

## 16. Governance and Next Steps

Identifying a satisfactory governance structure and method of decision-making can be a challenge for Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning regions spanning jurisdictional lines. The process of building relationships while discussing how organizations are represented and empowered with decision-making rights represents conflicting processes. Going through this type of discussion early in the process of developing the IRWM Plan for the Upper Sacramento, McCloud, and Lower Pit Region (USR) region allowed organizational representatives **and Tribes** to get to know each other and understand others' interests and needs.

The USR stakeholders spent over a year negotiating governance structure and membership, and as a result identified core group values and priorities. From these deliberations, a preliminary (temporary) governance structure led the Regional Watershed Action Group (RWAG) to evolve as constituted by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2013. Stakeholders signing onto the MOU in 2013 committed to an equitable decision-making structure that will serve the RWAG well into the future. In 2018, the IRWM Plan was updated to comply with 2016 IRWM Grant Program Guidelines. The 2018 Plan update builds upon the foundation of collaboration established over five years and intends to facilitate more productive **and meaningful** discussions in the future. Through productive communication, informed participation and effective administration, RWAG aims to improve the way shared interests are represented in local government and assist the region's responsiveness to changing conditions.

Throughout this chapter are discussions regarding the next steps for implementing the IRWM Plan. These correspond with Chapter 15, Financing IRWM Implementation and RWAG Operations, insofar as they reflect some of the thinking behind the need for financial resources relevant to the degree of desired activity by the RWAG.

### 16.1 Group Responsible for Plan Development

The existing RWAG, which evolved from the initial stakeholder group, is the decision-making body for the USR. While various work groups and committees provided research and information into the original process, the RWAG makes the final decisions using the decision-making method identified in Section 16.3, below. The entities listed in Table 16.1 participated in the 2011-2013 process in a number of ways. Many of them did not intend to be signatories of an MOU and be recognized as formal members of the resulting RWAG, but only wanted to participate in crafting the document and, in some cases, be project sponsors and adopt the final IRWM Plan.

| <i>Organization Participating in IRWM Development</i>    | <i>Statutory Authority for Water Management<sup>1</sup></i> | <i>Signatory to the MOU<sup>2</sup></i> | <i>Project Sponsor<sup>3</sup></i> |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Big Bend   | No  | No                                      | No                                 |
| Black Fox Timber Management                              | No  | No                                      | No                                 |
| Bureau of Reclamation                                    | No  | No                                      | No                                 |
| California Trout   | No  | Yes                                     | Yes                                |
| Campbell Timberland Management                           | No  | No                                      | No                                 |
| Castle Lake Environmental Research and Education Program | No  | No                                      | No                                 |
| City of Dunsmuir   | Yes   | Yes                                     | Yes                                |
| City of Mt. Shasta                                       | Yes   | Yes                                     | Yes                                |
| Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board      | No  | No                                      | No                                 |

| <b>Table 16.1: A List of Organizations that Participated in Development of the 2013 IRWM Plan, Including Those That Signed the 2013 USR MOU and/or Adopted the 2013 IRWM Plan</b> |  |  |                                     |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Organization Participating in IRWM Development</i>   | <i>Statutory Authority for Water Management <sup>1</sup></i> | <i>Signatory to the MOU <sup>2</sup></i> | <i>Project Sponsor <sup>3</sup></i> |
| California Department of Fish and Wildlife  | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Hancock Natural Resource Group  | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Hearst Forest   | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| McCloud Community Services District   | Yes  | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| McCloud Local First Network   | No   | No                                       | Yes                                 |
| McCloud Watershed Council   | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| Modoc Nation  | No   | Yes                                      | No                                  |
| Mt. Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center   | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| Pacific Forest Trust  | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| PG&E  | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Pit River Tribe   | No Yes   | Yes                                      | No                                  |
| River Exchange  | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| Roseburg Forest Products  | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Sacramento River Watershed Program  | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Shasta Indian Nation  | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Shasta Nation   | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District  | No   | No                                       | Yes                                 |
| Shasta-Trinity National Forest  | No   | Yes <sup>4</sup>                         | No                                  |
| Sierra Pacific Industries   | No   | No                                       | No                                  |
| Siskiyou County   | Yes  | No                                       | No                                  |
| Siskiyou Land Trust   | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| Trout Unlimited   | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| Western Shasta Resource Conservation District   | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |
| Winnemem Wintu Tribe  | No   | Yes                                      | Yes                                 |

<sup>1</sup> Statutory authority over water management is defined by the IRWM Guidelines (defined on page 32 of the November 2012 document), and indicates local agencies with statutory authority over water management (i.e. water use, water delivery, natural waters, water supply, water quality, flood waters, etc.). This definition does not include federal agencies, state agencies, or Native American tribes.

<sup>2</sup> MOU signatory list is as of the date of document adoption: November 25, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Project sponsor list is as of the date of document adoption: November 25, 2013. Individual agency/organizational adoption will consist of an update/addition to Appendix D throughout the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014; this will occur prior to any grant submittal to the DWR.

