

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 IRWMP Overview

In 2002, the Integrated Regional Water Management Act was created when Senate Bill 1672 was passed. The purpose of the Act was to encourage local agencies to coordinate and collaboratively manage water resources to improve water quality, quantity and reliability. Following creation of the Act, in November 2002, the voters of the State of California recognized and codified the need for integrated regional planning for the management of water resources with the passage of Proposition (Prop) 50, *the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act*. Central to Prop 50 was the preparation of Integrated Regional Water Management Plans (IRWMPs). IRWMPs define planning regions and identify strategies that allow for the regional management of water resources in what began as four main areas: water supply, groundwater management, ecosystem restoration, and water quality. Prop 50 provided \$500 million to fund competitive grants for preparing IRWMPs and for implementing projects that were consistent with IRWMPs. Since its inception, the IRWM program has evolved. In November 2006, California voters passed Prop 84, *the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality, and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act*, providing \$1 billion for planning and implementation grant funding through the IRWM program. Prop 1E, referred to as *the Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act*, was also passed at that time, providing \$300 million for IRWM Stormwater Flood Management. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) administers the IRWM grant programs as currently funded by Props 50, 84, and 1E. As part of that program administration, DWR released the *Proposition 84 & Proposition 1E Integrated Regional Water Management Guidelines* (Guidelines) in November 2012, a set of guidelines for IRWM implementation and planning grants, including descriptions of what must be included in an IRWMP to be eligible for the grant program.

The IRWMP is intended to be a living plan that is to be updated regularly. The Plan summarizes regional goals and objectives for water resources management, and identifies strategies, projects, and programs intended to fulfill those goals and objectives. Projects and programs included in the IRWMP are designed to integrate multiple resource management strategies (RMSs) and projects to provide multiple-benefit solutions and beneficiaries, both locally and regionally. Program Preferences are developed as part of the IRWM Program, equating to a number of criteria that IRWMPs and associated grant proposals should address. The Program Preferences, as included in the Prop 84 Guidelines, are to:

- Include regional projects or programs
- Effectively integrate water management programs and projects within a hydrologic region identified in the California Water Plan; the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) region or subdivision; or other region or sub-region specifically identified by DWR
- Effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions
- Contribute to attainment of one or more of the objectives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program
- Address critical water supply or water quality needs of disadvantaged communities within the region
- Effectively integrate water management with land use planning
- To provide for non-State funded flood control or flood prevention projects (pursuant to PRC §5096.824 or §75034) to provide multiple benefits, including, but not limited to, water quality improvements, ecosystem benefits, reduction of in-stream erosion and sedimentation, and groundwater recharge.
- Address Statewide priorities [for water resource management] which include:

- Drought Preparedness
- Use and Reuse Water More Efficiently
- Climate Change Response Actions
- Expand Environmental Stewardship
- Practice Integrated Flood Management
- Protect Surface Water and Groundwater Quality
- Improve Tribal Water and Natural Resources
- Ensure Equitable Distribution of Benefits

This IRWMP has been prepared for the East Stanislaus IRWM (ESIRWM) region. It is consistent with the Prop 84 Guidelines, the priorities and objectives for regional planning, and reflects local resources and environment.

1.2 Regional Water Management Group

The East Stanislaus Regional Water Management Partnership (ESRWMP), the official Regional Water Management Group for the region, is presently comprised of the Cities of Modesto, Hughson, Ceres and Turlock. According to California Water Code (CWC) §10539, a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) is a “group in which three or more local agencies, at least two of which have statutory authority over water supply or water management, as well as those other persons who may be necessary for the development and implementation of a plan that meets the requirements of CWC §10540 and §10541, participate by means of a joint powers agreement, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or other written agreement, as appropriate, that is approved by the governing bodies of those local agencies.” For the ESIRWM region, all four entities have statutory authority over water supply or management in their respective jurisdictions, and all ESRWMP members signed an MOU dated August 23, 2011 (included in Appendix A) which formally formed the ESRWMP.

The ESRWMP initiated development of the East Stanislaus Region and spearheaded completion of the Region Acceptance Process (RAP) application to become an official IRWM region. This Region, and its associated RWMG, are relatively new and were recently developed, beginning in July 2010, to foster regional communication and cooperation and to cooperatively resolve potential water supply conflicts in the Region.

1.3 IRWMP Development

The State of California has established IRWM Plan Standards or Guidelines that define aspects that must be addressed in each IRWMP. This IRWMP has been constructed to meet or surpass each of those standards. The organization of the Plan is such that each Plan Standard is documented and addressed. The Plan Standards include documentation of:

- *Governance* – The governance structure for a region’s IRWMP development and implementation. A description of the Regional Water Management Group responsible for development and implementation of the Plan and the project proponents who will adopt the Plan.
- *Region Description* – The watersheds and water systems within the Region; internal boundaries; and water supplies and demands, including

“IRWM Plan Standards are used to describe what must be in an IRWM Plan and can be used as criteria in Implementation Grant applications.”

