

## Water Plan Regional Workshop Summary – Palmdale, CA

### OVERVIEW

The 2009 update of the California Water Plan, Bulletin 160 (Water Plan) is based on a collaborative approach that engages a wide range of stakeholders and the public in a variety of ways. The Water Plan team is receiving recommendations from a standing Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from 18 State agencies, and an Advisory Committee, with 39 representatives from organizations representing statewide interests. The involvement of regional and local interests is brought in through a series of public workshops conducted in each hydrologic region.

Each workshop consists of three major presentations to describe: the Water Plan, Regional Reports, and regional approach. Immediately following each presentation, workshop participants engage in brainstorming discussions in a small group format. A workshop for the South Lahontan region was held on July 10, 2007 in Palmdale, CA. Copies of the workshop presentations, handouts, and materials are available on the Water Plan website at [www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials](http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials).

A brief recap of the presentations is provided in the following paragraphs and the remainder of this document provides a summary of the small group discussions. Flip charts were used to record ideas generated during the discussions and transcripts of the flip charts are located at the end of this document.

Paul Dabbs, Project Manager for Update 2009, presented an overview of the Water Plan Update process. This presentation described the approach and structure for the 2005 Update, as well as the process for the 2009 Update – including meeting schedule and opportunities for involvement, key activities and work products, and related content. The major sections of the Update include: data on water supply, use, and quality; water planning scenarios; water management strategies; Regional Reports; and reference materials and technical reports. Following this presentation, workshop participants were asked to identify additional items that should be considered for inclusion in the Water Plan.

In the second presentation, Mark Stuart, Chief of the Southern District for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), reviewed the Regional Report for the South Lahontan hydrologic region. Each regional report describes regional data and hydrologic conditions, regional challenges and accomplishments, and regional water planning efforts. The discussion related to this presentation asked for suggestions to improve the content of the Regional Report for the South Lahontan area. Participants were also asked to identify and provide contact information for good sources in obtaining and verifying regional data sets.

The final presentation, by Judie Talbot, workshop facilitator, recapped the regional approach proposed for Update 2009. This approach uses regional workshops, an annual regional forum, and an annual plenary session to bring in local perspectives, issues, and concerns into the Update process. The ensuing discussion asked for recommendations to: improve the proposed approach; encourage the continuation of regional dialogue on water management; and identify others who need to be part of the regional conversation on water.

The workshops also included brief presentations on related statewide water initiatives, including the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grants program, Flood Safe program, and Statewide Water Analysis Network (SWAN). The SWAN is an open forum of technical expertise that serves as a technical advisory group to Update 2009.

## Water Plan Regional Workshop Summary – Palmdale, CA

### ***DISCUSSION ON WATER PLAN CONTENT***

After hearing the presentation on the approach, content, and structure of Update 2009, workshop participants were asked to brainstorm other topics that should be considered for inclusion in the Water Plan. Workshop attendees were specifically asked to think about regional issues and concerns that might benefit from additional attention. Three key themes that emerged during the group reports included:

- a. reducing demand through conservation: it was noted several times that developers are required to have green lawn landscaping in new developments
- b. greater discussion on groundwater: groundwater banking/storage and conjunctive use, including regulatory guidance - timely permitting is needed for groundwater storage projects; adjudication
- c. coordination with other State agencies
- d. regional collaboration and planning, including linkage to land use

Other topics that were identified by multiple group reports include:

- e. reliability of the State Water Project: annual allocations, water quality, and long-term average supplies; addressing Delta concerns and conveyance
- f. climate change: storm intensity and stormwater flows; drought preparedness
- g. funding options and sources
- h. adequate supplies to meet growing demand: infrastructure for water delivery; water supply and distribution contingencies; water recycling/reclamation; longer-term water planning horizons – perhaps 100 years

Education was noted as playing an important role in water awareness and water use – usable and user-friendly information is needed to improve understanding of water issues. Interstate water issues were also mentioned, such as Las Vegas development.

### ***DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL REPORT CONTENT***

The discussion groups suggested a wide range of additional topics that might be included in the Regional Reports:

- a. regional data:
  - add regulatory setting (building codes, landscape ordinances, use of recycled water)
  - describe sub-regional differences
  - provide a range of estimates, instead of just one number (e.g. population)
- b. water supply/demand/quality data:
  - include monitoring and how data fits in to data and management programs
  - include groundwater: groundwater overdraft; require statewide monitoring wells for groundwater levels; groundwater plans and supplies
  - water balances should rely on completed studies and projects
  - add a rain table showing monthly, yearly, sub-regional values
  - recognize inter-regional and inter-state interdependencies
  - include water-dependent natural resources (detailed mapping is available)

