

Upper American River Watershed Program
Programmatic Watershed Plan (PWP)
Watershed Planning Group Meeting #7 Draft Summary

June 23, 2023, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM
El Dorado County (Conference Room D)
330 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667

Meeting Objectives:

- Provide updates on the development and content of the Programmatic Watershed Plan (PWP) and PWP Project List for the Upper American River Watershed Program.
- Review comments and feedback on the draft content of the PWP.

Attendees: See attachment on last page for list of meeting participants.

Action Items:

#	Item	Owner	Timeframe
1	Send out meeting slides, summary	Stantec	By June 30 th , 2023
2	Review the draft PWP and provide feedback (See below: Item 4, bullet VIII for questions to consider when providing feedback)	All	By July 7 th , 2023 OR notify the technical assistance staff in advance, if planning to provide comments at a later date.
3	Provide Placer fire safe councils' boundaries to Stantec.	County of Placer	By July 7 th , 2023
4	Provide language on native and protected plants and species to Stantec.	County of El Dorado	By July 7 th , 2023
5	Provide language on the roles and responsibilities of land trusts in watershed management	American River Conservancy	By July 7 th , 2023
6	Provide reference list of related plans	USDA Forest Service	By July 7 th , 2023
7	Provide list of outreach contacts	USDA Forest Service, County of Placer	By July 7 th , 2023
8	Provide updated draft PWP to the group for review	Stantec	By August 11 th , 2023
9	Attend next meeting	All	August 18 th , 2023

Presentation Materials: See attached PowerPoint slide deck.

Meeting Summary:

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

- All attendees provided self-introductions.

2. PWP Development Process

- Background was provided on the PWP development process, including the development timeline, primary goal, and outline of the draft PWP.
- Timeline was discussed.
 - Feedback on the draft PWP should be sent to the El Dorado Water Agency (Agency) or technical assistance staff prior to July 7th for timely incorporation into the draft PWP.
 - The group agreed on planning the next meeting for August 2023 to review and discuss the revised draft PWP.

3. PWP Project List Updates

- Background was given to the group on the PWP supplemental materials. The supplemental material provides an overview of the project prioritization process selected for the PWP, which uses the Reclamation WaterSMART Environmental Water Resources Projects (EWRP) grant criteria as a guideline.
- It was clarified that the Reclamation WaterSMART EWRP grant makes funding available at variable amounts for different project categories on an annual basis.
- The group discussed grant requirements related to the watershed management plans. Phase II of the Reclamation WaterSMART EWRP grant requires inclusion in the PWP. It was noted that many funding opportunities are looking for regional support for projects, demonstrating the benefit of inclusion in the PWP.

4. Review Comments and Feedback on Draft PWP

I. Title, Acknowledgement, and Members

- County of Placer mentioned that they would like to review the plan first, and then they will decide if it makes sense to be listed as a core member.
- It was noted that the draft PWP is a work in progress. The text is continuously revised to equally center Placer and El Dorado counties in the discussion.
- The group suggested discussing the PWP with the United Auburn Indian Community, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California, National Forest Foundation, and Tahoe National Forest. **Action item: USDA Forest Service and County of Placer to provide list of outreach contacts.**

II. Chapter 1

- Section 1.1, page 3: Consider adding reference to page 19 when we mention there are many various roles and responsibilities.
- Section 1.1, page 6: Include raster scale on the map.
- Section 1.2: Primary purpose be highlighted clearly
- Section 1.2: Consider adding addressing risks in watershed into the PWP goals
- Section 1.5: Consider moving closer to the front of the document.

III. Chapter 2

- Section 2.1: Add narrative on the upper Consumnes watershed portion of the planning area related to the importance of the upper Consumnes watershed for natural capital and working landscapes (e.g., Jenkinson's Lake, salmon habitat).
- Section 2.1: It was noted that the relationship of nature-based solutions and ecosystem services be clarified to avoid confusion. A suggested revision included "nature-based solutions recognize and enhance the ecosystem goods and services provided by working landscapes."
- Section 2.2: It was suggested to bolster the discussion on the role of land trusts in the watershed.
- Section 2.2: It was suggested that mention of farming and ranching as private land activities be added.
- Section 2.2: Clarify that ARC is a landowner (~25,000 acres) and so is Placer Land Trust. Add text to page 18 or 21. **Action item: American River Conservancy to provide text on the roles and responsibilities of land trusts in watershed management.**
- Section 2.2, page 21: Add PG&E to the water and energy utilities list in the 3rd paragraph.
- Section 2.2, page 22: Remove "((" in first paragraph next to FEMA and Cal OES

- It was suggested that emphasis be added on the role of private landowners in long-term planning and land management. Farming and ranching should be listed as private land activities.
- Section 2.2, page 24: Technical team expressed the need for clear delineation of fire safe council boundaries from Placer County. **Action item: County of Placer is to provide the technical assistance team these boundaries.**

