



**RESOURCE**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

4/23/10

To: DWR (attention Joe Yun)

RE: IRWM Guidelines/ PSP

The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) would like to thank the State of California for its dedication to watershed, water and conservation planning in the State of California. Great work and regional collaboration have been funded over the years through Prop 84 and Prop 50.

Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) serve as a driver of local conservation and are linked into their local communities through strong partnerships with local land owners as well as government agencies and non-profit groups. They are crucial to the "on-the-ground" conservation that California needs and values. They will be crucial to the water and conservation issues that will affect the State in coming years.

As the Executive Director of CARCD, I have had the opportunity to talk with RCDs around the State about the various IRWM groups. RCDs often feel excluded from the IRWM processes due to the size of their projects and organizations. The guidelines and PSP are biased towards large groups, large projects, and water agencies. There is no incentive for the larger players to be inclusive of the smaller watershed groups, yet the smaller groups are often the groups completing the actual work on the ground.

In this economic environment, small organizations are struggling to keep their doors open. Channeling State monies through large agencies and large projects reduces the ability of small scale operations to remain economically viable, yet these organizations are crucial to conservation in California.

We recommend that the psp be amended to include a scoring criteria for regional inclusion, clear effort to involve smaller partners in the proposal process, diversity of stakeholder groups represented in the application for funding (not just as signees on the IRWM), diversity of sizes of projects included in the application for

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funding, or some other such indicator that the IRWM has made an effort to include ALL the members of their watershed in the application for funding, not just the bigger, more well funded organizations.

It is crucial that the small organizations remain a strong, vibrant piece of the watershed community if the entirety of watershed issues are to be addressed. It is important to the State that the PSP and funding reflect the importance of this work.

Again we thank you for your dedication to watershed issues, but we want to ensure that the playing field is level for all watershed members.

Thank you,  
Karen Buhr  
Executive Director

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