# 6 TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF FIGURES

# LIST OF TABLES

# 6 PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

This section documents the project review process and contains the following three components taken from the 2016 DWR Guidelines (State Guidelines):

1. Procedures for submitting a project to be included in the IRWM Plan
2. Procedures for review of projects to implement the IRWM Plan
3. Procedures for communicating lists of selected projects.

Furthermore, the section will specifically answer the following three questions:

1. Who will be responsible for approving the project list?
2. How stakeholders provide input during the submittal, review, selection, etc.?
3. How and when is the list updated and does it require re-adoption of the Plan?

## 6.1 PROJECT LISTS

The State Guidelines (pg. 53) make explicitly clear there are to be a minimum of two lists:

- Projects that will be necessary to implement the IRWM Plan and
- Projects that may qualify for a specific funding source

Our Region takes this one step farther to differentiate projects that will be necessary to implement *this* iteration of the Plan from projects, regardless of stage of development, that will implement the plan. This is the primary differentiator of the Full Project List and the Implementation List. These are three project lists for the SLO County IRWM Region:

1. Full Project List (**Section 6.2**)
2. Implementation List (**Section 6.3**)
3. Grant Opportunity Specific List (**Section 6.4**)

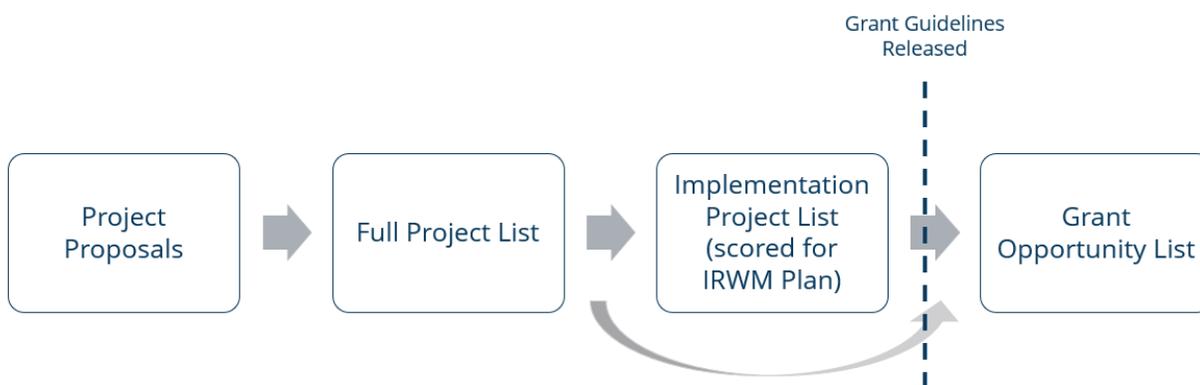The relationship of these lists is shown in **Figure 6-1** and each further described in this section.



*Figure 6-1: Relationship of the Full Project List, Implementation List and Grant Opportunity List*

## 6.2    FULL PROJECT LIST

The San Luis Obispo County Region Full Project List represents all the projects and programs being worked on by RWMG members, and a few not-yet RWMG members. These projects span the gamut of development stages: conceptual, planning, design, and ready for implementation. RWMG members are encouraged to submit projects even in their infancy, to be able to leverage IRWM for other partnership, funding, and marketing opportunities.

The Full Project List is attached as **Appendix F**.

### 6.2.1    Criteria and Process for the Full Project List

To be considered as an IRWM project, all prospective project proponents must meet 3 screening criteria, as described in **Table 6-1.**

*Table 6-1: Full Project List Screening Criteria*

| Full Project List – Screening | |
| --- | --- |
| How a project contributes to the IRWM Plan Objectives | **Pass,** if project satisfies <u>at least one</u> IRWM Plan Goal |
| Project Understanding | **Pass,** if sufficient knowledge of the project location, systems, materials, methods, or processes proposed is provided to indicate that the project will likely result in a successful outcome. Demonstrable understanding of technical, financial and operations & maintenance of the project. |
| Plan Adoption | **Pass,** if project proponent had adopted the SLO IRWM MOU and Plan or plans to do so. |

To accomplish "Project Understanding", the standardized submittal form requests the following information for each project submitted:

- Project Name and Summary
- Description of Need for Project
- If the Project will involve partnership with other organizations or communities (and to explain if so)
- Estimate Project Cost
- Funding Sources (if any)
- Construction Start and End dates
- Project Status (conceptual, planning/design, ready for implementation)
- CEQA and Construction Permit Status

In addition to this basic information, the form includes check-box fields for if a project addresses:

- Needs of a Disadvantaged Community
- Needs of a Native American Tribal Community
- Our Region's climate change vulnerabilities
- Greenhouse gas emission reduction

This information is received by the Lead Agency, the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District). District staff, on behalf of the RWMG, reviews this initial information. If a project meets the 3 screening criteria it is provisionally added to the Full Project List. A project is provisionally added to the list until the RWMG moves to approve the addition of the submitted projects to the Full Project List.

