

TUOLUMNE-STANISLAUS INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY WATERSHED ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER

The Tuolumne-Stanislaus Watershed Advisory Committee (T-S WAC) has been established by the Tuolumne-Stanislaus Regional Water Management Group (T-S RWMG) to advise the T-S RWMG on all facets of the implementation of the Tuolumne-Stanislaus Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (T-S IRWMP).

Contents

A. Introduction	1
B. Mission & Deliverables	2
C. WAC Focus	3
D. Importance	4
E. Organizational Structure	4
F. Membership	5
G. Roles & Responsibilities	6
H. Participants	7
I. Schedule	7
J. Decision Making	8
K. Protocol & Standing Group Rules	9
L. Amendments	10

A. Introduction

The Tuolumne and Stanislaus watersheds traversing eastern Stanislaus County into Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties contain an extraordinary regional geographic diversity. Water has been and continues to be an undeniable force that shapes the economic, ecological and cultural face of the area. It is in this area that:

- The discovery of gold in Jamestown launched booming towns and early water delivery systems that still exist side-by-side and serve both residents and recreationists
- Me-Wuk Indians live and work within their native watersheds
- Stands of oaks and brush in the lower elevations give way to dense coniferous forests in the Sierra Nevada range
- Growing population centers attract ever more full-time residents and also serve tens of thousands of recreationists
- Agriculture is a locally valued and sustainable way of life
- Yosemite National Park, the Stanislaus National Forest, two Wild Trout Streams and a Wild and Scenic River are located within these watersheds

Water is the essential link for all of these factors. Water needs are as broad reaching as area's diversity. Water is needed for homes, schools, businesses, the environment and recreational attractions. Recycled water irrigates agricultural lands, and water infrastructure, both new and historic, weave through the region. The community is committed to meeting or exceeding federal and state standards for water and wastewater quality, environmental protection and wildlife habitat.

Growing demand and changing conditions require the region to aggressively plan for its water future. This has led a host of stakeholders to come together to initiate an Integrated Regional

Water Management (IRWM) process and complete an IRWM Plan. The goal is to promote and practice integrated regional water management to ensure sustainable water uses, reliable water supplies, better water quality, environmental stewardship, efficient urban development, protection of agriculture, and a sustainable economy.

Implementation of the IRWM Plan will promote collaboration throughout project implementation such that quantifiable ecosystem restoration and improved water supply and water quality benefits will occur in an integrated, cost and time efficient manner. The Plan will integrate activities, which will increase environmental education and stewardship, reduce conflicts and litigation potential, and through interregional cooperation, increase understanding and participation in export water proposals as they relate to beneficial uses in the area of origin. Further, it is essential that the data management system be maintained so it can inform the T-S IRWMP JPA of the relative success of various Resource Management Strategies, programs and projects. This information will be key to an implementation effort grounded on adaptive management and guided by an active and involved governance entity. With the elements of collaboration, adaptive management and active governance in place, the T-S IRWM Plan cannot only become the vehicle for guiding the investment of public fiscal resources, but it can also serve as one logical venue for resolving difficult matters of resource management policy in the Region.

Implementation of the IRWM Plan will require a sustainable, local community capacity to be developed from within the public agency members and supported by the non-governmental organization membership that enables the program to be ongoing and funded, to the extent possible, from non-state funds.

B. Mission & Deliverables

The mission of the T-S Watershed Advisory Committee (T-S WAC) is to prepare all recommendations necessary to advise the T-S Regional Water Management Group (T-S RWMG) on implementation of the T-S Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (T-S IRWMP). Implementation of the T-S IRWMP is intended to follow the objectives of the Plan and the application of sound project selection criteria that mirror the original T-S Planning Grant Committee's commitment to integration of resource management strategies that maximize resource benefits in a sustainable fashion using efficient fiscal management.

