

Upper Santa Margarita Watershed Integrated Regional Water Management Program



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

IRWM PLANNING

- **What is the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan?**

The Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act was formed by Senate Bill 1672 in 2002. The California Water Code, 10530, states “a comprehensive plan for a defined geographic area, the specific development, content, and adoption of which shall satisfy requirements developed pursuant to this part. At a minimum, an IRWMP describes the major water-related objectives and conflicts within a region, considers a broad variety of resource management strategies, identifies the appropriate mix of water demand and supply management alternatives, water quality protection, and environmental stewardship actions to provide long-term, reliable, and high-quality water supply and protect the environment, and identifies disadvantaged communities in the region and takes the water-related needs of those communities into consideration.”

- **Why do we need an IRWM Plan?**

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to manage all aspects of water resources in a region. IRWM crosses jurisdictional, watershed, and political boundaries; involves multiple agencies, stakeholders, individuals, and groups; and attempts to address the issues and differing perspectives of all the entities involved through mutually beneficial solutions. An adopted IRWM Plan, approved by the state to meet defined standards, is required to be eligible for most state grant funding.

- **How often is the IRWM Plan updated?**

The IRWM Plan is required to be updated at least every five (5) years or more often if needed.

- **Who administers the State’s IRWM Grant Program?**

Under Proposition 84, the IRWM Grant Program is administered by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Information about the IRWM Grant Program can be found at <http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/>

IRWM GOVERNANCE

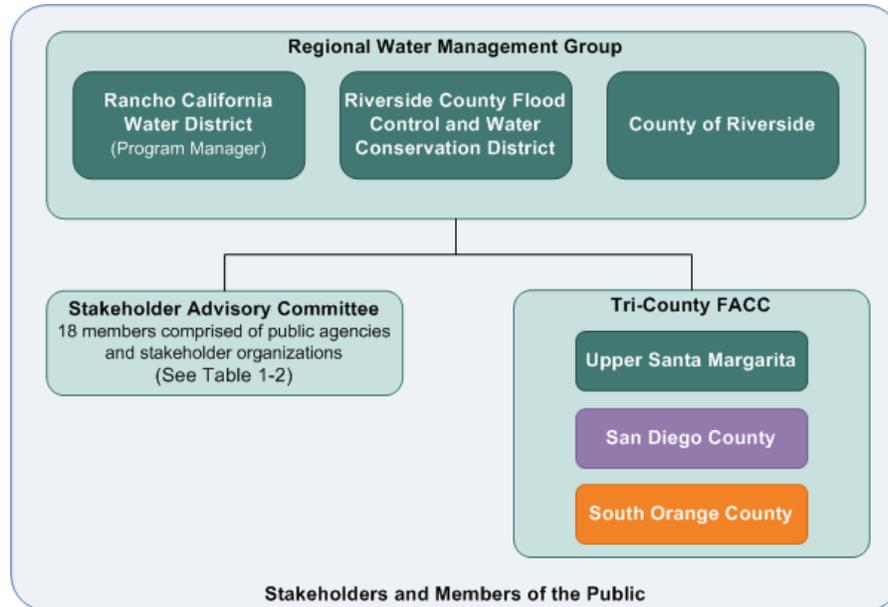
- **Who leads the USMW IRWM Region?**

A multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional framework forms the basis for the Region’s governance structure. This structure provides for management of project implementation, grant funding, communication, Plan revisions and updates, and general coordination among stakeholders. The Region’s governance structure features an inclusive process that encourages stakeholder involvement in the IRWM planning process. As shown in following figure, the Region’s governance structure is comprised of three key groups that work together to provide the

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region with focused direction while allowing for effective and comprehensive inter- and intra-regional collaboration. The Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) selected RCWD as its program manager who lead the region’s IRWM Program, including funding and contracting for planning, applying for funding and implementing funded efforts on behalf of the RWMG.



- **What is the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG)?**

The state IRWM planning process requires for a local governing body called a “Regional Water Management Group” (RWMG or “Management Group”) to administer the IRWM plan development process, its contents and projects. In 2007, Rancho California Water District (RCWD), Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC&WCD), and the County of Riverside signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by which the three agencies agreed to cooperate and work collaboratively with other stakeholders in the Region toward the completion of the watershed’s IRWM Plan. This MOU forms the basis of the USMW IRWM Regional Water Management Group (RWMG). The RWMG meets on a quarterly or as-needed basis to discuss ongoing management of the Region, IRWM Plan updates, and upcoming stakeholder meetings. Items requiring decisions are discussed and agreed upon by consensus all members of the RWMG.