IV. Chapter 3

- It was suggested that glossary be added for clarity of definitions (e.g., nature-based solutions, ecosystem goods and services, protected land status, urban wildland interface).
- Page 27: Correct spelling of word “stress”.
- Section 3.1: Consider adding hydropower to the list of renewable resources under the Natural Capacity definition.
- Section 3.1: It was suggested that narrative be added on the intersectionality of natural, built, and social capacity definitions provided in Section 3. Biomass utilization was an example that touched all categories.
- Section 3.1: Add discussion about the additive nature of these challenges (e.g., overstock of forest increases fuel loads which increases wildfire and pest challenges)
- Section 3.1: It was asked whether to provide a reference list of related plans. **Action item: USDA Forest Service provide reference list of related plans.**
- Section 3.1: Under Challenge 2, call out loss of meadows specifically.
- Section 3.1, page 30: Provide clarification of “under certain protected status”.
- Section 3.1: Challenge 3: It was noted that the title does not match the description. It was suggested that language on native and protected plants and species be revised to be consistent with County of El Dorado policies and programs. **Action item: County of El Dorado is to provide suggested revision.**
- Section 3.1: It was asked how we can incorporate equity and environmental justice into our challenges discussion.
- Section 3.1: There was discussion on how fire insurance relates to the outlined challenges in Section 3. Challenge 6 needs to be split out to effectively communicate the specific sub-issues it covers.
- Section 3.2, page 36: Highlight urban wildland interface risk and the impact of continuing urban growth

V. Chapter 4

- RMS6b, page 42: It was suggested that it be revised to specifically include language related to the West Slope El Dorado County Stormwater Quality and Best Management Practice (BMP) Design Manual.

VI. Chapter 5

- The group was referred to review the supplemental materials and list of projects to provide feedback.

VII. Chapter 6

- The group discussed how agencies may implement the plan.
 - Implementation of the plan will require individual actions within the roles and authorities of PWP partners; however, how these individual actions are implemented is at the discretion of the implementation agencies.

- The Agency shared that they plan to develop Agency-specific policies that will be adopted by their board as an example of what agencies could do with the plan to support effective implementation.
- The group focused on the content presented in Chapter 6 which focused on the implementation of the plan.
 - The group discussed leveraging existing forums for future discussion (e.g., El Dorado Countywide Plenary for Water, South Fork American River (SOFAR) Cohesive Strategy, Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI), and other related forums). Challenges include finding a forum which covers the geographic extent of the watershed and involved agencies.
 - The group agreed that updates on a five-year basis were appropriate. Progress updates should also be given on a yearly basis. The group expressed their willingness to provide yearly updates for their respective agencies.
 - There was consensus that quantifiable criteria would be helpful for the program to measure progress and success. However, group agreed that establishment of such criteria would be challenging, and it requires time and commitment which is beyond the scope of the current plan. Therefore, development of quantifiable criteria will occur alongside the implementation of the PWP. The group agreed to provide assistance in developing quantifiable criteria. This effort could be related to RMS9.1 and RMS9.2 related to development of database and tools for a better understanding and efficient watershed management.

VIII. General Comments

- Technical team noted that all maps will be revised to have consistent size, scale, and components (e.g., legend).
- Technical team reminded the group that the draft PWP is still a work in progress. It will go under a thorough editorial review after feedback is received from group members and the content is finalized.
- The Agency asked group members to specifically review the draft PWP to answer the following questions.
 1. Does the overview and summary information provided in Chapters 1 and 2 provide sufficient context for why the document was prepared and by whom?
 2. Do the proposed challenges broadly capture the problems facing the watershed, and do the proposed strategies and actions span the best ways to address them (Chapters 4, 5)?
 3. Is your agency accurately represented in the context of watershed management, including your roles and responsibilities for implementing individual resource management measures and actions?
 4. Did any lingering, unanswered questions arise during your review of the document?

5. Next Steps

- **Action items:** Group members are to provide feedback and comments on the draft PWP content to the Agency and technical team by July 7th, 2023.
 - If the deadline cannot be met, the Agency and technical support should be notified prior to July 7th, 2023.
 - Feedback can be provided in any format (e.g., comments on PDF, via email, word document).

- Group members may request follow-up discussions with the Agency and technical team to discuss their feedback, if needed.
- The Agency and technical team will incorporate feedback into a revised draft PWP and provide an updated draft PWP for group review one week prior to the next meeting.
- Participants agreed on their availability for the next meeting, which will be held on August 18th at 10:30 am.

6. Adjourn

- With no further business, the group adjourned at 12:27 pm.

Meeting Participants

* = virtual participant

Meeting Participant	Agency (in alphabetical order by agency)
Group Members	
Elena DeLacy	American River Conservancy
Brad Hubbard	Bureau of Reclamation
*Melissa Vignau	Bureau of Reclamation
LeeAnne Mila	County of El Dorado, Agriculture Department
Jeffrey Warren	County of El Dorado, Environmental Management
Karen Garner	County of El Dorado, Planning and Building
Christina Hanson	County of Placer
Barb Kildow	El Dorado County Farm Bureau
Kyle Ericson	El Dorado Water Agency
Rebecca Guo	El Dorado Water Agency
*Alexis Elliott	Georgetown Divide Public Utility District
*Michelle Banonis	Regional Water Authority
Darold Perry	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
*Lynn Huntsinger	University of California, Berkeley
Kim Morales	USDA Forest Service
Michelle Wolfgang	USDA Forest Service
Technical Support	
*David Batker	Batker Consulting LLC
Bridget Childs	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
Maliheh Karamigolbaghi	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
Kari Shively	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
Yung-Hsin Sun	Sunzi Consulting LLC