<sup>4</sup> The Shasta-Trinity National Forest is participating through an MOU-alternative developed for federal agencies.

## 16.2 Description of Chosen Governance Structure

### *Governance History*

Early in the planning process, the concept of a governance structure was identified as the most controversial component of the IRWM planning process. The three main issues included:

1. That jurisdictional entities (cities, counties, water districts, etc.) maintain their rights and responsibilities to their constituents via compliance with local and state law;

2. That sovereign governments (~~Native American tribes and nations~~, California Recognized Historic Indian Tribes and Nations, the federal government) maintain their rights and responsibilities as described in federal law; and
3. The advantages and disadvantages of a full consensus-based decision-making process.

During a stalemate in the discussions during preparation of the 2013 IRWM Plan, a proposed governance structure came forward through one of the participating city representatives. This structure included a single body of all regional stakeholders, identifying one voice (or vote) per entity. This body was identified as the General Assembly. Stakeholder entities could have a voice if they regularly attended IRWM group meetings, and were expected to make consensus decisions on elements of the Plan, project recommendations, grant applications, and other related matters. If consensus could not be reached in the first meeting in which an issue or topic was brought forward, it would be tabled and the affected stakeholders would discuss it and try to come to a conclusion before the next meeting. In the next meeting, if consensus could not be reached, then any member could call for a vote. For an issue to pass, it would have to get a 75% super-majority from all voting entities. If consensus could not be reached and a vote did not pass, the issue would not be revisited until the next plan update.

If a proposal was passed by the General Assembly, it would automatically go to the Coordinating Council for a second review by three distinct groups: statutory authorities (cities, counties, and special districts), tribal authorities, and non-governmental entities (non-profit entities, business groups, etc.). Each of these groups would be made up of four entities each. If an issue was referred from the General Assembly, the Coordinating Council would poll every member of the Council either in a Council meeting, by teleconference, or by electronic mail or other means of communication. A super-majority of 75% of the voting members of each sub-group (does not include abstention votes, and in the event that a sub-group has less than four members, a super-majority would be considered two votes of approval) would have to approve (“support” or “live with”) a proposal for it to become a position of the RWAG. Proposals not achieving super-majority approval at both the General Assembly and the Coordinating Council levels would not go forward.

During the transition from the original stakeholder group to the MOU-based RWAG, members of the stakeholder group continued to be consulted and given opportunities to comment on drafts of IRWM Plan material and the development of project proposals.

### ***Governance Transition and Future***

During the planning process, stakeholders decided that the governance process required formalizing through a MOU. The MOU was developed based very closely on the interim governance structure in place until that point, with a few refinements in structure. Signature onto the MOU was required for continued active participation (voting) in the planning process, and signatories to this MOU became the formal RWAG. Organizational entities (not individuals) could become members of the RWAG through signing onto this MOU, stating their support for the process, their commitment to participate in good faith, and intent to adopt the IRWM Plan at the end of the process (see Appendix C for the MOU). Identifying an organization as a member then allowed that organization one vote through their chosen representative or alternate(s). Members were to attend meetings consistently with the responsibility of communicating information regarding the IRWM planning process regularly to the entity that they represent. The organization also could designate an alternate in the event that the primary member was not able to attend; it was, and continues to be, expected that the alternate be fully briefed on all pending issues and decisions and be vested with the same authority as the primary representative.

The MOU was also designed to accommodate the process of adopting the completed IRWM Plan. If an entity chose to sign the MOU, but not adopt the final IRWM Plan, this entity could continue to participate

in the IRWM Plan implementation process, but could not submit implementation projects for inclusion in the IRWM Plan or for any IRWM-based funding opportunity. Adoption of the IRWM Plan is discussed further in Section 16.5.2, below. Likewise, if an organization did not want to sign on to the MOU, but did adopt the final IRWM Plan, they were free to be a project sponsor but would not be a voting member of RWAG. As described above, the governance strategy identified by the stakeholders early in the planning process, and then formalized into the RWAG, was chosen for its open and democratic process. Thus, as required by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Guidelines, the “public involvement process [is] direct to local agencies, [California Recognized Historic Indian Tribes California Indian Native American](#) tribes, and stakeholders, as applicable to the region.” These agencies and stakeholders included those listed in Table 16.1, above. Representatives of local public agencies, non-profit organizations, Tribes, private industry, and communities qualifying as disadvantaged were, and continue to be, active participants in the development and implementation of the IRWM Plan. State and federal agencies, while not signatories to the MOU, actively participated in the development of the IRWM Plan and continue to participate in an advisory role and as project partners.

RWAG meetings are open to the public and noticed on the USR website. Many of these meetings also are noticed through press releases given to local media outlets (see Section 16.5.1). Any individuals who express interest and provide their contact information are added to the e-mail list to receive meeting announcements and draft documents.