This list is updated, reviewed and approved biennially at a minimum by the RWMG. Provisional submissions are taken under consideration by the RWMG at this time and either added to the Full Project List or rejected. Special circumstances, such as a plan update or funding opportunity, may require an additional RWMG action to update the Full Project List.

### 6.2.2 Location of the Project Submission Form

Projects may be submitted for initial review by the District at any time. The Project submission form can be accessed from the Region's IRWM website, www.slocounty.ca.gov/IRWM or directly via SurveyMonkey[1].

### 6.2.3 Full Project List Development for the 2019 Plan

In preparation for the 2019 IRWM Plan update, the RWMG held a call for projects in May 2017 to update the Full Project List. In total, **14** new projects were submitted and **9** existing projects on the Full Project List were updated to reflect their current status. The submitted projects for the 2017 update are included in **Appendix F.**

Additionally, as part of preparation of the Implementation List (**Section 6.3**) in August 2018, the draft Full Project List was presented to the RWMG for review. The intentions of this exercise were two-fold:

- Review, update or remove projects from the existing Full Project List
- Add any new projects being considered for the Implementation List

This 2018 Full Project List review included updates to **10** projects, addition of **12** projects to the Full Project List and removal of **48** projects from the list that are no longer being pursued by

---

[1] https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SLO-IRWM-Project-Form

RWMG Members. In total, at approval of the 2019 IRWM Plan, the Full Project List included **103** projects from **30** different project sponsoring agencies or organizations.

## 6.3   IMPLEMENTATION LIST

The 2019 IRWM Plan Implementation List represent the projects expecting to be completed by the RWMG members in the next 5 years. This list represents *some of* the projects that would implement the 2019 Plan.

### 6.3.1   Implementation List Development

Based on the 2016 Guidelines as well as the Lead Agency's push for a simplified process compared to the 2014 Plan, the San Luis Obispo County RWMG spent most of 2018 developing the Implementation List process and the list itself.

Timeline of List development:

- April 4th, 2018 – RWMG Meeting. Members moved create an RWMG Working Group to develop the implementation scoring process and rubric, following the State Guidelines.
- April 9, 16, 23, 2018 – RWMG Working Group Meetings. The group met to discuss scoring priorities and weighting as well as adjustments to be made from the 2014 IRWM Plan process.
- May to June – District (Lead Agency) staff develop ed the fillable forms for RWMG use in the scoring efforts.
- July 20, 2018 – Draft forms were distributed to and reviewed by the RWMG Working Group.
- August 1st, 2018 – RWMG Meeting. Call for projects was opened to all RWMG members. Final forms were distributed. The final hour of the RWMG meeting was a workshop for members to begin the Implementation List forms.
- August 1st to 31st, 2018 – Call for Projects and Stakeholder meetings. District Staff met with individuals and groups of stakeholders/members to assist in the scoring process and discuss their projects. In total, 8 meetings were held, and 12 projects were discussed.
- September to October – District staff compiled the submitted projects and forms, organized the projects and prepared the draft Implementation List presentation.
- November 7th, 2018 – RWMG Meeting. Draft Implementation List presented to RWMG.

### 6.3.2   Scoring Priorities and Weights

The RWMG Working Group meetings in April focused on scoring priorities and how to weigh them. The Review Factors are prescribed by the Guidelines, starting on page 53. These factors were discussed, grouped and weighed in these Working Group meetings. **Table 6-2** shows what

these Review Factors are and where they were implemented in the Scoring Rubric, described below

A lesson learned from the 2014 IRWM Plan Implementation List was that its scoring process de-emphasized project readiness factors (i.e. Project status, economic feasibility, etc.) in favor of meeting objectives and proposed benefits. Taking those lessons and these factors from the Guidelines, the Working Group developed groupings, or categories, of the Review Factors and weighed them for 2019 Implementation List, as shown in **Table 6-3.** Once these weights were agreed upon, the Working Group went criteria-by-criteria for how to appropriate the categorical weight. In addition to setting the scoring of each criteria, the Working Group set guidelines for how to evaluate the projects for scoring. The summary of these efforts are presented in the Implementation List Scoring Rubric, show as **Table 6-4**.

