

**Borrego Springs Watermaster
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
December 14, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m.**

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AGENDA

Items with supporting documents in the TAC Meeting Package are denoted with a page number.

I. Opening Procedures

- A. Roll Call
- B. Review Agenda

II. Public Comments

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the TAC on items included on the agenda. Comments will be limited to three minutes per commenter. If you wish to comment, please join the meeting five minutes early to request to speak (verbally or via GoTo meeting Chat feature).

III. Status Update on a Planned DWR Monitoring Well in the Borrego Springs Subbasin (Driscoll)

IV. DWR Grant Application Page 2

- A. Review draft Watermaster’s solicitation package for a call for grant eligible projects
- B. Discuss possible project submissions by TAC
- C. Recommendation to the Board regarding the Project Review Committee

V. Public Comments (time permitting).

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the TAC on items discussed during the meeting. Comments will be limited to three minutes per commenter, time permitting.

VI. Future Meetings

- January 2022

VII. Adjournment

**Borrego Springs Watermaster
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
December 14, 2021
AGENDA ITEM IV**

To: Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

From: Andy Malone, PG (West Yost Associates), Lead Technical Consultant

Date: December 13, 2021

Subject: DWR Grant Application

Background and Previous Actions of the Board

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released draft [Guidelines](#) and a [Proposal Solicitation Package \(PSP\)](#) for the [Sustainable Groundwater Management \(SGM\) Grant Program's](#) Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation Funding. The draft Guidelines and PSP indicate that Round 1 of the funding will provide about \$152 million by spring 2022 to regional groundwater agencies in Critically Overdrafted (COD) groundwater basins for planning and implementation projects to help comply with the SGMA. The \$152 million will be split evenly to provide \$7.6 million per eligible COD basin. The grant application submission deadline in the draft Guidelines and PSP is January 31, 2021.

At the December 9, 2021 Board meeting, the Board directed Watermaster Staff to begin implementing the scope-of-work below to prepare the grant application (i.e., complete Task 1-3). Since the final Guidelines and PSP have not yet been released, Staff assumed the following in the development of the scope and schedule presented herein:

1. The Borrego Springs Subbasin is a grant eligible COD basin.
2. The Borrego Springs Watermaster or the Borrego Water District will be an eligible grant applicant and grantee. Regardless of who qualifies as the grant applicant, Watermaster Staff recommends implementation of the scope-of-work presented herein.
3. Grant eligible projects include those planning and implementation activities that are listed in the Groundwater Management Plan (Exhibit 1 of the Judgment) or are otherwise consistent with the sustainability goals of the SGMA.
4. The grant application due date is January 31, 2021.

At the December 9, 2021 Board meeting, Watermaster Staff committed to monitoring DWR's finalization of the PSP. If necessary, Staff will immediately inform the Board of any substantive changes to the PSP that could require adjustments to the proposed scope-of-work and schedule and will ask the Board for alternative direction.

Scope-of-Work to Prepare the Grant Application

The following scope of work is based on instructions contained in the draft PSP, which describes the general process to prepare and submit a grant application. The main component of the instructions is

the development of a \$10 million Spending Plan for eligible planning and implementation projects through June 30, 2025.

Task 1 – Prepare Comment Letter on Draft Guidelines and PSP. Watermaster Staff has already completed this task, which included working with various Watermaster Parties and Legal Counsel to prepare and submit a comment letter on the draft Guidelines and PSP to the DWR on November 30, 2021.

Task 2 – Establish the Project Review Committee. The draft PSP requires the establishment of a Project Review Committee that is responsible for completing a self-evaluation for all projects using the scoring criteria outlined in Table 7 of the draft PSP. The committee should include a representative for each entity within a GSA, a representative from each entity within an approved Alternative, and/or another method where all interested parties have an equal vote.

Task 3 – Prepare Draft Spending Plan. Watermaster Staff recommends that the \$10 million Spending Plan be developed in a step-wise approach to solicit input from a broad spectrum of interests in the Borrego Spring Subbasin:

Step 1: Solicit a Call for Grant-Eligible Projects. Watermaster Staff will prepare a solicitation package for a “call for grant eligible projects.” The solicitation will include guidelines, instructions, requirements, and attachments to facilitate submissions of grant-eligible projects consistent with the PSP. The solicitation package will be sent by email on or about December 10, 2021 to the Borrego Springs Watermaster distribution list, which includes all members of the Watermaster Board, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Environmental Working Group (EWG), and other interested members of the public. The solicitation package will also be posted to the Watermaster’s website. The due date for project submissions will be January 3, 2022.