Development of the 2013 IRWM Plan was the result of many hours that stakeholders and present RWAG members spent in meetings — some in plenary-based RWAG meetings, and many more in work groups and workshops, working out the more technical aspects of this document. Participation in the work groups and workshops occurred through self-identification in the larger General Assembly meetings and/or recruitment of participation by the project team, generally based on need and/or interest. The information presented, discussed, and any recommendations made were brought to the RWAG through chapter additions, drafts, and/or memos for discussion and consideration. The outcomes of all work groups were identified through meeting notes, which were dispersed to participants within two weeks following a meeting.

Work groups employed during the 2013 IRWM development process are listed below, along with their responsibility and coordination with the larger RWAG.

- Project Development Work Group: This group met during Plan development. Topics of discussion included how projects would be developed, how integration could be encouraged, project prioritization, the approach for subsequent DWR IRWM Plan Implementation Grants and how future discussions of project implementation would be guided by what was submitted. Information used by this work group included relevant DWR Guidelines sections, copies of other IRWM examples, and templates developed for the submittal of project application materials. Participants brought project materials applicable for their proposed projects and that may be useful to, or used by, other project sponsors. They also developed the prioritization process being identified and used in Chapter 10 (Project Review Process and Implementation).
- Objectives Work Group: This work group was self-identified in December 2012 and met once in January 2013 to refine the suite of objectives developed for RWAG consideration. They considered the measurability of each objective and the comprehensiveness of meeting stated issues and challenges in other developed sections. Following this meeting, their work was sent out to the RWAG for review and acceptance.
- Finance and Funding Work Group: This work group met periodically in 2013 to discuss funding issues on a larger level. This included project-specific funding, to some extent, but was more

focused on funding ongoing RWAG operations and IRWM Plan implementation. At least one meeting also identified and discussed the process for compiling and submitting an implementation grant, which was complimentary to some of the discussions had by the Project Development Work Group. This group's work fed directly into Chapter 15, Finance, which went to the RWAG for review prior to their adoption of the document as a whole.

- MOU/Governance Work Group: This group was made up of RWAG members who provided comments, written or verbal, directly on the MOU document and/or process. These individuals met once to negotiate language and process, and were contacted directly upon the refinement of that language to develop buy-in and confirm the signatory process.

While each of these committees worked on a separate and specific component of the final 2013 IRWM Plan, many RWAG members were on more than one committee. In addition, the region is small enough so that regular communication even outside the IRWM process can be had between all RWAG members, which aids in the coordination and communication process.

In general, these processes have continued into the work of the RWAG, adapted for implementation of IRWM objectives. With the Plan now adopted and five years of collaborative experience, RWAG relies upon three groups for making decisions: the Coordinating Council (CC), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the General Assembly (GA). The Coordinating Council includes representatives from three subgroups: Statutory Authorities (cities, counties, community services districts (CSDs), etc.), Tribal Authorities, and Resource Management interests (resource conservation districts [RCDs], non-governmental organizations, private businesses, etc.). The CC provides a chairperson to facilitate meetings and approves overarching, supervisory decisions. In addition to attending quarterly GA meetings, the CC usually meets ~~one or two times between~~ prior to GA meetings and as needed. The TAC (although Ad Hoc) is has been responsible for prioritizing, scoring and recommending projects for funding. In addition to quarterly GA meetings, the extra time commitment required by TAC members is concentrated around the DWR's release of Proposal Solicitation Packages (PSP).

### 16.3 Effective Decision Making

~~Each~~ As of 2018, each signatory to the MOU has a single vote in the GA decision-making process. ~~A motion may only be adopted with the approval of at least two-thirds of the Active Members of each of the three subgroups (i.e., a subgroup with three members requires two votes; four members requires three votes; five members requires four votes).~~

As discussed above, at the first meeting where an issue is discussed and a decision is needed, consensus is the only option for making that decision. If consensus cannot be reached, then the discussion is tabled and those with the disagreement work to address the outstanding issues before the next meeting. At the second meeting at which the topic is discussed, consensus is the first choice for making a decision, but if consensus still cannot be reached, at that point a vote may be held that would then refer the decision to the Formal Issue Resolution (FIR) process, per the MOU. The FIR is conducted by the Coordinating Council. A motion may only be adopted with the approval of at least two-thirds of the Active Members of each of the three subgroups (i.e., a subgroup with three members requires two votes; four members requires three votes; five members requires four votes). The Pit River Tribe has suggested that when a tribal issue is brought to the FIR process an appropriate DWR representative should be included in the process.

If, after the first meeting where an issue is presented and consensus is not reached and stakeholders see the potential for consensus with further communication and/or coordination of additional information, data, or background materials, there may be outreach performed by individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups to those individuals not joining in consensus. This may be completed in order to better ascertain an individual organizations' hesitancy, and thus, potentially, allow for consensus.