*Table 6-2:* *Relationship between Guidelines' Review Factors and the SLO IRWM Implementation List Rubric*

| Review Factors from Guidelines | Scoring Criteria |
|---|---|
| Contribution to objectives | A |
| Relation to resource management strategies (RMS) | B |
| Technical feasibility | D |
| Specific benefits to critical DAC water issues | H |
| Specific benefits to Native American Tribal Communities critical water issues | H |
| Environmental justice considerations | H |
| Project costs and financing | F |
| Economic feasibility | F |
| Project status | E |
| Strategic considerations for IRWM Plan Implementation | C |
| Adapting to climate change | I |
| Reduction of GHG emissions, compared to project alternatives | J |
| Plan Adoption | See **Section 6.2.1** |
| Reduced reliance on Delta | K |

*Table 6-3*: *Review Factor Categories and Weights*

| Scoring Category | Rubric Criteria | Scoring Weight |
|---|---|---|
| Plan Objectives | A, B, C | 40 |
| Readiness to Proceed | D, E, F, G | 40 |
| Environmental Justice | H | 10 |
| Climate Change & Delta | I, J, K | 10 |

**Table 6-4:** *Implementation List Scoring Rubric*

| Criteria | Scoring Guidelines | Points Subtotal | Points Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. How a project contributes to the IRWM Plan Objectives | - Projects that contribute to 5 or fewer objectives, 1 point<br>- Projects that contribute to 6-10 objectives, 2 points.<br>- Projects that contribute to 11-15 objectives, 3 points.<br>- Projects that contribute to 16-20 objectives, 4 points.<br>- Projects that contribute to 21 or more, 5 points.<br>*Note: Include any direct, indirect or qualitative contribution.* | 5 | **25** |
| | - Project that documents how it <u>directly</u> contributes to objectives:<br>  - Evidence of contributing to 5 or less objectives: 4 pts.<br>  - Evidence of contributing to 6-10 objectives: 8 points.<br>  - Evidence of contributing to 11-15 objectives: 12 points.<br>  - Evidence of contributing to 16-20 objectives:16 points.<br>  - Evidence of contributing to 21 or more objectives, 20 points. | 20 | |
| B. Utilized RMS, Resource Management Strategies | - Projects including 1-3 RMSs are given 3 points.<br>- Projects including 4-9 RMSs, 6 points.<br>- Project that includes 10 or more RMSs, 10 points. | - | **10** |
| C. Strategic considerations for IRWM Plan Implementation | - If the project demonstrates the ability to integrate with other projects or be modified to encourage regional planning and produce multiple benefits, it is given 5 points. No partial points are given for this criterion. | - | **5** |
| D. Technical feasibility of the project | - If project plans/designs have been completed and if there is evidence to indicate it will have a successful outcome (i.e. achieve the claimed benefits of the project), the project is given all 10 points.<br>- If project plans/designs have not been completed and evaluated for feasibility, the subsequent guidelines are followed:<br>  - For completed technical feasibility studies, the project is given 2 points.<br>  - For the completion of background studies and reconnaissance (before design), it is given 2 points.<br>  - For completed designs or technical project plans, the project is given 3 points.<br>  - For completed report(s) that document a successful outcome of the project, the project is given 3 points. | 10 | **10** |
| E. Project status / Readiness to Proceed | - If fully prepared for implementation (i.e. CEQA complete or exempt, Easements executed, etc.), project earns 10 pts.<br>- If a project is not ready for implementation, the subsequent guidelines are followed:<br>  - For a project that has identified it's permitting needs and a timeline to completion, 2 points are given.<br>  - A portion of the remaining 8 points will be given based on the percent-complete of the project's permitting needs and timeline. | - | **10** |