Step 2 – Prepare Project Descriptions for Watermaster-Related Projects and Services. Watermaster Staff will prepare project submissions for Watermaster-related projects and services that are currently being implemented, or are planned for future implementation, and are consistent with the grant-eligibility requirements in the PSP.

Step 3 – Conduct Special Ad-Hoc TAC and EWG Meetings. Meetings of the TAC and EWG will be held to: (i) review the project submissions for Watermaster-related projects and services in Step 2; (ii) discuss other projects that the TAC/EWG members wish to submit for consideration; and (iii) develop any recommendations to the Board (i.e., the Project Review Committee). The TAC and EWG meetings are being scheduled for mid-December 2021.

Step 4 – Compile Project Submissions and Prepare Project Scoring Template. Watermaster Staff will compile a packet of all project submissions received by January 3, 2022 and a proposed project scoring template. If necessary, Watermaster Staff will work with project proponents to refine their submittals to be consistent with the PSP. The project scoring template will be consistent with the requirements in the final PSP for self-evaluation of projects by the Project Review Committee. The package will be submitted to the Project Review Committee in the Board agenda packet for its meeting on January 13, 2021.

Step 5 – Project Review Committee Meeting: Review Project Submissions and Project Scoring Criteria. At the January 13, 2021 Board meeting, Watermaster Staff will review the package of project

submissions and project scoring criteria. The objective of this review is to educate the Project Review Committee on their task to independently score each project submission pursuant to the project scoring criteria. The Board meeting agenda will include a special comment period for members of the public to provide input to the Board.

Step 6 – Project Scoring by Project Review Committee. In this task, the Project Review Committee scores each project submission using the project scoring criteria. If asked, Watermaster Staff will answer questions and provide guidance to the Project Review Committee. Project scores are due for submittal to Watermaster Staff by January 20, 2022.

Task 4 – Prepare and Submit Grant Application.

Step 1 – Compile Project Scoring and Prepare Draft Spending Plan with Project Ranking. Watermaster Staff will compile the project scores from each Project Review Committee member and prepare a draft Spending Plan, which will consist of the highest ranked projects with a total combined cost of around \$10 million.

Step 2 – Prepare Draft Grant Application. Watermaster Staff will prepare and compile the documents that must accompany the Spending Plan to complete the draft grant application. This includes:

- (1) An adopted resolution of the Board designating an authorized representative to submit the application and execute an agreement with the State of California for the SGMA Implementation – Planning and Projects grant application.
- (2) Eligibility Self-Evaluation form for the grant applicant.

Step 3 – Project Review Committee Meeting: Finalize Grant Application and Spending Plan. This special meeting of the Board will be held on January 27, 2022 for the purposes of:

- (1) Finalizing and approving the Spending Plan.
- (2) Finalizing and approving the grant application (e.g., Resolution and Eligibility Self-Evaluation form)

Step 4 – Submit Grant Application and Spending Plan. Watermaster Staff will make any final revisions to the Spending Plan and grant application, as directed by the Project Review Committee and/or the grant applicant and submit the grant application to the DWR by **noon, January 31, 2022.**

Task 5 – Post-Submittal Support Services. Watermaster Staff will perform any necessary follow up activities to support the review of the grant application by the DWR and the execution of a Grant Agreement with the DWR. Based on discussions with DWR, this could include meetings to review and discuss the details of submitted projects and the Spending Plan.

Topics of TAC Discussion

Project Review Committee. The Technical Consultant has recommended that the Board of Directors of the Borrego Springs Watermaster be the Project Review Committee since it (1) is the entity charged with implementing the Alternative and (2) is comprised of broad representation of interests within the Borrego Springs Subbasin. The TAC should consider endorsing this recommendation or proposing an alternative recommendation to the Board for the composition of the Project Review Committee.