The T-S WAC is responsible for developing recommendations for consideration by the T-S RWMG for the following:

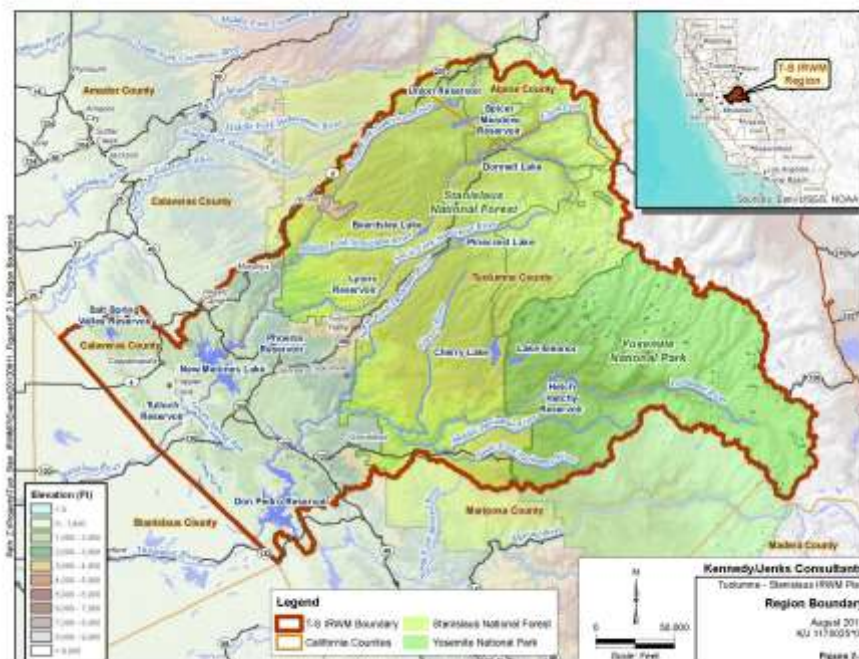
1. Upcoming funding opportunities
2. Improved project integration
3. Project selection for inclusion in grant applications being submitted through the RWMG
4. Plan performance to include progress toward Plan objectives
5. Objectives/targets not accounted for in currently included projects
6. Objectives updates
7. New or revised/integrated projects for inclusion in the Plan
8. Project priorities updates
9. Plan content revisions

10. Operational data that should be measured and managed to meet the goals and objectives of the T-S IRWMP
11. Efficient and effective communication with participating entities within the Region, the general public and the media

C. T-S IRWMP Focus

The approximately 2,700 square miles of the T-S Region span the entire western slope of the Sierra Nevada, encompassing the Upper Tuolumne River, Upper Stanislaus River, and Upper Rock Creek-French Camp Slough watersheds. The Region includes all of Tuolumne County, the southern portion of Calaveras County, and southwestern Alpine County.

The majority of the Region's approximately 70,000 people reside in the foothills at elevations below 3,000 feet. Major communities of the T-S Region include Sonora, Twain Harte, Copper Cove, Copperopolis, Angels Camp, Murphys, and Groveland. A number of the Region's communities have been identified as Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) which have median household incomes less than \$48,706 per DWR criteria. The Region is also home to two federally recognized Me-Wuk tribes, and federally managed national forest and national park lands represent over two thirds of the lands in the Region. The Region's economy continues to evolve from the historic industries of agriculture, mining and timber, to a more service-based economy. Residential and agricultural developments considered for the Region may contribute to the 1-2% projected growth in the Region and would result in related increases in water use demands within the Region.



D. Importance

The Upper Stanislaus and Upper Tuolumne River watersheds are sources of abundant water resources relied upon as critical supplies for invaluable river ecosystems, millions of people, hundreds of thousands of acres of prime farmland, and hydroelectric resources used throughout California. In the Region, these surface water resources are the primary source of potable water, while at the same time 98% of these water supplies serve export water demands and instream flow requirements. Numerous upstream reservoirs exist within the Region that serve multiple purposes including storage, largely for users outside the Region, and hydropower. Water supplies within the Region consist primarily of surface water. The surface water conveyance system consists of an extensive system of pipelines, canals, ditches and flumes, many of which are remnants of the Region's historical water system used for mining and support industries during the 19th Century. Surface water quality in the Region is generally very good with issues primarily resulting from current or historical land use. Groundwater quality is highly variable and availability of groundwater resources primarily found in fractured bedrock is largely unquantified. Nevertheless, groundwater is a primary water supply source for many individual homeowners and small water systems in the T-S Region. The T-S Region boasts a high diversity of ecosystems and environmental resources. About two-thirds of the land area within the T-S Region is contained within coniferous forests in the Stanislaus National Forest and Yosemite National Park. The lakes, creeks, meadows and other natural features of the Region provide key habitat for many of California's most important aquatic and terrestrial species. In addition, the Region's rivers, reservoirs and lakes provide extensive opportunities for water-dependent recreation popular to users within and beyond Region boundaries.

