

Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding for the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives. As IRWM has evolved, there have been ongoing challenges to engage and address the needs of Disadvantaged Communities (DACs). As a result, ten percent (10%) of the total IRWM funding allocated in Proposition 1 has been set aside to encourage involvement of DACs, economically distressed areas, and underrepresented communities in IRWM planning efforts. The Tulare/Kern Funding Area (covering most of Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern Counties) will be allocated \$3.4 million for involvement activities. A single, unified proposal for this Funding Area must be prepared and submitted to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to define the funding recipient and to propose the scope of work to be performed. The table below includes several eligible activities and desired outcomes presented in the Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) from DWR.

Eligible DAC Involvement Activities

Table 3 - Eligible DAC Involvement Activities		
General Activity	Examples of Activity	Desired Outcome
Needs Assessments (required)	Surveys or meetings with community members to identify water management needs	Needs Assessments provide better understanding of water management needs to help direct resources and funding
Education	Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, RWMGs education on DAC needs	Education and interpretive services provide better understanding by community members or RWMGs of water management needs
Community Outreach	Public meetings open to DAC community members, door-to-door outreach	Outreach increases participation in IRWM planning or project development activities
Engagement in IRWM Efforts	DAC regional engagement coordinator role, DAC Advisory Committee to RWMG, DAC representatives in governance	Engagement activities increases activity and roles of DACs in RWMG decision making and increased participation in IRWM efforts
Facilitation	Facilitated RWMG meetings, facilitated project development meetings	Facilitation services encourage participation and stakeholders resolving or overcoming obstacles in communicating needs
Technical Assistance	Service provider trainings, local circuit rider programs to train water and wastewater staff	Technical, financial, or managerial assistance results in community staff able to support local decision making, knowledge, and skills
Governance Structure	Evaluation of governance structures and related plan financing, assessment of DAC involvement in decision making processes	Evaluation of RWMG governance to ensure DAC participation in IRWM regardless of ability to contribute financially
Site Assessment	Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities	Site assessment results in knowledge gained by community staff on water management needs and data for project development
Enhancement of DAC aspects in IRWM plans	Development of Funding Area-wide DAC plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all IRWM plans	IRWM plan DAC-related changes result in IRWM plan updates that support the RWMG's understanding of DAC needs
Project Development Activities or Construction	Planning activities, environmental compliance, pre-construction engineering/design activities, or construction activities	Project development activities for future implementation/construction funding or construction activities