | 20 | 4% |
| | Project Cost | Max points for demonstrating planning level cost estimates complete and matching funds are secured and adequately described (i.e. source, type (in-kind, cash, eligible grant) | 10 | 2% |
| | Monitoring | Max points for adequately describing a monitoring program that will be sufficient to document project effectiveness | 10 | 2% |
| | Status | Max points for documenting that all necessary permits secured and CEQA complete | 10 | 2% |
| Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation | Climate Change Adaptation | Max points for demonstrating how the project contribute to regional adaptation to vulnerabilities identified in the IRWM or other state or local climate change planning documents | 15 | 3% |
| | GHG Reduction | Max points for when, compared to alternatives or to existing, does the project reduce GHG emissions or improve energy efficiency | 15 | 3% |
| Disadvantaged community, tribal, and environmental justice considerations | Benefits a disadvantaged community (DAC) | Max points for project that demonstrates benefits to a DAC identified by the State or through the 2014 Plan update process | 20 | 4% |
| | Benefits to Native American Tribal Community Water Issues | Max points for demonstrating that a project benefits a critical Native American tribal community water issue | 10 | 2% |
| | Environmental Justice | Max points for projects that demonstrate mitigation of inequitable distribution of environmental burdens | 10 | 2% |
| Max Total Points | | | 465 | 100% |

6.4.1 RESULTS

For the 2014 Plan, the Steering Committee and staff compiled and reviewed the information submitted by each project proponents and scored each project according to the Scoring Matrix. A total of 76 projects were submitted from 17 different entities. This included 18 planning projects and 58 implementation projects. The complete project list with scores is provided in Table 6-2 below. This project list and project summary information is also posted to the Santa Cruz IRWM website.

47 of the 76 projects (61%) addressed more than one functional area; 24 projects (32%) address more than 3 functional areas; 9 projects (12%) addressed all four functional areas. The total projects by principal functional area are:

- Water Supply – 30
- Water Quality – 21
- Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems - 17
- Flood and Stormwater Management – 8

Table 6 - 2 2014 IRWM Plan Project List

| ID | PROJECT TITLE | PROJECT PROPONENT | CATEGORY | SCORE |
|----|--|--------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| 59 | Santa Cruz County Regional Recycled Water Feasibility Study | City of Santa Cruz | Water Supply | 237 |
| 44 | Water Wise Monterey Bay Friendly Ecological Landscaping Public Education and Incentives Program | Ecology Action | Water Supply | 229 |
| 64 | Residential and commercial water resources and environmental management program | Resource Conservation District | Water Supply | 214 |
| 58 | Scotts Valley Water District Water Use Efficiency (WUE)/Recharge Optimization Plan and Outdoor WUE/Recharge Implementation Pilot Project | Scotts Valley Water District | Water Supply | 212 |
| 30 | Farm and rangeland soil management for water conservation in Santa Cruz County | Resource Conservation District | Water Supply | 209 |
| 73 | Conjunctive Use Water Exchange | County of Santa Cruz | Water Supply | 208 |
| 49 | Implementation of LID, IPM, and Water Conservation at Santa Cruz County School Sites | Ecology Action | Water Supply | 207 |
| 52 | Scotts Valley Water District Regional Groundwater Conjunctive Use Planning and Implementation Project | Scotts Valley Water District | Water Supply | 204 |
| 57 | Scotts Valley Water District Low Impact Development Retrofits for Stormwater Treatment and Groundwater Recharge | Scotts Valley Water District | Water Supply | 200 |
| 54 | Managed Aquifer Recharge Program in Santa Cruz, California | Resource Conservation District | Water Supply | 199 |
| 75 | North Coast Agriculture Water Supply Project | County of Santa Cruz | Water Supply | 193 |
| 51 | Soquel Aptos Groundwater Basin Stakeholder-driven Management Plan Development and Incentive Pilot | Ecology Action | Water Supply | 190 |
| 66 | Groundwater Protection: Achieving water demand reduction and LID BMP implementation through expanded incentive programs | Ecology Action | Water Supply | 181 |