## Water Plan Regional Workshop Summary – Palmdale, CA

- c. challenges:
  - discuss emergency water supplies, how water systems interact during emergencies
  - funding: distribution of State funding needs to be increased to desert areas
  - reuse of tertiary-treated wastewater needs additional funding and removal of permitting obstacles (related to resource management strategies)
- d. resource management strategies:
  - include storage capacity
  - discuss implementation costs
  - discuss technologies: recycled water piping, desalination
  - conservation needs to promote low-water landscape
- e. regional planning:
  - include information on regional relations and coordination with other agencies
  - identify activities undertaken during the past five years and the results
  - explain how planning efforts fit together (integrated, groundwater, and urban water management plans)
  - describe drought protection
  - add emergency planning, multi-hazard assessments
  - synchronize Water Plan with Urban Water Management Plans
  - include list of projects proposed by locals; include project leads and timelines
- f. reference materials:
  - include any technical guidelines already developed
  - include templates for ordinances

### ***DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL APPROACH, OUTREACH, AND NETWORKING***

At the workshop, participants suggested additional strategies and contacts for successful regional outreach and involvement:

- a. provide summary of materials and results from workshops, demonstrate that input is being used, provide tangible results to participants (return on investment of time)
  - share the list of participants to make networking easier, build a network of contacts
  - share data and monitoring information; how can locals access data to complete data analysis for grant applications?
- b. expand outreach:
  - notify county planning commission
  - contact field representatives for county supervisors and State legislators
  - increase outreach to Tribes (Mohave Desert Mountain RCDC can help with contacts)
  - use local IRWM email reflector lists (and other sources) for announcements
  - send announcements to town councils (newspapers can help with contacts)
  - expand use of regional website for each region
  - make presentations at ACWA

## Water Plan Regional Workshop Summary – Palmdale, CA

- c. get attention with announcements:
  - include a statement about why people should get involved, why they should care and participate
  - send the agenda out in advance with the first announcement
- d. evaluate representation:
  - make sure that State agencies with regional programs are solicited for information and advice (RWQCBs, DHS) – more State agency involvement in IRWM meetings
  - balance public involvement and staffing: who is that target audience? (decision-makers? technical staff? general public?)
  - rotate tables at workshops
- e. regional follow-up:
  - follow-up meetings to discuss Water Plan tasks, regional planning, strategic alignment (who should organize?)
  - need a chart to show progress

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

At the close of the workshop, Paul Dabbs and Mark Stuart expressed thanks to all those who attended and participated in the session. A special thank you was extended to Palmdale Water District for hosting the workshop.

A final reminder was given to participants on contacts for the Water Plan: Chang Lee is serving as the point of contact for regional coordination in the Southern District. He can be contacted via email at [clee@water.ca.gov](mailto:clee@water.ca.gov) or by phone at (818) 500-1645, ext. 250. Paul Dabbs, provides general oversight for Update 2009 and can be contacted via email at [pdabbs@water.ca.gov](mailto:pdabbs@water.ca.gov) or by phone at (916) 653-5666.

## **CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts South Lahontan, July 10, 2007**

### **Table A**

#### *Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:*

- reliability of State Water project (annual allocations)
- reducing demand through conservation: need more awareness, developing incentives to conserve, need landscaping so that people look at this as the desert
- better cooperation between State and counties for groundwater recharge (DHS issue – takes 10 years to get a permit)
- groundwater issues: relates to need to reduce demand
- what regulations relate to groundwater storage? (need to encourage storage possibilities)
- water quality in the State water project (organics, bromide)
- water supply for growing population
- need a cross-Delta conveyance facility plan (to address reliability and storage)
- climate change impacts

#### *Suggestions regarding regional reports:*

- add item #7 (looking to the future) C: storage capacity
- add a section on regulatory environment (building codes, landscape ordinances, use of recycled water)
- emergency water supplies

#### *Regional outreach and networking:*

- do presentations at ACWA
- good overall
- need communication back on summary of results

## **CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts South Lahontan, July 10, 2007**

### **Table B**

#### *Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:*

##### Top issues:

- water banking and conjunctive use
- water conservation (evaluate conservation trends)
- water quality (Total Dissolved Solids, salts, etc.)
- agency planning consistency

##### Other issues:

- landowner control / agency control
- xeriscape
- funding for water issues
- water availability for growing population
- planning: 100 year horizon?
- balance: open space, housing, agriculture

#### *Suggestions regarding regional reports:*

1. costs of implementing plan
  2. add new section on activities undertaken during past 5 years (what was done? what were the results?)
  3. add new section on regional relationships and coordination with other agencies (protocol)
  4. synchronize planning (State Plan with Urban Water Management Plans); check that plans balance
- add new section on emergency planning
  - discuss technologies: piping, desalination, recycled water
  - broaden scope of demand to include fish (and other instream uses) – include regional baseline assessment/inventory
  - clarify scenarios
  - add more data
  - schedule work and identify participants to expedite the work
  - who will enforce the new plan? include an evaluation of the previous update

