

## **Section M**

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Relation to Local Water and Land Use  
Planning

## **Section M – Relation to Local Water and Land Use Planning**

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Water and land use are inextricably linked. This section focuses on how the IRWM Plan relates to planning documents and programs established by local agencies. The IRWM Plan facilitates communication between land use planners and water managers to encourage coordination between land use planning and regional water planning. This collaborative management approach leads to better decision making, which in turn increases the region's resiliency to climate change and drought and ensures that the region's water needs are met into the future.

The planning documents discussed below serve as an important foundation for the IRWM plan. The goals, objectives, and programs contained in these documents are integrated into the IRWMP to ensure that it is consistent with local issues and needs. The RWMG will continue to integrate local planning objectives as General and Community Plans are updated or new plans are developed.

### **M.1 Applicable Land Use Plans**

#### **M.1.1 Tulare County General Plan**

The County of Tulare has recently adopted an updated General Plan which has elements related to infrastructure development. The General Plan places a high priority on the provision of water supply to community areas, with specific emphasis on water supply for areas subject to development. In recognition of the significance of surface water supply to development within the county, reference is made to surface water supply related issues. The General Plan has a special section related to water supply based on the early recognition by the Board of Supervisors that water plays a critical role in the economic well-being of the County. It was the understanding of the Board of Supervisors that the authors of various components of the General Plan took into consideration the water supply information which was made available prior to the development of policy issues which are embodied in the adopted General Plan. It is the goal of the Board of Directors of the Deer Creek and Tule River Authority (DCTRA) to work with the County with respect to the issues of land use planning and land use actions as they relate, in particular, to water quality and, to a lesser extent, water quantity.

#### **M.1.2 City of Porterville General Plan**

The City of Porterville General Plan contains a variety of policies related to water management that are integrated into the IRWMP. These include the continued monitoring of water quality, incorporation of water recycling programs, and reduction in the over drafting of groundwater. It is the goal of the RWMG to work with the City of Porterville in order to facilitate an integrated approach to water and land use planning.

### M.1.3 Unincorporated Community Plans

Several unincorporated communities exist within the IRWMP area. The communities with formal community plans include:

**Table M-1. Community Plans Within the IRWM Planning area.**

Community	Population Size (2010 Census)	Year Community Plan was Approved
<b>Terra Bella</b>	3,310	2015
<b>Pixley</b>	3,310	2015
<b>Tipton</b>	2,543	2015
<b>Ducor</b>	612	2015
<b>Poplar</b>	2,470	1998

The community plans vary in terms of their relevancy, for example the Poplar Community Plan has not been updated for almost 20 years, however much of the information in the plans remains highly relevant. The IRWMP incorporates several policies identified in these documents, including those related to flood control, reducing groundwater overdraft, increasing water use efficiency, and protecting local water resources. The RWMG will continue to work with communities within the region to encourage integrated decision making with regard to land use and water infrastructure projects.

### M.1.4 National Forest Land Management Plan

While the DCTRA IRWMP has an easterly boundary that extends only up to approximately the 660 foot contour, actions which take place higher in the Tule River watershed have an impact on beneficial uses within the IRWMP planning area. In particular, sedimentation reduction is a major issue, particularly as it affects storage capability behind Success Dam. In addition, uncontrolled stream systems feeding into the IRWMP area are sensitive to and impacted by adverse volume sediment loads. The recharge capability of the Tule River and its tributaries and the uncontrolled stream system beds are the principal locations where effective recharge of runoff to the groundwater reservoir occurs. Accumulation of sediments in these channels is averse to the effective percolation capability of same.

In addition, coliform contamination is an objective water quality standard in both the Basin Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin and within the adopted General Order related to the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. The actions of parties in their utilization of natural forest and park lands contributory to the stream groups is currently exhibiting an adverse level of coliform presence and the matter is rising on the radar of the Regional Water Quality Control Board as an issue to be dealt with. As preliminary indications are that the source of this contamination is not from irrigated agricultural, attention of the Regional Water Quality Control Board will be turned away from irrigated agricultural to other potential sources once they feel that sufficient justification exists of the source not being irrigated agricultural. Coordination with the National Forest Land Management Plan and with U.S. Forest Service personnel will obviously be required to address each of these and potentially additional, water quality related issues.