The USR process is based on a significant amount of person-to-person, or organization-to-organization, communication. The small population and relatively few stakeholder organizations (when compared with other regions in the state), makes this type of communication feasible, and even more effective than a purely meeting-based negotiation process. The relationships developed as part of this process can make the RWAG seem like a “closed club” to new entities wanting to join in the process. The RWAG membership is aware of this, however, and continues to solicit, as well as incorporate input from additional stakeholder groups as they show interest.

#### **16.4 Balanced Opportunity for Participation**

As shown in Table 16.1, the suite of entities participating in the development of the USR IRWM Plan has been diverse, including varied interests throughout the region. During the initial outreach phase of the development of the IRWM Plan, organizations and agencies in the region were alerted of the opportunity to participate in and, subsequently, to sign on to the MOU. This outreach was achieved through personal contact by the grantee (the River Exchange) and extensive email communication. Outreach also included public announcements. The outreach phase extended longer than the first year of the planning process, allowing an extensive time for contact, communication, and ongoing opportunities for participation in the planning process.

This initial, more personal form of outreach set the stage for the outreach process used throughout the planning and project implementation process. While RWAG’s website provides a helpful way to get information to the fingertips of all stakeholders and interested parties, it is the personal communication that gets people to meetings, bridges gaps in understanding and disagreements, and helps the RWAG utilize a formal decision-making structure to improve representation of shared interests beyond the planning phase.

The planning process was funded initially by a DWR Proposition 84 planning grant, and the 2018 IRWM Plan update was funded by a DWR Proposition 1 planning grant. During work on the 2013 Plan, participation by disadvantaged communities and tribes was also supported by a private grant from the Rose Foundation, awarded to the River Exchange, that helped pay for these entities’ time and travel costs. During 2014, the first year of meetings after the RWAG was established, a grant from the National Forest Foundation supported administrative functions conducted by the River Exchange and participation by several organizations and tribes. Both sets of stipends were crucial in enabling a more diverse group of stakeholders to continue to participate in the planning process. In addition, specific outreach to entities not able to make meetings occurred regularly throughout the process, with the opportunity to submit oral comments and, in some cases, go through the draft document components with the project team.

As noted above, the governance and decision-making structure identified by stakeholders was based on an interim governance structure and allows for jurisdictions to participate on equal footing with other stakeholders. Each stakeholder has one vote in the decision-making processes, and all votes are counted with similar weight. This avoids any particular entity or group of entities having a preponderance of influence or status in the decision-making process.

Equal opportunity and representation of the stakeholder group evolved into the structure identified in RWAG’s MOU. The only officers noted in the MOU are Secretary and Fiscal Agent. The MOU defines the designation of these posts as “from time to time,” indicating an openness to change but unwillingness to do it without reason. It is likely that the fiscal agent post will only be used when the RWAG has finances to disperse; that is, the fiscal agent post is likely only to become effective upon grant award and/or if membership dues are ever assessed (see Chapter 15, Financing IRWM Implementation and RWAG Operations). Stakeholders making up the RWAG are open to considering any RWAG member

filling these roles, as can be seen by the initial designation of the River Exchange, a non-profit organization without statutory power, as the fiscal agent and secretary in the original version of the MOU.

The RWAG's successful grant application during Round 3 of Proposition 84 Implementation Grant funds resulted in the assessment of a small percentage of project awards going toward RWAG's ongoing administration. The "USR task" launched an internal effort to provide a stable source of sufficient funding for administrative duties. In addition to serving as ~~GACC~~-members, direct beneficiaries of IRWM "give back" to RWAG by contributing towards functional and reliable operations. Combining the USR task funds with support from the Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACI) program, the RWAG is transitioning toward a paid administration in 2019 and 2020. With operational details covered, duties of the CC and TAC will not be as overwhelming and committee members can be expected to serve on a volunteer basis. The organizational structure during phase two (2019-2024) of RWAG's collaboration is anticipated to increase interest, improve the region's impact, and provide balanced opportunities for participation.

There are currently no terms of service within the MOU-based governance structure; member entities may leave the organization whenever they wish. However, continued participation requires that organizations have at least one primary and one alternate representative actively participating and attending meetings to ensure the continuity and comprehension essential for active and meaningful participation.

## 16.5 Effective Communication

### *General Stakeholder Communication*

RWAG meetings are noticed on the USR website and announced via email to the list of participants compiled since 2011 and added to as new participants attend and/or contact RWAG's administration. If stakeholders state a preference for hard copy documents and announcements, these are mailed to them at the same time as the email is sent.

As mentioned above, the website is a helpful tool for making resources available to all stakeholders, as well as to those entities who have chosen not to participate but are still interested in following the process. The website includes a calendar which is updated as meetings are scheduled and materials made available. It also has a database for reference documents that allows stakeholders to load their own data and documents as well as view those loaded by others. This adds to process transparency and is an excellent organizational tool for bibliographic materials. In order to facilitate shared understanding of common watershed language, the Plan's glossary and a definition of common acronyms will also be added to the website.

