

Appendix B

Alternate Prioritization Method

The following screening and prioritization method was developed for the Yolo County IRWMP, but was not considered a suitable method, because the actions were not sufficiently developed.

B.1 Screening Method

Step 1. Action Screening

Individual actions are first screened using the following screening criteria that will be applied sequentially:

1. The action is a project, program, or policy.

If the action is *not* a project, program, or policy (e.g., a study or resource model) it should be screened out, incorporated as a prerequisite to or part of a project or program, or rephrased so it will be a project, program, or policy, and then retained.

2. The action addresses one of the water-related issues articulated by the WRA.

If the action does *not* address issues articulated by the WRA it will not be addressed in the IRWMP. (Note: The action has to be technically feasible to meet this criterion. The determination of feasibility may only be possible with additional information. Actions of undetermined feasibility will be noted as such.)

3. The action is an individual action and not an integrated action.

If the action is *not* an individual action, but instead is an integrated action that addresses issues in multiple water resource management areas, the integrated action should be decomposed into individual actions.

4. The action is a regulatory mandate.

WRA member agencies have a regulatory mandate to implement the action (i.e., implementation is non-discretionary under federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or policies).

All listed actions which have been retained under the screening criteria will move to Step 2.

Step 1 Work Product – An *unranked* list and matrix of individual actions, each with a brief description, indicating the issue or issues being addressed within one or more resource management categories. The list will also highlight those actions which are non-discretionary.

B.2 Prioritization Method

Step 2. Prioritize Individual Actions

Each action remaining after Step 1 will be evaluated, scored, and ranked numerically in relative order using each of the **priority criterion** described below. Numerical ranking would be assigned under each criterion. Scores range from four points for the greatest assumed benefit to one point for the least benefit, except for the first criterion which is numerically greater because of its importance in the decision-making process.

The methodology for scoring is tentatively assumed to be initiated by the consultant team (in consultation with other team professionals), and then presented for the consideration and refinement by the WRA TC members. Each team leader will initially score all the actions based on their personal understanding of action benefits and consequences. Next, an expanded team meeting will be held to compare and contrast each team leader's scoring results. Based on the discussion, a consensus score will be arrived at and applied to actions under each criterion. The results will next be presented to a special working meeting of the WRA TC.

1. Responsiveness to issues.

Definition: The degree by which the action addresses issues identified by the WRA.

Score (This criteria is weighted at twice the numerical value of other criteria.):

- 8– Has an exceptional response toward resolving the issues.
- 6– Has a potential direct, positive effect toward resolving the issues.
- 4– Has a somewhat positive effect toward resolving the issues.
- 2– Responds poorly, or is neutral to the issues.

2. Public and agency support.

Definition: The level of anticipated or known public support for the action. Public support of individual actions may change as more information becomes available, and where an action is combined under integrated action scenarios. (The application of this criterion could be deferred to Step 5.)

Score:

- 4– The action has or likely will have broad public support.
- 3– The action has or likely will have moderate public support.
- 2– The action has or likely will have narrow public support.
- 1– The action has or likely will not have public support.

3. Efficiency.

Definition: The anticipated level of effect in addressing issues relative to the predicted level of required resources to reach that effect (i.e., the amount of resource “bang for the buck”).

Score:

- 4– The action is highly efficient in addressing the issues.
- 3– The action is moderately efficient in addressing the issues.
- 2– The action has some efficiency in addressing the issues, or there is currently no basis to form a judgment about efficiency.
- 1– The action is inefficient in addressing the issues. (The implication is that resources may be wasted by implementing the action.)

4. Conflict resolution.

Definition: The level to which the action will likely contribute to resolving water resource allocation and management conflicts. Some individual actions may rank lower in this category unless the action is combined into integrated actions, or follows a prerequisite action.