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| ID | PROJECT TITLE | PROJECT PROPONENT | CATEGORY | SCORE |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 42 | Scotts Valley Water District Local and Regional Recycled Water Expansion Project | Scotts Valley Water District | Water Supply | 180 |
| 14 | Cox Well / Water Treatment Plant to Treat for Iron and Manganese | Central Water District | Water Supply | 171 |
| 19 | Davenport Recycled Water Plant | Davenport County Sanitation District | Water Supply | 171 |
| 41 | Scotts Valley Water District Regional Automatic Meter Read Program | Scotts Valley Water District | Water Supply | 169 |
| 50 | Soquel Aptos Groundwater Basin Computer Model | Soquel Creek Water District | Water Supply | 163 |
| 45 | Bonita Hexavalent Chromium Treatment Facility | Soquel Creek Water District | Water Supply | 162 |
| 40 | Scotts Valley Water District - Santa Cruz Water Department Regional Water Supply Intertie Project | Scotts Valley Water District | Water Supply | 159 |
| 46 | Country Club Hexavalent Chromium Treatment Facility | Soquel Creek Water District | Water Supply | 158 |
| 47 | Altivo Hexavalent Chromium Treatment Facility | Soquel Creek Water District | Water Supply | 158 |
| 69 | Davenport New Town Toilets and Showerheads Retrofit | Davenport County Sanitation District | Water Supply | 156 |
| 10 | Boulder Creek Recycled Water Project | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Supply | 144 |
| 34 | Water intake and conveyance system improvements | Davenport County Sanitation District | Water Supply | 141 |
| 13 | Redwood Water Tank Replacement Project | Lompico County Water District | Water Supply | 140 |
| 43 | City of Santa Cruz: Tait Well 1 & 4 Replacement | City of Santa Cruz | Water Supply | 122 |
| 71 | Managed off-stream storage for riparian water rights holders | Resource Conservation District | Water Supply | 120 |
| 55 | City of Watsonville Nitrate Treatment Plant | City of Watsonville | Water Supply | 92 |
| 56 | Chromium 6 well head treatment | City of Watsonville | Water Supply | 87 |
| 25 | Performance-based Incentives for Conservation In Agriculture (PICA) - Watsonville Sloughs | Resource Conservation District | Water Quality | 243 |
| 65 | Reducing nutrient, sediment, & pathogen pollution to surface and ground waters through implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on livestock facilities | Resource Conservation District | Water Quality | 237 |
| 48 | LID Bioretention and Rainwater Catchment Projects Implementation following Prop 84 Planning | Ecology Action | Water Quality | 230 |
| 3 | Rural Roads Erosion Control Assistance Program (RRECAP) for Santa Cruz County | Resource Conservation District | Water Quality | 227 |
| 9 | Upper Rodeo Gulch Trunkline and Soquel Bridge Sewer Replacement | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 193 |
| 5 | Arana Gulch Trunkline Replacement Project | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 184 |
| 8 | Borregas Gulch Trunkline Replacement Project | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 183 |

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| ID | PROJECT TITLE | PROJECT PROPONENT | CATEGORY | SCORE |
|----|--|---------------------------------------|--|-------|
| 61 | Arana Gulch Tidal Reach Enhancement Plan and Feasibility Analysis | Resource Conservation District | Water Quality | 174 |
| 1 | Reducing NPS Pollution in County Road Maintenance Operations | County of Santa Cruz | Water Quality | 166 |
| 20 | Sewer lateral and water line connection replacements | Davenport County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 161 |
| 76 | Private Sewer System Assistance | County of Santa Cruz | Water Quality | 159 |
| 62 | Arana Gulch Sediment Reduction and Habitat Enhancement Program | Resource Conservation District | Water Quality | 148 |
| 16 | Chanticleer Park stormwater and drainage improvements | Santa Cruz County Parks | Water Quality | 146 |
| 6 | Valencia Creek Sewer Relocation | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 143 |
| 15 | Street Sweeping and Routine Storm Drain Maintenance Water Quality Protection Project | Santa Cruz County Road Maintenance | Water Quality | 143 |
| 72 | City of Santa Cruz Drought Mitigation to Improve Potable Water Quality, Implement Conservation Program for Agriculture, and Reduction of Ecosystem Conflicts with Habitat Conservation | City of Santa Cruz | Water Quality | 138 |
| 4 | Lode Street Wet Weather Flow Management Facility | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 137 |
| 11 | Upper Santa Cruz Harbor North of Brommer Street Sewer Replacement | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 121 |
| 67 | Monterey Bay Seawater-Freshwater Interface Location Study | Soquel Creek Water District | Water Quality | 120 |
| 7 | Jewel Box & Venetian Sewer Replacement Project | Santa Cruz County Sanitation District | Water Quality | 119 |
| 17 | Low Impact Demonstration Project - 701 Ocean Street | Santa Cruz County Parks | Water Quality | 90 |
| 23 | Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP) | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 260 |
| 63 | Watsonville Slough Restoration and Enhancement Project | Watsonville Wetlands Watch | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 258 |
| 68 | San Lorenzo River Alliance | Coastal Watershed Council | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 238 |
| 32 | West Branch Struve Slough Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project | Watsonville Wetlands Watch | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 229 |
| 12 | Santa Cruz Countywide Partners in Restoration Permit Coordination Program (PIR) | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 225 |
| 24 | Salmonid Recovery in the San Vicente Creek Watershed | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 224 |