In addition to these efforts, the River Exchange created a stakeholder participant list midway through the planning process, including the representative and alternate for each organization and organizational contact information. This document was created to better facilitate coordination and communication among stakeholders on the topic of plan content, as well as to encourage and enhance collaboration with regards to project development. It was provided to all participants midway through the planning process.

Making project team contact information available to all participants facilitated two-way communication between participants and the project team. In addition, project team members called participants directly. These calls addressed issues such as opportunities for comment, questions regarding submitted comments, general check-in calls to gauge process status, and to field questions regarding future efforts (such as document adoption and project financing).

### ***Communication with and between Project Proponents***

The initial project solicitation resulted in the submittal of 19 different projects by 12 entities. Project submittal continued to be a topic of RWAG conversation for several months, resulting in a final list of 31 projects by 13 entities. After the call for initial project proposals, several stakeholders initiated their own outreach to other entities to discuss collaborating on specific projects. Further coordination and collaboration among project sponsors was encouraged through the project development workshops to emphasize integration. The RWAG reinforced the need for collaboration by noting that integrated projects would be more likely to be universally supported for inclusion in the IRWM Plan. This encouragement resulted in better communication between project sponsors, which then resulted in a stronger and more integrated suite of implementation projects.

For the 2018 IRWM Plan update, the Pit River Tribe has proposed that the RWAG should require Tribes be directly consulted on all proposed projects that have the potential (i.e., ground disturbing activities) to impact cultural and environmental resources within a Tribes jurisdictional territory. This process can be required through the project selection criteria, prior to inclusion within the USR Plan. Communications and collaboration should be ongoing (if requested by the Tribe).

### ***Communication with Neighboring IRWM Regions***

Communication with neighboring IRWM groups occurs periodically, as needed. For example, after learning that the North Coast Resource Partnership (NCRP) successfully administers diverse stakeholder planning and project implementation processes and has integrated California Recognized Historic Indian Tribes California Indian Tribes Native American interests into its governance structure, RWAG project team members attended NCRP meetings and followed up with West Coast Watershed staff to get more information about the North Coast's processes. In addition, the River Exchange and DACI Coordinators have been active in interregional communication opportunities, such as the Sacramento Region Funding Area calls and meetings, and the Roundtable of Regions calls and events. Because the USR is tied to the Upper Pit IRWM Region through the Medicine Lake Highlands-Fall River hydrologic connection, USR stakeholders anticipate more opportunities for inter-regional communication with the Upper Pit Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) in the future (see Chapter 10, Project Review Process and Implementation). Further, with specific direction from the RWAG, there could be opportunities ~~it is the intent of the USR RWAG~~ to work more closely with the Upper Pit RWMG and NCRP to improve climate resilience in the North State through the exchange of information and collective efforts where possible.

### ***Communication with Government Agencies***

Local, state, and federal agencies are all included in the e-mail list for meeting announcements and materials. While most federal and state agencies have chosen not to participate in the decision-making process, their document review, suggested edits and additions, and other input is considered on the same level as that of local stakeholders and RWAG members. In the case that projects were proposed on land managed by one of these agencies, stakeholders made sure that one of the partners included on these projects was the land management agency and that all project strategies were in line with that agency's land management directives and goals. Going forward, the continued participation of these state and federal agencies will be integral to the region's success. Local agencies will likely continue to participate as project sponsors, and will contribute to ongoing meetings, project administration, grant management, and planning document update efforts.

### ***Communication with the General Public***

Meetings of the RWAG and workgroups have been open to participation by any party expressing interest. These meetings have been and will continue to be posted on RWAG's website along with information

relevant to the topic to be discussed. In addition, participating entities discuss the IRWM process regularly at publicly noticed board meetings and workshops and include information regarding the planning process in organizational newsletters. The website is available to the public and is the most readily available and consistently updated place to go for up-to-date information about the IRWM planning process. Please see the following section for public notice announcements.

### 16.5.1 Public Notice Announcements

The River Exchange, as the grant recipient from DWR, held initial responsibility for publicly noticing the IRWM development process. The first notice went out in March 2011 as a news release to a number of regional news outlets. It announced the grant award and contract as well as a description of the planning process and intent to prepare an IRWM Plan. The news release included contact information for the River Exchange should readers be interested in participation. This announcement was followed up by progress reports to the same regional news outlets in April and October of 2012.

As the IRWM Plan was completed, a notice went out in November of 2013 indicating the RWAG's intent to adopt the completed IRWM Plan. Comments were solicited via the website, with directions indicating how to review documents and submit comments included in the news release.

During 2017, projects that received funding through Round 3 of Proposition 84 were featured in brief videos that interviewed project proponents and documented project implementation process. This audio-visual communication format enabled RWAG to tell the story of why watershed collaboration is important in the USR. ~~in a more comprehensive, engaging and consistent way.~~ These videos are featured on the RWAG website for accessible viewing. The videos will continue to help RWAG raise IRWM awareness and inform potential stakeholders about opportunities for participation.