E. Organizational Structure

Watershed Advisory Committee: The T-S Watershed Advisory Committee (WAC) is the primary advisory committee for the T-S Regional Water Management Group. As such, it is authorized through the T-S IRWMP JPA Agreement and established through the JPA Board of Directors. The WAC shall consist of representatives of the members of the JPA Board of Directors and representatives of parties designated to represent an interested organization within the T-S Region. Each member of the JPA Board of Directors and each interested organization may appoint one member and at least one alternate to the WAC. Members and alternates shall be designated in writing by the respective governing body of each appointing entity. The WAC shall provide recommendations to the Board, but shall have no authority to take action that binds the Authority in any way.

Workgroups/Subcommittees: To advance its work, with the approval of the Board, the WAC may choose to create workgroups and/or subcommittees to conduct specific tasks. The WAC will craft a clear charge and scope of work for any work group or subcommittee. Work groups and subcommittee meetings will be open to the public and their materials will be available to the public. As in the full group, these groups will seek consensus in their recommendations and work products. Highlights, decisions, and action items will be recorded in meeting summaries. In addition to regular progress updates, materials developed in these groups will be brought back to the WAC for discussion, refinement as necessary, and recommendation to the board, as appropriate.

Voluntary & Balanced Representation: WAC members may volunteer to participate in workgroups or subcommittees; both will strive for balanced representation of interest groups. To ensure these groups remain small enough to complete tasks expeditiously, WAC members will confer and identify appropriate representatives for different interests. All members will be expected to have the passion, time, and resources needed to do intensive work. The WAC will provide logistical and technical support to help convene these groups and track their work products.

F. Membership

In keeping with the goals of collaboration and transparent processes that have underpinned the work of the Planning Grant Committee that preceded and led to the establishment of the T-S IRWMP JPA, the WAC will strive to include representatives of groups with a range of interests who are engaged in water-related issues within the T-S IRWMP Region. These may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Air Quality
- Agriculture
- Community Vitality and Local Economic Development
- Cultural Resources
- Disadvantaged Communities
- Environmental Groups
- Fire Safety and Community Protection
- Forestry
- Local, State Federal, and Tribal Governments
- Industry
- Water Quality and Quantity
- Youth Education and Training

Members: To become a member of the WAC, an organization representing one of the above interests must complete a membership form designating an official member and alternate, if applicable. Members, and the organizations they represent, must formally commit to uphold the guidelines of the charter and accept the T-S IRWM Plan. It is also expected members/alternates will act as a conduit of information between the WAC and the organization the member represents.

New Members: While membership is open, new members must abide by the responsibilities of members, listed above. The WAC aims for members to make informed decisions. Therefore, new members may participate in decision-making after attending one meeting and committing to understanding the information being analyzed and previous WAC discussions.

Attendance Requirements: Members in good standing will attend at least 50% of WAC meetings per calendar year or send an alternate. Members who are unable to meet attendance requirements will be deemed “inactive” and will not be consulted in their absence before decisions are finalized.

Alternates: Regular attendance will be essential to the continuity of the group. When unable to attend, the member may choose to send an alternate. The alternate is expected to act on behalf of the member. The member and alternate must remain fully briefed and be able to work without causing the group to revisit items previously considered.

Associate Members: An interested party who does not officially represent an organization focused on the interests listed above may request to become an associate member.

External Liaison: An external liaison is an individual who represents a governmental agency that does not have formal membership in the WAC, but serves in an advisory capacity.

G. Roles and Responsibilities

Specific roles and responsibilities are defined as follows:

JPA Board of Directors: is comprised of representatives of agencies/organizations that have signed the JPA Agreement. The board is the decision-making body of the T-S IRWMP JPA and the recipients of all recommendations of the WAC. It also constitutes the T-S IRWM Regional Water Management Group.

Members: are stakeholders who are officially designated by their organization (representing an interest listed in Section F) and sign on to fully participate in the work of the T-S IRWMP JPA and agree to (1) advise the T-S JPA Board on how issues might best be addressed and processes improved; (2) contribute expertise, data and information to clarify discussions, eliminate false assumptions, and advance innovation; (3) serve as the liaison to communicate information to and from their organizations and constituencies; (4) participate in an open and honest forum; and (5) act in a manner that will enhance trust among all partners and interested parties. Members are responsible for reviewing material in advance and being prepared to engage in substantive discussions during meetings. Members should attempt to attend every meeting to ensure continuity in discussions and decisions, and to ensure efficient workflow.