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| ID | PROJECT TITLE | PROJECT PROPONENT | CATEGORY | SCORE |
|----|--|---|--|-------|
| 33 | Ecosystem Condition Profile for the San Lorenzo River Watershed using the Level 1-2-3 Framework | Central Coast Wetlands Group at MLML | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 195 |
| 22 | Recovery of the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander and California red-legged frog in the Larkin Valley | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 191 |
| 53 | Zayante Area Outreach Program | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 190 |
| 26 | Scott Creek Lagoon Restoration | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 179 |
| 74 | Lower Soquel Baseflow Protection | County of Santa Cruz | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 168 |
| 27 | Santa Cruz County Watershed Awareness and Stewardship Project: Phase II | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 167 |
| 18 | Moran Lake Water Quality and Butterfly Habitat Restoration Project | Santa Cruz County Parks | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 160 |
| 60 | Pajaro River Steelhead enhancement | City of Watsonville | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 160 |
| 31 | Fire Prevention & Fuel Load Management Program | Resource Conservation District | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 154 |
| 37 | Freedom Sanitation District Trunk Sewer Replacement Project | City of Watsonville | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 142 |
| 38 | Mañana Lane Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project | City of Watsonville | Watershed Stewardship/Aquatic Ecosystems | 122 |
| 70 | Storm Water Allocation Program (SWAP) - Alternative Compliance Options for Stormwater Mitigation | Resource Conservation District | Flood and Stormwater Management | 198 |
| 2 | Repair Sidewalls, Invert, Outfalls and Fish Passage Channel in the Branciforte Creek Flood Control Channel | City of Santa Cruz | Flood and Stormwater Management | 172 |
| 21 | Farm Neighborhood Park and Community Center including storm water quality improvement measures | Santa Cruz County Parks | Flood and Stormwater Management | 170 |
| 35 | Lee Road Stormwater Control Measures Development | City of Watsonville | Flood and Stormwater Management | 158 |
| 39 | Rio Del Mar Flats Stormwater Drainage Project Along Soquel Creek | SC County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Zone 6 | Flood and Stormwater Management | 112 |
| 36 | Santa Cruz Stormwater Residuals Disposal Site | City of Watsonville | Flood and Stormwater Management | 107 |
| 28 | Implementation of portions of the Storm Drain Master Plan Recommendations, Santa Cruz County, California, Zones 5 & Zone 6 | SC County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Zones 5 and 6 | Flood and Stormwater Management | 97 |

| ID | PROJECT TITLE | PROJECT PROPONENT | CATEGORY | SCORE |
|----|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------|
| 29 | 38th Avenue Detention Basin Retrofit | SC County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Zones 5 | Flood and Stormwater Management | 92 |

6.4.2 PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNICATING THE LIST OF SELECTED PROJECTS

The results of the project ranking were sent to each project proponent, an email notification was sent to the stakeholder distribution list informing that the project list was posted on the Santa Cruz IRWM website for stakeholder review and comment. The ranked Project List was approved by the RWMG as part of the final IRWM Plan adoption process. The final ranked Project List is posted on the Santa Cruz IRWM website at www.SantaCruzIRWMP.org.

6.4.3 UPDATING THE IRWM PROJECT LIST

The IRWM Plan is intended to be a living document based upon the recognition that regional priorities will change over time. In between formal updates to the Plan, the IRWM Steering Committee will periodically review and assess the list of projects in the Plan. Pending the need, and as finances allow, the Steering Committee may recommend a new solicitation for projects and otherwise make adjustments as necessary to be responsive to changes throughout the Region. Solicitations are anticipated to occur on a periodic basis, contingent on the state's IRWM Program grant solicitation schedule. The Plan project list will continue to evolve with each new project solicitation. Updating the IRWM project list will not entail formal re-adoption of the Plan, but just the approval of the RWMG through a simple majority vote. The project lists (and updates) will be announced to stakeholders via email and will also be available for download on the Santa Cruz IRWM website at www.SantaCruzIRWMP.org.

6.4.4 IDENTIFYING PROJECTS FOR FUTURE IRWM GRANT FUNDING REQUESTS

In the event of future solicitations for IRWM funding applications, the Santa Cruz IRWM Steering Committee will lead the effort to develop an application. The Steering Committee will consider strategic aspects of plan implementation in determining what projects to include in an application, including selecting the projects that implement high and medium level strategies in order to best enable the Region to achieve its objectives. The specific projects to be included in the application will be drawn from the project list. The Steering Committee will contact project sponsors to gauge interest in participating in a funding application. For those that are interested, the Steering Committee will develop a set of criteria based on the current Proposal Solicitation Package to further refine the project list. Once applied a final project list for the proposal will be circulated to all project sponsors for review and comment. The Steering Committee and project sponsors together will make the final decision on what projects to put forward in any grant round. An application cannot go forward without the final support of the full RWMG.