Score:

- 4– The action makes good progress toward resolving conflicts.
- 3– The action makes some progress toward resolving conflicts.
- 2– The action has no influence on conflicts.
- 1– The action has the potential to create conflicts.

5. Potential for adverse environmental consequences.

Definition: The potential to create adverse environmental consequences, and the relative magnitude of anticipated or potential adverse consequences.

Score:

- 4– The action has no adverse environmental consequences or is beneficial.
- 3– The action has minor environmental consequences and benefits.
- 2– The action has moderate adverse environmental consequences that can be mitigated.
- 1– The action has substantial adverse environmental effects that cannot be mitigated.

Once individual actions have been ranked according to the above five priority criteria, they will be evaluated in Step 3 for their potential to be combined with other individual actions across all five water resource management categories.

Step 2 Work Product – A *ranked* list and matrix of individual actions and the issues under each resource management category(s) the action benefits. Ranking, based upon the five criteria described above, will be presented in two ways:

- A list of actions indicating the numerical *ranking within each of the five criteria*.
- A *composite ranking order* based upon the numerical total of all six ranking results of individual actions. Each criterion will be applied equally, with the exception of the criterion ‘Responsiveness to Issues’ which is weighted at double the value of other criteria.

Step 3. Prioritize Integrated Actions

Actions addressing issues from two or more water resource management categories will be combined to create integrated actions. Similarly, actions within a single resource management category may be combined to create an integrated action. Integrated actions are mutually compatible packages of actions where one or more high-priority actions define or dominate the primary objectives of a packaged set of actions, along with other compatible individual actions. However, some individual actions may have compelling reasons to remain as stand-alone projects, and not be integrated with other actions

One or more of several criteria may be used to combine individual actions into multi-objective integrated actions, including the following:

1. Geographic Relatedness – Actions that would be implemented in the same area, in close proximity to each other, or in some other spatially related way, e.g., along the same water way).
2. Complementary – Actions that would more likely address WRA articulated issues in combination than individually.
3. Increase in Public and Agency Support – Actions that in combination would result in greater public support than individually, e.g., individual actions may each be supported by different segments of the public.
4. Efficiency – Actions that would use fewer resources when implemented in combination than individually (this criterion can be related to the first two).
5. Reduction of Conflict – Actions that in combination would result in less conflict than each individually, e.g., individual actions may each benefit opposing interests.
6. Reduction of Adverse Impacts – Actions that would in combination have fewer or smaller adverse impacts than individually, e.g., one action may compensate for the impacts of another, or result in a net benefit.

7. Higher Likelihood of Funding – Actions that in combination would have a higher likelihood to be funded than individually, e.g., the integrated action may fit the selection criteria for Proposition 50 or other grant programs better than the component individual actions.
8. Complexity – An integrated suite of actions could become unwieldy, or trigger a complex and time-consuming web of regulatory compliance, if too many actions define a single project or program.

Integrated actions will be prioritized by comparing their relative merits using the following five considerations. Note that the last four considerations listed below for prioritizing integrated actions are defined under Step 2 where they are used as numerical ranking criteria applied to individual actions.

1. Responsiveness to objectives for water management in Yolo County.

Definition: The degree by which an integrated action package addresses the objectives for water management identified for the Yolo County IRWMP (may include overlap with other planned or existing integrated actions). This consideration also includes the degree to which integrated actions magnify the effect or likely success of individual actions.

2. Public and agency support.

Public and agency support may be elevated for effective combinations of integrated actions, such that some individual actions with little visibility or relatively low ranking may receive greater support.

3. Efficiency.

An integrated action, when integrated with several compatible and symbiotic actions, may enhance the overall effectiveness of the entire suite of projects, programs, or policies.

4. Conflict resolution.

Integrated actions may be more successful at resolving resource conflicts associated with a low level of support for some individual actions proposed in isolation from more desirable or palatable integrated actions.

5. Potential for adverse environmental consequences.

Integrated actions may substantially reduce the potential of one or more individual actions, if implemented alone, to cause adverse environmental consequences.