The Administrative Director: serves as the programmatic staff of the T-S JPA and is responsible for executing the WAC charter and for ensuring that all relevant perspectives related to the deliverables are discussed and captured in written documents. The A.D. is responsible for overall project management and coordinating with technical support. The A.D. is also responsible for seeing that meeting materials are distributed at least one week in advance of meetings and for all routine communication with WAC members. Additional responsibilities include reporting to the Board of Directors on WAC activities and carrying out any other directives issued by the Board of Directors.

Technical Support: will be provided by resource experts who function as technical advisors to the T-S JPA during ongoing discussions of the WAC and its work groups or subcommittees. Technical advisors participate in meetings to serve as an important resource to the T-S JPA on complex scientific questions and issues.

The Facilitator: provides impartial leadership to the dialogue process and meeting management. The facilitator is content neutral and will advocate for a fair, effective, and credible process – not a particular outcome. The facilitator will help the T-S JPA stay within scope and follow the

terms of the Charter. Specific WAC duties include: (1) helping to formulate meeting objectives and agendas; (2) overseeing the preparation of meeting notes, including points of agreement and disagreement; (3) serving as a confidant for members who wish to express concerns privately, whether about the substance of discussions or the dialogue process. The facilitator will also actively suggest methods to accomplish tasks.

If a member has a concern about the neutrality or performance of the facilitator, s/he should first speak with the facilitator. If the concern is unresolved, the member should discuss it with the Administrative Director.

Associate Members: are interested parties who are not officially designated by an organization (representing an interest listed in Section F). An associate member may participate in WAC discussions, but will be a non-voting member. It is expected that an associate member have an ongoing commitment to the purpose and work of the WAC.

Liaisons: provide a means of communication between an agency/organization and the T-S JPA. A liaison is a non-voting member of the T-S JPA.

Workgroup/Sub-Committee Members: subject to approval of the T-S JPA Board of Directors, the WAC may agree to formation of a workgroup to address specific topics. Members' work will be bounded by specific timeframes and specific questions to be considered. If the need arises, a subcommittee may be convened to assist a workgroup and/or the WAC with topics requiring specific expertise. Depending on the nature of the assignment, a subcommittee may report back directly to the WAC or work through a workgroup.

H. Participants

The categories of participants are as follows:

Administrative Director

Facilitator

Members/Alternates (voting)

Associate Members

External Liaisons

I. Schedule

The WAC is expected to meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as necessary to accomplish the advisory group's mission. Meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of the month. If additional meetings are determined necessary, members will be polled for availability prior to scheduling.

Depending on need, one or more work groups/subcommittees (see Section E, Roles and Responsibilities) may be formed. Subcommittee meetings will be scheduled as required.

J. Decision-Making

1. **Consensus is the Fundamental Principle:**

The WAC is an advisory group to the JPA Board of Directors (RWMG) and, as such, decisions made by the WAC will be forward as recommendations to the JPA Board of Directors. In working with the WAC, the facilitator and administrative director will use a consensus-seeking approach and work diligently to find common ground on issues. The group will strive for consensus in its work. In reaching consensus, some WAC members may strongly endorse a particular proposal, meaning they fully support the proposal. Others may accept it as just "workable," meaning it is not perfect but there are good elements about it. Others may be only able to "live with it, meaning they do not see the need for it, but will go along with it. Still others may choose to "stand aside" by verbally noting a disagreement, yet allowing the group to reach consensus without them if the decision does not affect them or compromise their interests. Members may "conditionally endorse" a proposal meaning they support it but need to bring it to their governing body for formal approval. Any of these actions still constitutes consensus. A member may "oppose" a proposal which results in no consensus. No quorum is required for consensus decisions.

2. **Voting Process:**

If no consensus is reached, then the WAC automatically moves to a voting structure. Absent consensus, the necessary vote to take action on an item by the WAC is 70% or more of a quorum of the WAC members. Those WAC members who could not "stand aside" will be asked to indicate whether they believe, in good faith, there is sufficient potential for compromise to recommend referral to a subcommittee for continued discussion with the hope of developing a consensus position to be brought back to the WAC for consideration.

WAC members will, if necessary, determine through a roll call vote whether there is a minimum of 70% of those present who wish to send the proposal to a subcommittee for further consideration. If the vote indicates the WAC does not believe the potential exists to develop a modified proposal, members will use the voting threshold of 70% to determine the fate of the proposal "on the table".

