

# Section 7: Education, Outreach, Public Participation

Since its inception in 1993, the WRA has a history of local stakeholder and community engagement in planning, programs and activities for water resource planning in Yolo County. The term “stakeholder” refers to representatives of agencies, nonprofit groups, nongovernmental organizations, government organizations, and private citizens interested in or affected by the development of the Plan.

Specific outreach to non-government organizations (NGOs), disadvantaged communities (DACs), economically distressed areas (EDAs) and the general public built on the efforts initiated by the WRA, detailed in the following subsections.

## 7.1 Local Stakeholders

As described in Sections 2 and 4, local stakeholders included non-profit organizations, municipal water agencies, reclamation districts, government agencies, community services districts, and non-governmental organizations. All stakeholders were invited to participate in the collaborative Plan development process, regardless of whether they were members of the Yolo WRA.

To maximize resources, SWRP development meetings were generally held following the monthly Yolo WRA Technical Committee meetings. Meeting announcements, agendas, materials, and draft sections of the Plan were developed and discussed by the SWRP Team prior to sending out by email and posting to the WRA website at [http://www.yolowra.org/projects\\_swrp.html](http://www.yolowra.org/projects_swrp.html). See Appendix G for meeting agendas, materials, and sign-in sheets.

In addition to holding SWRP development meetings, the SWRP Team developed a survey to gauge potential project sponsor interest in submitting projects for storm water management. The results of the survey were used to track the submittal of project forms during the project solicitation period described in Section 5. To facilitate and encourage project submittals, project development workshops were held on July 10, 2017 and July 12, 2017. The purpose of these workshops was to provide in-depth reviews of potential projects for submission to the SWRP. These meetings were open to all local stakeholders. Discussion included identifying opportunities for

storm water projects, how to estimate benefits, and potential funding mechanisms.

## 7.2 Disadvantaged Communities

Individuals from disadvantaged, small, and rural communities, and other interested groups were frequently encouraged to participate. In addition to regular SWRP meetings, an in-person workshop was held with representatives from the Madison CSD and Yolo County on July 25, 2017 to discuss storm water challenges for the Town of Madison and other DACs in the County such as Knights Landing. The SWRP Team also provided assistance to the Town of Madison and the County of Yolo in developing project concepts and benefits, as well as project forms for submittal to the SWRP.

Although no organizations specifically addressing environmental justice (EJ) concerns have been identified in the Region, conversations regarding the challenges and opportunities of the Region and especially conversations with representatives of DACs were structured to identify and include EJ concerns.

## 7.3 Climate-Vulnerable Communities

Because of the large agricultural production in Yolo County and the heavy reliance on groundwater, the entire County of Yolo and its stakeholders are considered vulnerable to climate change impacts. The Westside IRWMP identified climate change vulnerability issues and those applicable to Yolo County include:

1.4: Groundwater supplies lack resiliency after drought events.

4.5: A portion of the Region floods at extreme high tides or storm surges.

During the outreach process, project development discussion and workshops included these considerations.

## 7.4 Other Stakeholders

In addition to local stakeholders, outreach efforts included invitations to storm water management agencies in upstream watersheds that discharge to Yolo County. Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) manages water supply and flood control throughout the entire county of Solano, including the Lower Putah Creek subwatershed upstream of Yolo County. One conference call was held on July 17, 2017 with the SCWA to discuss projects related to the portion of the Lower Putah Creek subwatershed that discharges to Yolo County. The Lower Putah Creek subwatershed includes Dry Creek, a significant wildlife migration corridor, and Thompson Canyon, a significant contributor of sediment.

Finally, outreach to the Westside RWMG included participation in quarterly Westside IRWMP coordination calls and presenting updates on the Yolo SWRP progress.

## 7.5 Community Participation in Plan Implementation

Public outreach is part of the overall implementation strategy for the Yolo SWRP and may also be part of the implementation of individual components of the SWRP projects. The public outreach and stakeholder involvement process used by the Yolo WRA to implement the Westside IRWMP and other projects will be used for the implementation of the Yolo SWRP and are outlined in the following subsection.

### 7.5.1 Outreach

The WRA and implementing agencies will coordinate their public outreach efforts with ongoing stakeholder involvement efforts of the Westside IRWMP. WRA member agencies are involved both as agencies that plan the Yolo SWRP and as agencies that plan and implement their own independent storm water resource management activities—both processes are moving forward concurrently.

#### 7.5.1.1 Public Education and Participation

The WRA Technical Committee is the working group for WRA activities. The Technical Committee is responsible for implementing foundational actions and coordinating actions for implementation of the Yolo SWRP. Member agencies will be partners in

implementing this plan; member or non-member agencies may sponsor and implement projects.

Technical Committee meetings are open to the public and generally the first Thursday of every month, with the third Thursday held as an additional standing meeting date as needed. Agendas are posted 72 hours before the meeting date at [http://www.yolowra.org/meeting\\_technical.html](http://www.yolowra.org/meeting_technical.html). Technical Committee functions in relation to implementation of the Yolo SWRP is described in Section 6.

Upon completion of the final SWRP, the Project Team will present their findings to the WRA and Westside IRWM group. This is expected to take place over a three-month period in the first quarter of 2018.

Other public involvement opportunities include implementation and maintenance of the submitted projects. Many of the projects submitted to the SWRP include volunteer and public education components. These public involvement opportunities can begin as soon as the project is funded or completed. For example, the Winters Bioswales Project and Habitat Enhancement project relies on volunteers to maintain bioswales plantings. The volunteer program will also include education on the function and importance of the bioswale.