Call for Projects. Watermaster Staff has prepared draft instructions and a form for the *Call for Projects in the Borrego Springs Subbasin for Inclusion in a DWR Grant Application* (Call for Projects) and plans to disseminate the Call for Projects to the Watermaster email distribute list and will post the Call for Projects to the Watermaster's website. The TAC should review the enclosed draft instructions and project submission form and provide comments and suggested edits. The TAC should also provide feedback and recommendations on the plan to disseminate the Call for Projects.

Grant-Eligible Projects. Some TAC members have already been compiling ideas for grant-eligible projects to include in the spending plan. The TAC should engage in an open discussion on the types of projects that will grade highest by the DWR and will provide the greatest benefit to the Basin. The TAC should also attempt to assign individual projects to specific TAC members to avoid duplication of efforts.

Next Steps

1. Watermaster Staff will compile the feedback received at the TAC meeting and make any TAC recommended revisions to the instructions/form for the Call for Projects and disseminate.
2. Watermaster Staff will present the TAC recommendation on the composition of the Project Review Committee at the January 13, 2022 Board meeting.

Enclosed

Draft Project Submission Instructions

Draft Project Submission Form

**CALL FOR PROJECTS
IN THE BORREGO SPRINGS SUBBASIN
FOR INCLUSION IN A DWR GRANT APPLICATION**

Introduction

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released draft [Guidelines](#) and a [Proposal Solicitation Package \(PSP\)](#) for the [Sustainable Groundwater Management \(SGM\) Grant Program's](#) Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation Funding. This grant program is expected to provide a \$7.6 million grant to support planning and implementation projects that will help achieve groundwater sustainability in the Borrego Springs Subbasin (Basin) pursuant to SGMA. Grant funding is expected to be disbursed to the grant recipients for work performed between Spring 2022 through June 30, 2025.

The Borrego Springs Watermaster ([Watermaster](#)), in coordination with the [Borrego Water District](#), is facilitating the development of a \$10 million spending plan for grant-eligible projects in the Borrego Valley. Project submissions will be accepted from any stakeholder with an interest in the Basin.

The Watermaster is a special master of the Superior Court of California and is responsible for implementing the adjudication of groundwater pumping rights in the Basin (Judgment) and achieving the sustainable management of the Basin pursuant to its Groundwater Management Plan (GMP). The Judgment and GMP can be found on the Watermaster website [here](#). Before submitting a project for inclusion in the spending plan, you are encouraged to review the Judgment and GMP because the DWR considers them the equivalent of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan under SGMA. A Project Review Committee is being established to evaluate and rank all project submittals based on completeness, comprehensiveness, and the nexus to groundwater sustainability and the GMP. Your project will grade higher if it is consistent with the projects, management actions, and sustainability goals listed in the GMP.

Instructions for Project Submittals

Attachment A is a form to propose a specific project for inclusion in the grant application. The form is a Microsoft Word electronic file. Follow these instructions to submit your project(s) for consideration:

1. Copy the Attachment A file to your computer and rename it with the following convention: "Project-Owner_Project-Name.docx"
2. Complete each section of the form to the best of your ability. Save the file.
3. Email the file by **noon, January 3, 2022**, along with any supporting documentation/files, to:

Andy Malone (Watermaster Technical Consultant) at: amalone@westyost.com

4. Submissions by mail must be received by **noon, January 3, 2022** to:

Andy Malone
West Yost Associates
23692 Birtcher Drive
Lake Forest, CA 92630

5. Please direct questions to Andy Malone at 949-285-6908.

Glossary of Terms

Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) refers to the areas throughout California which most suffer from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes, as well as high incidence of asthma and heart disease. Specifically, a **DAC** is defined as an area with an average household income (AHI) of <80% the state average. A **Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC)** is defined as an area with an AHI of <60% the state average.

Underrepresented Communities. On September 30, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law a landmark bill (AB 979) requiring boards of directors of California-based public reporting corporations to have a minimum number of directors from underrepresented communities on their boards. The law defines underrepresented communities broadly to include those who self-identify as "Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Native Hawaiian, or Alaska Native, or . . . as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender."

Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER) is a set of tools, funding sources, and regulatory authorities designed to ensure that one million Californians who currently lack safe drinking water receive safe & affordable drinking water as quickly as possible. The SAFER program also aims to reach sustainable operations for all the state's drinking water systems and is a critical element for achieving the goals of safe, accessible, and affordable water for all Californians. More information on the SAFER can be found at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/safer.html and <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/>

California Conservation Corp (CCC) The California Conservation Corps is a department within the California Natural Resources Agency. It is the oldest and largest conservation corps in the nation. The program provides young adults (18 – 25 years old) a year of paid service to the State of California. During the year of service, Corps members work on environmental projects and respond to natural and man-made disasters. Through this work, they gain skills and experience that lead to meaningful careers. The CCC motto is: "Hard Work, Low Pay, Miserable Conditions and More!" The CCC is dedicated to developing its Corps members into citizens with character, credentials, and commitment. More information on CCC can be found at <https://ccc.ca.gov/>.

PROJECT SUBMITTAL FORM

DWR SGM GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE BORREGO SPRINGS SUBBASIN

Project Submitter/Owner:	
Project Name:	
Contact Information	
Name: Phone: Email:	Address:
Project Summary. Please provide a summary of the Project description.	
[Insert text here]	
Project Map. Provide regional and Project map(s) depicting the Project location, current conditions, and the benefitting areas.	
[You may provide as a separate file, if appropriate.]	
Nexus to Sustainable Groundwater Management. Please describe the nexus of the Project to the Sustainability Goal of the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) for the Borrego Springs Subbasin. Is the Project listed as a project or management action (PMA) in the GMP? Does the Project help achieve the goals of the GMP or benefit the planned Rampdown? Does the Project have a basin-wide benefit?	
[Insert text here]	
Objectives and Benefits. What are the specific goals and needs for the Project, and how will the project achieve the goals and meet the needs? What are the quantifiable benefits of the Project (e.g., protect or enhance water quality, water conservation, enhanced understanding of the groundwater basin, etc.)? How will those benefits be quantified and evaluated?	
[Insert text here]	
Communities Served. Please describe the communities served by the Project. Will the Project benefit an Underrepresented Community, a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), and/or a Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC)? If so, please provide the amount of funding that will benefit the Underrepresented Community, DAC, and/or SDAC.	
[Insert text here]	

PROJECT SUBMITTAL FORM

DWR SGM GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE BORREGO SPRINGS SUBBASIN

<p>Small Water Systems and Private Domestic Wells. Will the Project positively impact issues associated with small water systems or private shallow domestic wells (e.g., groundwater contamination vulnerability, drawdown, etc.)? Does the Project help address the needs of the State Water Board’s SAFER Program? If so, please provide information such as: domestic well census results, water system maps, service area maps, etc.</p>			
<p>[Insert text here]</p>			
<p>Human Right to Water. How does the Project address the Human Right to Water (AB 685 Section 106.3)? How will the Project support the established policy of the State that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes?</p>			
<p>[Insert text here]</p>			
<p>California Conservation Corp (CCC). Have you contacted the CCC to obtain their service for the Project? Did the CCC provide an emailed response? If so, provide backup documentation.</p>			
<p>[Insert text here]</p>			
<p>Scope of Work. Please provide a detailed Project description by tasks/subtasks. You may provide as a separate file, if appropriate. Provide backup documentation, if available.</p>			
<p>[Insert text here]</p>			
<p>Budget. Please provide a detailed Project budget table by tasks/subtasks. You may provide as a separate file, if appropriate. Include estimates for labor hours and other direct costs (e.g., subconsultants, travel, laboratory, rentals, reproduction, etc.). Ensure that the tasks/subtasks in the budget table align with the tasks/subtasks in the Scope of Work. Please indicate whether a local cost share is included, and if so, the amount of the cost share. Provide backup documentation, if available.</p>			
<p>[Insert text here]</p>			
<p>Schedule. Please provide a detailed Project schedule table by tasks/subtasks. You may provide as a separate file, if appropriate. Ensure that the tasks/subtasks in the schedule table align with the tasks/subtasks in the Scope of Work and Budget. Provide backup documentation, if available.</p>			
<p>[Insert text here]</p>			
<p>FOR WATERMASTER USE ONLY</p>			
<p>Received by:</p>		<p>Date/Time:</p>	