If a proposal is referred to a subcommittee, the subcommittee will diligently strive to develop an acceptable proposal to present to the WAC at the next regularly scheduled meeting. If the subcommittee cannot come to consensus on a modified proposal, the WAC will vote on the original proposal utilizing the 70% threshold. If the subcommittee recommends a modified proposal, the WAC will attempt to come to consensus on the subcommittee's recommendation. If the WAC cannot come to consensus on the modified proposal the WAC will vote on the subcommittee's recommendation utilizing the 70% threshold. The WAC may also vote on the original proposal, or any other modification to that proposal, utilizing the 70% threshold.

If there is no vote of 70% or more for any action proposed, then the item is considered to not have been passed by the WAC.

In the case that a person is the designated representative for more than one member

entity, said person will state which of the entities he/she is representing for purposes of the vote. The other entity (or entities) will not be represented in the vote unless there is a designated alternate representative present for the voting process.

All decisions, agreements, recommendations, and reservations will be documented in the meeting summaries, which are part of the public record.

Timeframe: In making decisions, the WAC will abide by timelines set by the T-S IRWMP JPA Board of Directors. If the WAC determines a longer timeframe is needed than set by the board, the WAC may ask the administrative director or facilitator to request that the board extend the timeline. However, the board is under no obligation to agree to the request.

K. Protocols & Standing Group Rules

Process Agreements

- **Members agree to act in good faith in all aspects of this process and to communicate their interests.** Members agree to make a concerted effort to provide requested information to other members or to explain the reason why not. Tentative or sensitive information will be treated appropriately.
- **Members agree to address the issues and concerns of the participants.** All members have a stake in the issue at hand. Members agree to validate the issues and concerns of other parties, and work to develop agreements that include all the issues under consideration. Disagreements will be viewed as problems to be solved, rather than battles to be won.
- **Members agree to only make commitments they intend to keep.**
- **Parties will express concerns and support in discussions of the WAC that are consistent with concerns and support they express in other forums, including in sessions with the press.**
- **Outside of WAC meetings, people will represent comments made in these meetings as organizational or general group comments. Personal references should be avoided.**
- **Meeting notes will be prepared with a focus on key points, ideas, and action items rather than as transcripts.** Unless very specific to understanding the content, references will generally be made to the content rather than the members. Meeting notes will be circulated within two weeks of meetings. Meeting notes will then be made publicly available.

Meeting Groundrules

- **Electronic courtesy.** Most of the participants have demanding responsibilities outside of the meeting room. However, your full attention is requested during meetings. Please turn cell phones, or any other communication item with an on/off switch to “silent.” If you have to respond to a communication, please do so outside the meeting room.
- **Stay focused on the charge and deliverables.** There are many related topics that people care about. The WAC cannot address all of these. The facilitator will help the group stay focused on the deliverables.
- **Sit at the table only if you are the member representing an agency/organization.** Balancing participation and identifying individuals representing member

agencies/organizations is easier when only one person per agency/organization is seated at the table. The person can be the “member” or the “alternate.”

- **Raise your hand if you wish to speak.** Raising your hand helps the facilitator manage the queue.
- **Use common conversational courtesy.** Don't interrupt others. Use appropriate language. Avoid third party discussions.
- **Treat each other with respect.** People are passionate about these issues and in many cases have invested their careers in this work. People offer their time, expertise, insight, and resources in these discussions. Please respect the work people do to advance the conversation and create common ground.
- **All ideas and points have value.** You may hear something you do not agree with. You are not required to defend or promote your perspective, but you are asked to share it. All ideas have value in this setting. If you believe another approach is better, offer it as a constructive alternative.
- **Avoid editorials.** Please avoid ascribing motives to or judging the actions of others. Please speak about your experiences, concerns, and suggestions.
- **Honor time.** In order to achieve meeting objectives it will be important to follow the time guidelines provided by the facilitator.
- **Beware of the 3 C's Disease:** Do not criticize, complain, or condemn.
- **Be comfortable.** Please help yourself to refreshments or take personal breaks.
- **Humor is welcome** and important, but humor should never be at someone else's expense.

L. Amendments

The WAC may develop and recommend amendments to the Charter for submission to the T-S IRWMP JPA Board of Directors consideration. The Charter will be reviewed every two years to assure continued relevancy and commitment of members.