- Proposition 84 & 1E IRWM Guidelines, November 2012, Page 18

potential effects of climate change. Comparison of current and future water quality conditions in the Region. Description of social and cultural makeup of the regional community. Description of major water related objectives and conflicts. Explanation of how the IRWM regional boundary was determined and why it is appropriate. Identification of neighboring and/or overlapping IRWM efforts and explanation of planned/working relationships.

- *Objectives* – Objectives of the IRWMP that are measurable, and the process used to develop them. Explanation of prioritization of objectives if they are prioritized or the reasons they are not prioritized.
- *Resource Management Strategies* – Resource management strategies considered to meet IRWM objectives and which strategies were incorporated into the Plan. Effects of climate change on the region's water resources.
- *Integration* – Structures and processes that provide opportunities to develop and foster integration.
- *Project Review Process* – Procedures for submitting a project to the RWMG. Procedures for review of projects considered for inclusion into the Plan. Displaying the lists of selected projects.
- *Impact and Benefit* – Discussion of potential impacts and benefits of implementation of the IRWMP.
- *Plan Performance and Monitoring* – Performance measures and monitoring methods to ensure the objectives of the IRWMP are met.
- *Data Management* – Process of data collection, storage, and dissemination to IRWM participants, stakeholders, public, and the State.
- *Finance* – Possible funding sources, programs, and grant opportunities for the development & ongoing funding of the IRWMP. Funding mechanisms (e.g. rate structures) for projects that implement the IRWMP. Explanation of the certainty and longevity of known or potential funding for the IRWMP and projects included. Explanation of how O&M costs for projects would be covered.
- *Technical Analysis* – Data and technical analyses that were used in the development of the IRWMP.
- *Relation to Local Water Planning* – A list of local water plans used in the IRWMP. Discussion of how the IRWMP related to planning documents and programs established by local agencies. Description of the dynamics between the IRWMP and local planning documents.
- *Relation to Local Land Use Planning* – Current relationship between local land use planning, regional water issues, and water management objectives. Future plans to further a collaborative, proactive relationship between land use planners and water managers.
- *Stakeholder Involvement* – Description of the public process that provides outreach and an opportunity to participate in the IRWMP development and implementation. Process used to identify, inform, invite and involve stakeholder groups in the IRWM process. Discussion of how the RWMG will endeavor to involve DACs and Native American tribal communities in the IRWM planning effort. Description of the decision making process. Discussion regarding how stakeholders are necessary to address the objectives and resource management strategies. Discussion of how collaborative processes will engage a balance of the interest groups regardless of their ability to contribute financially to the IRWMP's development or implementation.

- *Coordination* – Identification of the process to coordinate water management projects and activities of participating local agencies and stakeholders to avoid conflicts and take advantage of efficiencies. Identification of neighboring IRWM efforts and how cooperation/coordination with these efforts will be accomplished. Identification of areas where a State agency may be able to assist in communication, cooperation, or implementation of IRWMP components, processes, projects, etc.
- *Climate Change* – Discussion of the potential effects of climate change on the IRWM region, including an evaluation of the IRWM region’s vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change and potential adaptation responses. Process that discloses and considers greenhouse gas emissions when choosing between project alternatives.

As described in the Guidelines, although the Plan Standards name specific topics the IRWMP should cover, they do not constitute an outline for the Plan. The following table shows which sections of the IRWMP address the Plan Standards previously described. All of the Plan Standards are addressed which helps ensure the creation of a high quality, implementable IRWMP.

Table 1-1: Plan Standards Addressed in the East Stanislaus IRWMP

Plan Standard	East Stanislaus IRWMP Chapter to Reference
Governance	3.1, 3.2
Region Description	2.1, 2.2, 2.3
Objectives	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5
Resource Management Strategies	4.4
Integration	5.2
Project Review Process	5.1, 5.2, 5.3
Impacts and Benefits	5.4
Plan Performance and Monitoring	7.1, 7.3, 7.4
Data Management	6.2
Finance	7.2
Technical Analysis	6.1
Relation to Local Water Planning	4.7, 4.8
Relation to Local Land Use Planning	4.9
Stakeholder Involvement	3.2
Coordination	3.3, 3.4
Climate Change	2.3, 5.2

Ongoing information about the development and implementation of this IRWMP can be found on the East Stanislaus IRWM Region’s website at www.eaststanirwm.org.

1.4 IRWMP Adoption

ESRWMP member agencies and project proponents are expected to adopt the IRWMP upon completion, and any stakeholder entities can choose to accept or adopt the completed Plan to demonstrate support and commitment to implementation. Upon completion of the East Stanislaus IRWMP, the following entities adopted this Plan:

- [ADD ENTITIES WHO ADOPT PLAN AND DATE OF ADOPTION]

As described in Chapter 7.4, Plan Updates, the East Stanislaus IRWMP will be updated periodically to reflect changing conditions and IRWMP project implementation. When the IRWMP is updated, it will be re-adopted by the participating agencies. There may, however, be interim changes to the IRWMP that will be administrative in nature; for example, the project list may be updated prior to a grant proposal solicitation. This IRWMP does not require re-adoption of this Plan for interim or administrative changes.