#### *Regional outreach and networking:*

- summarize material from workshops
- need a chart to show progress
- would be good to have a list of participants for contacts

## CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts South Lahontan, July 10, 2007

### Table C

#### *Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:*

##### Top 3 issues:

1. adjudication issues
2. water conservation (new developments required to have green lawns)
3. water banking

##### Other issues:

- water delivery: tie in missing links; update infrastructure
- fix the Delta: don't interfere with smelt – issue of peripheral canal and State delivery system
- role of the RWQCB, need to know more about what they do for our region
- desert areas need better representation for funding
- always seem to be in a position of “catch-up”
- connection between water resources and land use: involve city planners and planning departments
- educational process, need usable information
- how does Water Plan get “enforced”?
- State legislature should re-draft California Water law – especially for groundwater

#### *Suggestions regarding regional reports:*

- divide South Lahontan region into smaller areas that have similar characteristics and issues
- desert watersheds should have equal access to State funding as the “wet” watersheds
- change outdated outdoor landscape policies (requirement that new developments have green lawns)
- promote low-water landscape
- solve problem of groundwater overdraft
- increase funding and remove permit obstacles for reuse of tertiary treated wastewater
- require statewide monitoring wells for groundwater levels

#### *Regional outreach:*

- send announcements to town councils (newspapers can help with contacts)
- notify county planning commission
- contact field representatives (Norm Hickling) for county supervisors
- contact field representatives for State legislators
- outreach to Tribes (Mojave Desert Mountain RCDC does quite a bit of work with Tribes and can help with outreach)

## CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts South Lahontan, July 10, 2007

### Table D

#### *Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:*

##### Top issues:

- water banking and groundwater storage
- conservation: urban and agricultural water use efficiency; increase public awareness
- Delta: long-term reliability and maintain/increase long-term average supplies
- universal “State” water plan (beyond DWR water plan)

##### Other issues:

- Antelope Valley IRWMP
- continued support for IRWM plan process; deference to local priorities
- water supply and distribution contingencies (to adapt to changing uncertainty)

#### *Suggestions regarding regional reports:*

- contain more on current programs and activities
- different audiences for CWP (legislature, local efforts)
- address monitoring and management programs; show how data programs fit in
- drought protection, groundwater plans and supplies
- explain how planning efforts fit together (integrated, groundwater, and urban water management plans)
- water balances should rely in studies and projects that have been completed
- hydrologic region balances: population estimates seem low; publish a range of numbers rather than just one

#### *Regional outreach and networking:*

- continue dialogue beyond workshops and meetings
- share contacts
- expand use of website (for each region)
- share local contact with DWR (e.g. Mojave IRWMP email reflector list)
- build a network of contacts for information (if not on DWR’s website, facilitated by Southern District)
- make sure that appropriate State agencies are solicited for information and advice (e.g. RWQCBs, Health Services – agencies that have regional programs)
- meetings to develop strategic alignment
- follow-up meeting to discuss:
  1. CWP tasks
  2. regional planning – expanding existing efforts and bringing them together

## CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts South Lahontan, July 10, 2007

### Table E

#### *Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:*

##### Top issues:

- resource preservation, enhancement, and restoration (fish and wildlife habitat)

##### Other issues:

- water storage / groundwater banking and storage (isolated individual pumping; small water systems)
- water reclamation – infrastructure needed
- growth issues
- drought preparedness
- stormwater, climate change and storm intensity
- regional collaboration: leverage existing resources, coordination between agencies (wastewater, water rights)
- Inyo County: government land ownership, little growth
- large water exports: LA aqueduct
- no strategic long-term plan with LA for water use
- inter-state water issues (Las Vegas development)
- no common vision between stakeholders

#### *Suggestions regarding regional reports:*

- add a rain table showing monthly, yearly, and sub-regional diversity figures
- sub-regional delineation
- recognition of inter-regional and inter-state interdependencies
- interaction of water systems during emergencies; multi-hazard assessment
- develop meaningful action as plan output (locally developed)
- list of projects proposed by locals
- list of water-dependent natural resources (detailed mapping is available)

#### *Regional outreach and networking:*

- outreach to small systems
- consolidate distribution list, use multiple lists/sources
- more State agency (DWR and others) in IRWMP meetings
- SWAN: 2-way communication – how can locals access data and grant process to complete data analysis
- annual meetings each hydrologic region (day meetings for agency reps, night meetings for public)
- follow-up after meeting: email, feedback, meeting notes/minutes
- demonstrate that information/input is being used
- rotate tables at workshops
- balance public involvement and staffing: who is the target audience? (decision-makers? technical staff? general public?)
- provide tangible benefits to participants (local return on investment and time)
- where/how does technical work get done? what options for participation?
- are there technical guidelines already developed?
- what does the CWP want to do?