

Wallace, Keith A.

From: Robert Lindsey [rlindsey@mercedid.org]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 2:06 PM
To: DWR IRWM Grants
Subject: IRWMP Guidelines Comments - Merced IRWMP

To Whom It May Concern:

Merced IRWMP has the following comments and concerns:

- 50% Funding Match
 - Disadvantaged Communities will not be able to afford to participate in the program
 - As of January 2010, the unemployment rate in Merced County has reached 21.7%, the local economy has been hit hard and can not support this kind of funding opportunity
 - Merced IRWMP is concerned that Planning Grant money will flow to areas that already have money while the areas that need money will not be able to participate, a “pay-to-play” situation
- The intent of IRWM
 - Allows local regions to manage and direct the facilitation of water projects within the region
 - To empower regions and provide a means of streamlining the process of managing land with the perspective of various water issues
 - To emphasize that water issues are not a “one size fits all” problem
- Where IRWM is heading
 - The process is slowing down the progress of water management groups within the area that have been functioning for more than a decade
 - The process has become very burdensome and time consuming, in essence filling out and application for and application for a grant
 - DWR needs to understand that, much like water issues, this process is not a “one size fits all” process. In some cases what is achievable for one region may only slow the progress of another
- Where the IRWM Should Go
 - Empower existing partnerships and build on their successes
 - Simplify the inclusion of more stakeholders, that are not typically involved with day to day water issues (e.g. Planning Departments, DACs, etc.), without scaring them with a burdensome process that requires a high threshold of time and money
 - Continue to concentrate on the establishment of the sustainable IRWMs rather than getting wrapped around the axle with bonds and project funding issues at this phase

Please keep the above in mind when finalizing the IRWM Guidelines.

Respectfully,

Robert W. Lindsey
Facilities Specialist - Storm Water Drainage
Engineering – Water Resources
744 W. 20th Street
Merced, CA 95340

(209) 722-5761 Ext. 2857

RLindsey@mercedid.org

www.mercedid.org



“A superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.” – Confucius

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