## **M.2 Applicable Water Management Plans**

### **M.2.1 Urban Water Management Plan**

An Urban Water Management Plan is currently in place for the City of Porterville. The plan deals with existing and forecasted future conditions, particularly with regard to land use considerations. In response to projected demands, forecasts are made of future requirements for supply, with additional segments dealing with water quality related issues. In addition, due to declining water levels, both static and pumping, each of these plans deals with issues related to power required for extraction and the costs related to same. Additional considerations are given to water quality issues and historical and projected impacts on water quality parameters. Interface between elements of these plans and this IRWMP will obviously take place in the future and the guidance provided by the plan will be employed by those parties who are charged with dealing with the particular matter at hand. Within the DCTRA IRWM planning structure, including the Stakeholders Advisory Group, participation from each of the urban water suppliers already exists and attendance is regular for each of the representatives. Adequate knowledge sharing as to elements of each of the urban plans between both IRWMP planning areas will be of necessity moving forward with the formal adoption of this IRWMP.

### **M.2.2 DCTRA Groundwater Management Plan**

The DCTRA has in place, an SB1938 compliant Groundwater Management Plan. This plan was prepared pursuant to the statutes related to implementing AB 3030 and has been updated bringing the plan SB1938 compliant. There are a multiple number of signatories to the DCTRA Groundwater Management Plan, including parties outside of DCTRA membership.

Based on the party's signature to the DCTRA Groundwater Management Plan Memorandum of Understanding, the jurisdiction of said Groundwater Management Plan extends beyond the boundaries of DCTRA. In fact, based on the Memorandum of Understanding participants, the area covered by said plan extends beyond the boundary of the IRWMP, particularly to the west. To date, steps taken to update the policy provisions of the DCTRA Groundwater Management Plan has taken into consideration IRWM principals and it is anticipated that that degree of cooperation and coordination remain in the future.

### **M.2.3 Local Water Shortage Contingency Plans**

At the current time, there is a single identified water shortage contingency plan in place within the DCTRA IRWM planning area. This plan is in the form of a written agreement between the Lower Tule River Irrigation District (LTRID) and the Terra Bella Irrigation District (TBID). Principal features of this plan call for entitlement to Friant Division, CVP supplies of TBID to be made available to LTRID when the demands of TBID have been met, in any given year. In a reciprocal fashion, in below-normal and dry year conditions, the LTRID available declared Friant Division, CVP supplies are first dedicated to TBID to meet their in-lieu domestic, domestic and agricultural demands. Supplies above that level are available to LTRID to use at their direction. While there are other informal water shortage contingency plans, there are no others that exist in written form that apply on a long-term basis. To the degree that such plans may be developed in the future, policies such as those of the Tule River Association relative to out-of-basin transfers will need to be taken into consideration as they are principally focused on water balance conditions within the Tule

River Basin. Likewise, any future negotiations related to water banking where such banking will call for exportation of water from the Tule River Basin will need to take into account existing adopted policies with respect to out-of-basin transfers.

#### **M.2.4 Capital Improvement Plans/Master Plans**

For many of the public agencies and California Public Utility Commission governed utilities, capital improvement plans and/or master plans are in place. Many of the public district surface water suppliers also have in place either complete or equipment and distribution system oriented capital expenditure plans.

Based on the requirements of the implementing legislation of Proposition 218 and multiple court related decisions based on litigation surrounding compliance with the legislation implementing Proposition 218, future water management planning will need to take into consideration the economic constraints imposed by existing adopted elements of budgets, improvement plans and/or master plans. Water supply and water supply infrastructure projects developed as a result of the IRWMP process and participation have already had to take into account financial constraints imposed by both economic conditions within the IRWM planning area, as well as the constraints imposed by the implementing legislation associated with Proposition 218. This will continue to be of necessary concern in future planning efforts.

#### San Joaquin River Restoration

An important element of San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement legislation and the underpinning Settlement Agreement, calls for funding and project assistance and priority for restoring back to the Friant Division, CVP contractors that element of water supply estimated to be taken from their declared basis by virtue of Settlement. Based on the position of the number of Friant Division, CVP contractors within and adjacent to the IRWM boundary, attention to and participation in San Joaquin River Restoration activities will be paramount, particularly those dealing with water supply restoration.

#### **M.2.5 Water Management and Monitoring Programs**

The IRWMP project evaluation and scoring criteria take into account compliance with elements of adopted water management and monitoring programs in their evaluation and scoring processes. Outlined as follows are several topics related to water management and monitoring which are incorporated in this evaluation and scoring process. Updates to this IRWMP will need to consider the addition and/or deletion of programs from this inventory.

