

**Tulare Kern Funding Area  
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program  
White Areas Working Group**

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**Location:** Self-Help Enterprises 8554 W. Elowin Court Visalia, CA 93292  
Phone: 800-768-2983 / Code: 3418040

**Meeting Summary  
Tuesday, November 26, 2019 10:00 am - 11:30 am**

**Attendees:** Jim Maciel (Armona Community Services District), Maria Herrera (Self-Help Enterprises) and Angela Islas (Self-Help Enterprises) – On the phone: Soua Lee (Kings River Conservation District/Kings Basin Water Authority) and Rebecca Berg (Civic Spark/County of Tulare)

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Maria thanked everyone for agreeing to serve on the white areas working group.

**Review/Approval of the Agenda:** The group reviewed the agenda. No changes were made to the agenda.

**Purpose/Objective of the White Area Working Group:** Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) provided an overview of the purpose/objective of the White Area Working Group and discussed approved activities as part of the Disadvantaged Community Education and Engagement Program (DACEEP). In summary, the purpose of the group is to identify and discuss approaches to extend coverage to communities outside of an Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) region, review current circumstances, previously identified recommendations and develop new recommendations. SHE has funding through the DACEEP to perform the following activities:

- Reconvene white areas working group;
- Facilitate up to three (3) conference calls or in-person meetings with the white areas working group and prepare meeting materials/notes and draft and final recommendations;
- Review what other IRWM regions around the state have done to facilitate DAC participation, determine relevant options for the Tulare-Kern Funding Area (TKFA), present options to white areas working group and obtain feedback; and
- Gauge interest by DACs in participating in IRWM and identify IRWM groups that are willing to incorporate DACs into their boundaries

**Current DACs/Entities not Covered by an IRWM Region:** The group then reviewed the map of DACs not covered by an IRWM region (Figure 4-9 DACs and SDACs Communities Outside of IRWM Boundaries) provided Provost and Pritchard.

The group also reviewed the list of entities not covered by an IRWM that was developed by the White Areas Working Group that was convened in 2014. Upon review, the group will add to the list of un-covered entities the newly formed Groundwater Sustainability Agencies: South Fork Kings, Mid-Kings River, El Rico, Greater Kaweah, Southwest Kings GSA and Pleasant Valley. Additionally, the group observed that most DACs/entities not covered by an IRWM region are within Kings County. Kings County has not been interested in participating in IRWM.

SHE then provided a brief overview of the approaches, preliminary recommendations, challenges and questions previously identified by the 2014 White Areas Working Group. **See the IRWM Participation Recommendations document.**

Comments by the group:

- Overlap issues has been resolved.
- All approaches previously identified appear to continue to be appropriate.
- Challenges identified by the group include limited funding currently available for the IRWM program, the competitiveness of the program (no one wants to increase the number of agencies they will need to compete with) and uncertainty about the future of IRWM. Armona experienced some resistance when they requested to join the Kings Basin Water Authority. Perhaps, DWR can identify and allocate additional funding to the FA and or provide funding/incentives to IRWM groups that agree to provide coverage to DACs in white areas.
- DACs not covered by an IRWM region should be able to seek funding but there should be some coordination with the neighboring IRWM region. Perhaps the DAC could submit the application to a neighboring IRWM. Unclear if the IRWM region should review, rank and score the project.
- There is a need to rebrand IRWM and this should begin with an education and messaging campaign to teach new members and remind existing members of the importance of the IRWM. It is important to communicate success of the IRWM program. The Kings Basin Water Authority will be working on rebranding IRWM in 2020.

### **Coordination with the Department of Water Resources (DWR)**

SHE provided an overview of recent Coordination with the DWR. In summary, SHE reported that at least two calls had been held. The first was held with Craig Cross and Nathan Fisch (Funding area coordinator). The second call was held with Carmel Brown and Rachelle Ballanti (Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Grant Program Contact).

SHE reported that DWR is excited to hear that Rebecca is part of the White Areas Working Group and is looking forward to reviewing the recommendations that are developed by the group. DWR has agreed to reach out to funding area grant managers to ask if they have any recommendations to share. Moreover, DWR will talk to staff involved in awarding funding to determine if any previous funding was awarded to projects that provided benefits to DACs outside an IRWM region or to DACs that are not covered by an IRWM region and how it was facilitated. Lastly, Rachel will follow up with staff member regarding a query of projects funded outside of IRWM regions.

### **Group Discussion**

The group identified some preliminary recommendations and approaches to provide coverage to DACs not covered by an IRWM region. Recommendations were developed for individual IRWM regions/funding areas, DWR, the Legislature/Governor and the Project Advisory Committee. See the IRWM Participation Recommendations document.

### **Future Agenda Topics/Action Items/Adjourn:**

SHE will prepare a meeting summary, draft preliminary approaches and recommendations and circulate to the group. Preliminary approaches and recommendations will also be provided via google docs.

- Convene one more call prior to January 16, 2019 PAC meeting. In order to find out when everyone is free for another meeting, a WhenisGood link will be provided when emailing the meeting summary and draft preliminary approaches and recommendations.
- Provide a brief presentation to the Project Advisory Committee at their January 16, 2020 meeting.
- Determine appropriate outreach method (calls, letter, survey and/or other) to gauge preliminary interest in participating in IRWM activities. It should be noted that agencies and DACs currently not covered by an IRWM region may not have enough information to

make a firm/final decision and may need to be outreach to and engaged more than once.

- Conduct outreach to DACs currently not covered by an IRWM region.
- Contact Andrew (Westside San Joaquin IRWM) to gauge interest in expanding existing IRWM boundaries to provide coverage to Kettleman City and Community 241.
- Contact Shane Smith to gauge interest in expanding Kaweah's existing or IRWM boundaries to provide coverage to the City of Exeter.
- Rebecca to update the group if Colorado has provided opportunities for DACs that are not covered by an IRWM
- SHE to provide updates as they are received by DWR.