In order to be included in an application for IRWM grant funds, all project sponsors must formally adopt, or commit to formally adopting, the IRWM Plan prior to the application being submitted; and all project proponents must have formally adopted the IRWM Plan prior to the grant being executed. All project

sponsors included in the funding application will share equitably in the costs and burdens of developing the funding application.

6.4.5 IRWM PROJECT INTEGRATION

The development of the 2005 Santa Cruz IRWM Plan, the subsequent successful implementation of high priority IRWM projects, and the completion of the IRWM Plan Update 2014 are indicators that the Region is forming, coordinating, and integrating separate efforts in support of a unified regional water management planning effort. Integration is occurring across different levels, through stakeholders, resources, and project development and implementation.

Stakeholder Integration

The governance structure for the Santa Cruz IRWM Region (RWMG + stakeholders) represents a balance and diversity of interests and includes nearly all of the water resource-related agencies responsible for water supply and water quality, flood protection and stormwater management, wastewater and recycled water, and watershed management in the region. The process fosters stakeholder and institutional integration by encouraging the region's diverse range of agencies, interest groups, and residents to actively participate in the IRWM planning process. The formation of the Regional Water Management Foundation to support Santa Cruz IRWM efforts is a unique example of institutional integration in between resource agencies and a community-based organization. Stakeholder outreach methods illustrate the intent to engage a broad, diverse group of participants. Anyone can participate and play a role in IRWM planning, and specifically in the IRWM Plan Update, either through occasional working groups or through public comment, regardless of their ability to pay.

Resource Integration

The Santa Cruz IRWM planning process promotes resource integration in several ways. The active participation of RWMG agencies and stakeholders brings together a wealth of knowledge, expertise, and technical capacity to the planning process. The IRWM Plan itself is based on existing data and information from local agencies, and represents the combined planning efforts of water, land use, and environmental resource agencies throughout the Region. Another way in which the IRWM planning process promotes integration is through the sharing of data (see Chapter 10, Data Management). Throughout the Santa Cruz IRWM Region, a great deal of valuable environmental and water resource data is being collected, but unfortunately, few of these efforts are coordinated and data is seldom shared. The IRWM planning process is helping to facilitate better information sharing and to identify data needs that will help the RWMG, agencies and organizations, project proponents, and stakeholders in the region better understand environmental conditions. Finally, resource integration is promoted through the implementation of a broad and diverse array of resource management strategies (see Chapter 5). Promoting an integrated and diversified approach to resource management through the IRWM Plan will enable the Region to become more resilient to, and mitigate for, uncertain future circumstances, such as climate change.

Project Integration

An example of project integration in the Santa Cruz IRWM Region is the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP). IWRP is an innovative, effective, coordinated program for local, state, and federal watershed restoration efforts, as described in more detail in Chapter 14 Coordination. The

identification and integration of watershed restoration projects from agencies and stakeholders in the Region is a primary purpose of IWRP. Projects receive technical review by a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of natural resource managers, engineers, ecologists, and biologists representing local, state, and federal agencies; these include the County of Santa Cruz, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and Natural Resources Conservation Service. In addition, many of the watershed restoration projects are facilitated through the Partners in Restoration Permit Coordination Program (PIR). PIR promotes voluntary implementation of conservation projects to provide a wide range of resource benefits to water quality, habitat quality, and the conservation of agricultural resources. To date, the Santa Cruz IRWM program has funded the implementation of more than 40 watershed stewardship and water quality related projects that were developed through IWRP.

Another example of project integration in the Santa Cruz Region is the development and promotion of stormwater infiltration practices which provide increased groundwater recharge, reduced runoff, and improved water quality. These efforts involve multiple entities including the affected water supply agencies, public works agencies, Resource Conservation District, and property owners. These projects are being implemented at multiple locations in the county. The projects integrate the stormwater management efforts of the county and local municipalities and are informed by the efforts of the Monterey Bay Storm Water Action Group (SWAG). These collaborating partners, including RWMG agencies and stakeholders, identify regional activities and programs to address stormwater quality implementation needs. Multiple projects related to these efforts are included on the IRWM Plan 2014 project list. Previously funded IRWM efforts include elements of the stormwater pollution prevention program and groundwater recharge projects.



Aptos Sewer Transmission Main Relocation – Seacliff State Beach (2010)