#### Groundwater Measurement Programs

The DCTRA, throughout its history, as well as Friant Division, CVP contractors have historically engaged in a process of groundwater level measurements which occurs in both the spring and fall months of each year. Data from these measurements is fed to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation who published documents up to 1992 with said information. The information is also supplied to the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) who historically published maps of both confined and unconfined lines of equal

elevation on both a spring and fall basis. That mapping procedure has now been reduced by DWR to publication in the spring only of the unconfined lines of equal elevation of water in wells.

Complimentary to these programs, both the Tule River Basin urban and rural domestic water purveyors also conduct depth to groundwater measurement procedures. While driven principally by the economic factors of power consumption and capability of current pumping equipment to satisfactorily perform within the observed groundwater conditions, the information is nonetheless available in the public arena and can be utilized for project planning and impact analysis purposes. Based on the importance of this information to IRWM based water planning, it is envisioned that these efforts by local agencies will continue into the future and be available as a planning tool to IRWMP participants and the associated Stakeholders Advisory Group.

#### Water Quality Monitoring Programs

As previously introduced, a considerable program, both in terms of scope and cost exist with respect to surface water quality. An extensive inventory of surface water quality test results associated with agricultural delivery systems exists and is database accessible, both at the local, as well as at the State level. With the expansion of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program into groundwater, it will not be long until an expanded amount of information is available with respect to groundwater quality which, at the current time, is restricted principally to the domestic water purveyors' service areas and the Dairy Order Monitoring Program. While this information is available through the databases of the Division of Drinking Water of the SWRCB and the RWQCB and published by each water purveyor and transmitted annually to their customers, the same level of quality information does not exist in the rural unincorporated areas not covered by a permitted domestic water supplier. Deliverables which are in the near-term, time wise, are required as a part of the newly adopted General Order under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program with respect to groundwater. As time passes, additional information will be available through this monitoring program to be utilized as another tool in the IRWM planning process.

#### Stormwater Resource Plans

Water Code § 10562 (b)(7) (i.e. SB 985) establishes new standards for stormwater resource plans and requires that they be incorporated into IRWM Plans as they are developed. A number of stormwater management programs exist within the IRWMP area, however these plans have not yet been updated to the standards set forth by this new legislation. It is important that a process is established by the IRWMP to incorporate new stormwater resource plans as they are developed.

The RWMG intends to review and update the IRWMP every five years as new information becomes available and conditions within the basin change. New or updated stormwater resource plans should be incorporated into the IRWMP at this time. The processes required to amend the IRWMP as new stormwater resource plans are developed is located in Section B – Governance, Stakeholder Involvement, and Outreach.

## **M.3 Local Climate Change Planning**

### **M.3.1 Tulare County Climate Action Plan**

The Tulare County Climate Action Plan is the only formal climate change planning document in the IRWM planning area and establishes emission reduction goals consistent with the goals of AB 32. The document also develops a set of strategies to implement these goals, which are organized as follows:

- Land Use and Transportation System Improvements
- Alternative, Non-Automotive Travel Modes
- Building Energy Efficiency/Green Building Design
- Water Conservation
- Waste Reduction Program

The water conservation strategies identified in the Tulare County Climate Action Plan are the most relevant in terms of coordination with this IRWM plan. Water conservation reduces GHG emissions by reducing the energy required to pump and treat water for use, while also increasing adaptability to climate change caused changes in precipitation and water availability. The specific water conservation measures identified in the Tulare County Climate Action Plan are consistent with IRWMP objectives in Section E, as well as the Resource Management Strategies in Section F, and are briefly summarized below.

- Expand groundwater recharge to capture runoff and water available during wet years
- Use reclaimed water from tertiary plants for irrigation in appropriate locations
- Use native and drought tolerant landscaping
- Require the installation of low-flow fixtures
- Smart irrigation technologies that apply water based on plant requirements and that direct water flow only where needed.

### **M.3.2 Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation Strategies in Local Land Use Plans**

Several Community Plans within the IRWMP area include policies related to climate change. These policies are primarily related to climate change mitigation and involve strategies to reduce GHG emissions through the consideration of GHG emissions during the project review process to meet statewide objectives. The Tule River Basin IRWMP facilitates this strategy by requiring consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions prior to the development of water infrastructure projects. This process is described in Section O – Climate Change. Climate change adaption strategies were not included in the Porterville General Plan or Community Plans within the IRWMP area.

It is likely that climate change mitigation and adaption policies will be strengthened as time goes on. These strategies will be incorporated into the IRWMP as they are adopted by communities within the IRWMP area. The process by which the RWMG will amend the IRWMP is in Section B – Governance, Stakeholder Involvement, and Outreach.