- **What is the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)?**

The Stakeholder Advisor Committee (SAC) was created as authorized by the MOU. Members of the SAC include individuals representing public agencies and stakeholder organizations throughout the Region. SAC members were selected by consensus of and serve on behalf of the RWMG to inform and advise the RWMG agencies on regional needs, goals, priorities strategies, and projects. SAC members represent nonprofit organizations as well as

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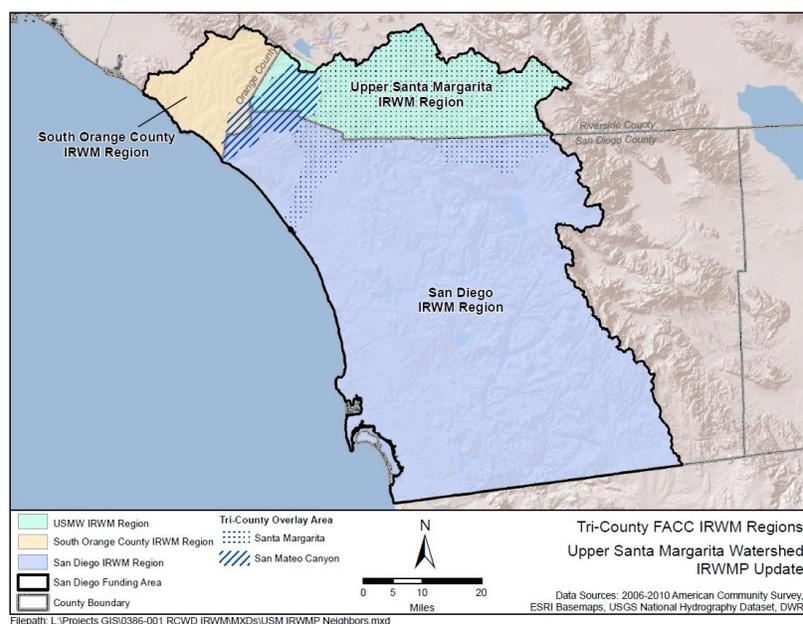
federal, state, and local agencies involved in watershed management. The SAC meets on a quarterly or as-needed basis.

- **Who are the IRWM stakeholders in the USMW IRWM Region?**

More than 50 federal, state, regional, and local agencies, organizations, groups and individuals. The IRWM Plan Chapter 1 Governance includes a list of stakeholders.

- **What is the Tri-County Funding Area Coordinating Committee (Tri-County FACC)?**

The USMW RWMG is signatory to the *Memorandum of Understanding for Integrated Regional Water Management Planning and Funding in the San Diego Sub-Region Funding Area*. Agencies collectively under this agreement are the Tri-County FACC. The Tri-County FACC is comprised of the Upper Santa Margarita Watershed IRWM Region and its neighboring IRWM Regions of San Diego County and South Orange County for the purposes of coordination within the San Diego Funding Area (under Proposition 84). The Tri-County FACC members have committed to coordinated planning to enhance the quality of planning, identify opportunities for supporting common goals and projects, and to improve the quality and reliability of water in the Funding Area. Planning and coordination is done in a watershed-based approach through integration and coordination, which includes cross-boundary projects, common programs, and IRWM grant funding. Further, the Tri-County FACC has entered into an agreement to share the Proposition 84 IRWM funds allocated by the State to the San Diego Funding Area. The agreement facilitates coordination between the RWMGs by reducing competition and conflicts over funding.



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IRWM Stakeholder Involvement

- **How do I get involved?**

Join the USMW IRWM Region email list, which you can do from the USMW IRWM web site found at www.rcwd.com. Participate in stakeholders meetings, submit comments on draft planning documents, or develop integrated projects for inclusion in the IRWM Plan. Be sure to monitor the Region's progress by checking the website for news and updates as well as to registering on the stakeholder email list. Your involvement is important, and your input is always welcomed through any form of communication.

- **Why is my involvement important?**

Stakeholders have been active in ongoing efforts in the Region to provide information and recommendations for the IRWM Plan Update and overall IRWM Program, as well as promote projects, project ideas, partnerships, and integration opportunities. The IRWM Plan's goal is to manage water resources in the local regions and seek to secure funding for water resources projects. The IRWM Plan and the RWMG support and encourage public participation to ensure all challenges and opportunities are identified across the Region that could be possible, and the IRWM Plan reflects the priorities of the communities.

IRWM Plan Projects

- **How do I get my project on the USMW IRWM Plan Project List?**

Complete the Project Nomination Form (found on the USMW IRWM web pages) and submit to the USMW IRWM Program Manager at irwm.ranchowater.com. The PNF includes instructions on Implementation and Conceptual projects, as well as how to complete and submit the PNF. Your project, partnerships, and funding should be somewhat developed to be able to complete the PNF, but feel free to submit conceptual projects. You may submit projects any time for consideration or through a Call-for-Projects, which occur prior to preparation of grant applications.

IRWM Program Manager Contact

- **Who can I talk to for more information?**

Contact the USMW IRWM Program Manager:

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