~~The RWAG has continued this proactive approach to public education throughout successful grant rounds in 2015 and 2017, as well as during the 2018 plan update. In order to streamline outreach efforts, RWAG is assigning responsibility for general outreach to the newly formed administrative branch. In addition to distributing meeting minutes and agendas, RWAG administration will work with project proponents to conduct project specific education and outreach.~~

RWAG has temporarily assigned administrative duties, including taking and distributing meeting minutes and agendas, to a newly funded RWAG Coordinator.

### 16.5.2 Plan Adoption

The type of IRWM Plan created by the RWAG is a new document referencing in-place, existing local plans. It does not supersede or contravene any authority of existing plans and policies or the authorities of statutory jurisdictions, including jurisdictional agencies participating in the planning process or adopting the IRWM Plan.

The adoption of the IRWM Plan occurred through a process of two central, linked actions on the part of RWAG members. The first action was that of RWAG approval through the group's adoption of the IRWM Plan. This occurred on November 25, 2013, and was a consensus of the agencies and organizations present. The second phase of action was that of individual RWAG members and other parties bringing the RWAG-adopted document to their respective organizations for organizational adoption. Organizational adoption was structured through a mutually agreed upon resolution (see Appendix D). The signatures of an organization's governing body, and the submittal of a copy of that resolution to the RWAG through the River Exchange, represented organizational adoption. While not finalized for adoption on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013, this chapter has been updated with subsequent revisions.

Document adoption is open to any interested organization, whether they participated in developing the IRWM Plan or not. Due to DWR Guidelines, adoption was and is required of all organizations that sponsor projects. Table 16.1, above, shows those organizations that adopted the IRWM Plan, with a note if the organization has sponsored a project. All adoption resolutions may be found in Appendix C of this document.

### 16.5.3 Interim and Formal Changes to the Plan

It is anticipated that minor changes in strategy or situation could result in occasional changes to the IRWM Plan by the RWAG. These may be factual changes **in policy**, such as a new endangered species or changes in approaches to resource management **or engagement and consultation with Tribal governments** by state and federal agencies, and will thus be incorporated into the appropriate section and result in a revised section or addendum. It is not anticipated, however, that these types of changes will require members to re-adopt the IRWM Plan.

There may also be procedural changes requested by RWAG members or required by an outside entity, such as the DWR or other granting agency. In this case, it is likely that a more formal process will be put into place, based largely on the decision-making structure described earlier in this chapter. Changes in and additions to the project list for implementing the IRWM Plan will likely be done through the development of addenda and appendices.

The performance measures chapter (i.e., Chapter 12) describes in more detail how plan implementation success is to be measured. It is through this process that stakeholders anticipate assessing the need for plan revisions or updates, and whether they need to be simple revisions or a more formal process.

### 16.5.4 Updating or Amending the Plan

Stakeholders view the IRWM Plan as a living document, which is essential to assessing the Plan for relevance and effectiveness on a regular basis. The performance measures chapter describes this process in more detail, but the RWAG assumes that some changes will be required as conditions within the region change and as accomplishments are made. In particular, the process for assessing performance may determine that one or more of the objectives become less important due to success in meeting the measurements placed on it. This may indicate a need to change the measurements, a need to edit the objectives, or both. It is likely that a formal review of the IRWM Plan and resulting changes will occur, on average, every five years.

## 16.6 Long-term Implementation

The 2013 document was written with a planning horizon of 20 years. The RWAG MOU governance structure is designed to be useful and applicable for as long as it is needed. In the process of identifying a governance strategy, several other IRWM Group's strategies were considered; most of the groups examined had existed for at least five years. It was felt that if a governance strategy could be adopted that was similar to that which had brought another group through the planning process and into implementation and ongoing governance, that it was likely that this strategy could be similarly effective for the USR. Adding strength to this assessment was the fact that many of those governance structures were similarly organized, including the following points: 1) all interested organizations were included in the decision-making structure; and 2) the structure emphasized consensus, but had an “out” for final decision making if consensus could not be reached. More information on the topic of future plans is available in Chapter 15, Financing IRWM Implementation and RWAG Operations.

### 16.6.1 Organizational Structure and Needs

As stated in Chapter 15, Financing IRWM Implementation and RWAG Operations, DWR has indicated that it is looking at IRWM as the future of water management in California. Supporting this, there are more places in the California Water Code and current legislation that cite additional responsibilities for RWAG's and the IRWM process. While not a mandate, there are some tasks and functions important for a RWAG to consider apart from actual project implementation. As stated in Chapter 15, the degree to which RWAG embarks upon ongoing activities must be a decision by the group as a whole.