Other factors may influence the judgment of the WRA Technical Committee to determine a final draft list of action priorities to be presented to the public in Step 4. Factors influencing draft priority rankings, in addition to the five most important considerations described above, may include the timeliness of an action, or the inclusion of one or more non-discretionary actions with a near-term completion mandate under federal, state, or local regulations.

Step 3 Work Product – *A prioritized list and descriptions of integrated actions.* A draft report suitable for public dissemination will be prepared, including:

- Summary descriptions of each proposed integrated action, using a standardized format in one to three pages.
- A prioritized list and matrix of the integrated actions, indicating the issues under each resource management category the integrated action benefits.
- A summary description of the methodology and rationale for the steps (Steps 1-3) used to rank and prioritize individual and integrated actions.

Step 4. Public and Agency Review of Actions and Priority Criteria

The results of Steps 1-3 above will represent a thoughtful, defensible set of draft recommendations for the region and provide a description of the actions, determine action priority rankings, and a list of integrated actions. Step 4 (approximately March 2006) will be the first opportunity for the general public and other interested agencies to review the recommendations from the WRA Technical Committee, and to provide comments. Public participation in Step 4 will include one or more informational workshops, notification and electronic version of the draft document on WRA and member agency websites, announcements in local publications of how to acquire a copy of the draft report, and e-mail distribution to other interested and permitting agencies. A suitable span of time and deadline for submitting written comments will be announced. Results of public and agency comments and suggested changes will be summarized in a report format.

Step 4 Work Product(s) – *A summary report of the results of public and agency input and participation during the Step 4 process.*

Step 5. Re-evaluation of Integrated Actions and Priority Criteria

The consultant team will, as needed, prepare a revised set of priority and ranking criteria and other methodology, a revised list and descriptions of individual and integrated actions, and incorporate any appropriate new actions from the public and agency comments. The WRA Technical Committee will consider and revise the consultants' recommendations, and refine the priority ranking and descriptions of integrated action packages for inclusion in the IRWMP document.

Step 5 Work Product – *A revised version of the report work product listed under Step 3.*

Step 6. Select Actions for Investigation

Step 6 represents a point in the IRWMP planning process where the WRA Technical Committee would allocate a part of the planning budget to investigate selected actions with the purpose of developing a detailed definition of the action, its accomplishments, cost, implementing agency(s), and implementation plan. To assist the Technical Committee in making this determination, both individual and integrated actions would be assigned to a time frame for potential implementation. Time frames fall under three categories:

- Near-Term: Implementation within 1-3 years.
- Mid-Term: Implementation within 4-6 years.
- Longer-Term: Implementation likely beyond 6 years.

The basis for assigning relative time frames will consider these questions:

1. Does an action satisfy essential public safety needs?
2. Are funding sources already identified and likely to be acquired?
3. What are the level of complexity and time requirements for environmental documentation, public comment, and permit approvals?
4. Does the action entail partnerships and formal inter-agency agreements that require a due process that controls the schedule for implementation?
5. What is the level of urgency to implement non-discretionary, mandated actions?
6. Is the likelihood of success or practicality of an action affected by how soon the action can be implemented?
7. Is the action understood and supported by a significant component of the general public and key stakeholders?

The option exists for an agency acting alone, or in partnership with other agencies, to augment the funding available through the IRWMP planning grant to advance the development of a particular action or actions to improve the prospects for earlier funding through various grant programs.

Step 6 Work Product – A report in electronic form with the following contents:

- *Lists of individual and/or integrated actions proposed under each of the time frames* and the basic rationale for how the recommended timeframe was determined.

- Recommendations for *sponsoring and participating supporting agencies* for each individual and integrated action.
- List of the actions with the best *prospects for funding under existing funding programs*.

These work products constitute the nucleus of an implementation strategy for integrated actions under the overall watershed plan.