As discussed in Chapter 15, Finance, and Chapter 12, Plan Performance and Monitoring, the USR RWAG anticipates regular review of IRWM implementation status and success, as well as updates to this IRWM Plan on a periodic basis (generally every five years). The governance structure and IRWM adoption resolution allow for ongoing decision-making; there are no anticipated changes needed for the governance structure to accommodate updates to the IRWM Plan. However, other RWMGs have formalized their governance structure to allow for greater funding options and legal organization and responsibility. The current RWAG structure is not a legal organization, with signatures to an MOU identifying members and no formal entity (e.g. non-profit incorporation, Joint Powers Authority (JPA), etc.) established. However, stakeholders are looking to the future at potential options for organization. Some of the organizational discussions have included consideration of the following options:

- Joint Powers Authority/Agreement: This would formalize the process and would require adherence to all governmental organizational laws (such as the Brown Act). This organizational tool could allow for governmental and federally- and state-recognized aboriginal nations to participate as members of the JPA, but could sideline, somewhat, the role of the non-profit entities, private corporations, and those aboriginal nations not recognized by the federal or State government.

The Pit River Tribe has proposed that potential opportunities exist for JPA creation under SGMA for Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) formation, which provides a mechanism for a GSA to work more collaboratively with federally recognized Tribes (demonstrated recognition of Tribal Sovereignty). In addition, the Pit River Tribe also proposes that the RWAG may want explore opportunities for cross-jurisdictional planning on GSA formation (e.g., regional GSA's include Big Valley/Modoc GSA, Shasta/Scott River GSA and Tulelake GSA).

- Merging with Another IRWM Planning Region: Because of the relatively small size of the USR, in area and in population, stakeholders have discussed potential benefits and costs associated with joining another region. While a potential partner may be had in any neighboring region, differences in resource use (conventional agricultural vs. timber), stakeholder organization and momentum, hydrologic region (the North Coast versus the Sacramento River Hydrologic Regions), and basin type (headwater vs. lower valley) may cloud the objectives of each existing RWMG. Existing advocacy and organizational entities could also serve as an organizing force. An existing group of IRWM regions, the Sierra Water Work Group (SWWG), currently works with IRWM regions throughout the Sierra to advocate for common issues, including source water area protection, area of origin water rights, and rural/mountainous region issues. The RWAG has collaborated with the SWWG on its data management tool. This existing relationship could represent an opportunity to magnify the voice of USR stakeholders on issues of common interests within the State legislature. Additional partnership benefits include hydrologic assessment, planning and coordination at a watershed scale in addition to data integration for holistic resource management.

## 16.6.2 Ongoing Operations and Maintenance Support

The funds needed for ongoing operations will depend on the activities identified by the RWAG for implementation. However, an in-kind or financial contribution by members will likely be necessary in order to allow for continual updates to the IRWM Plan: financial contributions would allow the RWAG to hire temporary staff to do this work or pay a member organization to do it; in-kind contributions could allow member organizations to contribute effort in lieu of financial resources in order to update the IRWM Plan. Program longevity is essential for California to realize the potential of IRWM, and a 20-year planning horizon is minimum.

After several years of relying upon volunteer administration and coordination, the RWAG has determined that a supported, operational administrative staff is necessary to accommodate efficient and effective decision-making among stakeholders. As a result of past success and the DACI phase, RWAG is establishing an administrative branch to ensure consistent and effective operations. By 2020, RWAG anticipates serving as a leader in place-based climate stabilization for the region.

The Pit River Tribe has proposed that the administrative branch should include a local Tribal representative and that the USR develop a Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC).

## 16.7 Coordination

The governance structure allows for individual member entities to make any efforts they feel are necessary to advance the interests of the RWAG, as long as they are clear that they are acting on their own behalf and not on behalf of the RWAG.

### *Coordination within the USR for Information and Project Development*

As stated above, in Section 16.5, coordination within the USR is good. Information and meeting dates are shared via RWAG's website and announced via email to the list of participants. If stakeholders state a preference for hard copy documents and announcements, these are mailed to them at the same time as the email is sent. While the website is a helpful tool for making all resources available to all stakeholders, person-to-person communication has proven to be the most successful form of coordination within the USR. The region is of a good size to accommodate this method of communication, and new stakeholders are easily brought into the RWAG. To support these efforts, a participant list allows stakeholders to have contact information for all of those entities and representatives involved in the IRWM process.

Future coordination efforts will include the identification of the Project Development Work Group as an ongoing effort to facilitate communication and coordination regarding IRWM implementation efforts, priority projects, and the identification of synergistic partnerships and planning efforts.

Stakeholders in this process have voiced on several occasions the increased efficiency, synergy, and expected process improvements associated with doing project development and implementation through this coordinated group. Participants expect, after some initial challenges, that project identification, development, and implementation will be a smoother process and will involve fewer challenges from a process, legal, and/or collaborative perspective. A good example of how this coordination affected project development can be seen in the project submitted for the City of Mt. Shasta. A traditional infrastructure upgrade was made more robust by stakeholders' suggestions of efficiencies, green infrastructure, and public outreach additions. These tasks will add to the organization's ability to convey the importance of the project to their ratepayers and will also increase the value of the project overall.

### *Coordination with Neighboring IRWM Efforts*

Several stakeholders participate both in the USR process as well as another IRWM process. This adds to the coordination between regions due to stakeholders' knowledge regarding other regions' processes,

interests, and issues. In addition, the River Exchange also participates actively in interregional efforts (coordination between immediate boundary-area regions, participation in the Sacramento Hydrologic Region Funding Area group, and participation in the Roundtable of Regions) and brings that information back to the RWAG as information and, as necessary, decision points.

A challenge in interregional coordination specific to the USR and the River Exchange was the change in leadership with the River Exchange on several occasions throughout the application and implementation process. While these changes didn't interfere with participation, it is possible that the development of relationships and organizational coordination was somewhat hampered. That being said, good interregional efforts were demonstrated throughout the planning process. There was participation in DWR's May 2011 IRWM conference, as well as regular attendance in the Roundtable of Regions calls and meetings. Project staff also coordinated closely with the NCRP on topics of governance and tribal issues, and with the Inyo-Mono region on the climate change assessment.

Stakeholders have discussed the opportunity for at least one interregional project, looking at the connectivity of the Medicine Lake Highlands to the springs that feed Fall River in the Upper Pit IRWM Region. It's likely that there could be some water management collaboration between the USR and the North Sacramento Valley IRWM Region, if the need were there. Further discussions occurring in the Sacramento Hydrologic Funding Area (SRFA) as IRWM plans are implemented will further show the potential for this interregional work.

Communities located in the forested watersheds of the North Coast, USR, and Upper Pit regions have many water resource issues in common. They also share challenges related to the high proportion of DAC communities. There would seem to be many potential opportunities for RWAG to benefit from shared experience in resource management and IRWM implementation. Implementing this coordination will be dependent on continued capacity building and internal policy development regarding the role of RWAG. a lot in common. In addition to the challenges inherent of being almost entirely DAC, the capacity for improving carbon sequestration and water supply reliability in each region is tremendous. As the IRWM process strengthens, coordinating stewardship efforts across watersheds will hopefully minimize the devastating impacts of catastrophic wildfire and extreme drought, while revitalizing local economies and emphasizing restoration.

### *Coordination with State and Federal Agencies*

State and federal agencies, while not voting members of the RWAG, have occasional representation at the RWAG meetings. State agencies participating in the process include DWR, the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board, and Department of Fish and Wildlife. Federal agencies with interests in the planning process include the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. These agencies are included in regular RWAG communications and are continually invited to submit projects, comment on chapters, and participate in the general operations of the RWAG. Several of these entities are potential partners on implementation projects.

Some of these agencies serve regional roles of a regulatory and/or management nature, and thus are important reviewers for the IRWM Plan document. The fact that the U.S. Forest Service manages nearly half of the USR makes that agency of particular value in the process. Likewise, because the region provides a vast amount of water for uses throughout the state, DWR and the Bureau of Reclamation are important participants. These roles are respected and stakeholders expect to continue these relationships as planning moves into implementation; in fact, these agencies, as well as large landowners and forest managers in the private sector, will be essential partners if the RWAG is to accomplish all that is identified in Chapter 7, Objectives.

The Pit River Tribe, a federally recognized tribe, has a working MOU with three USFS National Forests (Shasta-Trinity, Lassen, and Modoc). The Tribe conducts quarterly consultation meetings with the three National Forests. In addition, the Tribe maintains a Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) for the Medicine Lake Highlands. The Medicine Lake Highlands is registered with the National Historic Preservation Office (NHPO) as a Traditional Cultural Property.

State agencies have been particularly important in the development and implementation of this IRWM Plan. One topic that has come up repeatedly in the region, emphasizing both its importance and controversial nature, is groundwater status and monitoring. This was felt with particular emphasis during the project development phase of the IRWM planning effort, as there were numerous projects identified that addressed the topic. State agencies (DWR and the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board) were particularly helpful in these discussions and e-mails through the provision of Water Code understanding and references, as well as information regarding the ways that other regions have implemented challenging components of IRWM. The DWR was instrumental in identifying a governance structure for the region, as well as with implementation support, and will likely continue to play a role in the region's implementation efforts.

The Pit River Tribe has noted the evolving relationship of groundwater status and monitoring. As new Tribal case law is being applied and created, changes may arise during SGMA implementation (e.g.,

#### **16.8 Collaboration to Establish Objectives**

While the outcomes of this process can be found in Chapter 7, Objectives, and (generally) in Chapter 2, Planning Framework (see Section 2.2.8), the process to establish objectives included all interested parties in USR and individual meetings and interviews, group identification of issues and interests, a workgroup formed to nuance and revise the objectives for discussion by the entire RWAG (see Section 16.2, above), and a process to review the objectives for completion and gaps. Those who may not have desired such active participation in all of the meetings and workgroups had ample opportunity to submit comments and edits throughout the development process, and were part of chapter approval and ultimate IRWM Plan review and adoption.