| Criteria | Scoring Guidelines | Points | |
|----------|--------------------|:------:|:-----:|
| | | Subtotal | Total |
| F. Project costs and financing | - Project Costs. If project costs are known to best extent possible and documented, the full 5 points will be given. A full 5 points will be awarded for projects with contractor bids and an engineer's estimate. If there is only an estimate without bids, 3 points will be awarded. | 5 | **10** |
| | - Financing. A project will receive the full 5 points if it can document 80% financing or more. If partially financed, points will be given according to the percent financed, rounded up to the nearest whole number. (i.e. 62% financed rounds to 4 pts). | 5 | |
| G. Economic feasibility (O&M) | - Is the O&M cost of the completed, operational project accounted for? An analysis or report of these anticipated O&M costs, and how any additional financial needs are being covered is required to receive 10 points. No increase in O&M costs, with proof, will receive 10 points. | - | **10** |
| H. Environmental justice considerations | - If the project specifically addresses critical water issues of a disadvantaged community (DAC), it is given 4 points. | 4 | **10** |
| | - If the project specifically addresses critical water issues of Native American Tribal communities, it is given 3 points. | 3 | |
| | - If the project specifically addresses Environmental Justice concerns (i.e. pollution, industrial contamination), then the project is given 3 points. | 3 | |
| I. Climate Change Adaption | - For each climate change vulnerability addressed, the project is given points based on a weighting of the vulnerability's priority. | 4 | **6** |
| | - If changes in runoff and recharge are addressed in the project planning, then the project is given 1 point.<br>- If sea level rise impacts, specifically to water supply, are addressed in project planning, the project is given 1 point. | 2 | |
| J. Climate Change Mitigation (GHG Emission Reduction) | - If the selected project reduces GHG emissions compared to other project alternatives, and can provide documentation of this analysis, it is given 1 point. | 1 | **3** |
| | - If the project qualitatively reduces energy consumption, especially energy embedded in water, it is given 1 point. | 1 | |
| | - When evaluating the project-related GHG emissions on a 20-year planning horizon, projects that reduce GHG emissions are given 1 point. | 1 | |
| K. Reduce Delta reliance | - If the project reduces dependence on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for water supply, it is given 1 point. | - | **1** |
| | *Total Possible Score* | **100** | |

### 6.3.3 Call for Projects and Stakeholder Meetings

Upon completion and Working Group approval of the Scoring Rubric, District staff prepared the Implementation List Scoring worksheets and call for projects package for interested project sponsors. The call for projects was open from August 1st, 2018 to August 31st, 2018. In this time, 26 projects were submitted. District staff used this opportunity to meet with new RWMG members and new representatives of existing members. These meetings included evaluating projects, discussing IRWM in San Luis Obispo County, exploring opportunities for integration, and the future of IRWM as a whole.

Of the 26 projects submitting, 25 projects were considered eligible and presented to the RWMG membership at the November 7th, RWMG Meeting. No comments were received by the RWMG regarding the list and project scores.

### 6.3.4 2019 Implementation List

**Table 6-5** is the 2019 Implementation List of projects for the San Luis Obispo County IRWM Region. In general, true "multi-benefit" projects scored higher than singular focused projects.

As expected, given the 40% weight to "readiness", projects further along in design, permitting and financing also generally scored higher.

Because of the "readiness" emphasis, it is vital to note that the scores were snapshots in time. Therefore, it's important to acknowledge what the list is, and what the list is not. This list represents the projects that are necessary to implement the 2019 IRWM Plan and the priorities for RWMG Members for the next 5 years. It is possible that a high-scoring project will not be eligible for Prop 1, Round 1 funding and will need to wait for Round 2, or future funding opportunities. As required by the Guidelines (pg. 53), this list is not a grant-prioritization process.

*Table 6-5*: *2019 IRWM Plan Implementation List, alphabetical by Project Sponsor*

| Project Sponsor | Project Name | Status |
|---|---|---|
| Cambria CSD | WWTP Nutrient Removal and Efficiency Improvements | Design |
| Cayucos Sanitary District | Cayucos Sustainable Water Project, Phase 1 | Ready for Implementation |
| Cayucos Sanitary District | Cayucos Sustainable Water Project, Phase 2 | Planning |
| City of Pismo Beach | Central Coast Blue | Design |
| City of San Luis Obispo | One Water SLO | Design |
| City of San Luis Obispo | Mid Higuera Bypass | Design |
| City of San Luis Obispo | Recycled Water Distribution System Expansion | Design |
| City of San Luis Obispo | Meadow Park Stormwater Capture and Use | Concept |
| Coastal San Luis RCD | Remediation and BMP Implementation in the Oso Flaco Watershed | Design |
| Coastal San Luis RCD | Livestock and Land Program | Ready for Implementation |
| County of San Luis Obispo | Oceano 13th Street Drainage Project | Ready for Implementation |
| County of San Luis Obispo | Mountain Springs Road Sediment Control | Design |
| Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District | Huer Huero Recharge Project | Concept |
| Los Osos CSD | 8th Street Well Construction | Ready for Implementation |
| Morro Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) | Los Padres CCC Center Stormwater LID | Planning |
| Morro Bay NEP | Water Conservation Partnerships in Chorro Valley | Planning |
| Morro Bay NEP | Baywood Park 2nd St. Stormwater Management | Concept |
| Nipomo CSD | Supplemental Water Project, Final Phase | Ready for Implementation |
| Oceano CSD | Oceano LID Project | Design |
| San Miguel CSD | Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion | Planning |
| San Miguelito Mutual Water Company | Lower San Luis Obispo Creek Fish Passage Improvement and Seawater Intrusion Barrier | Planning |
| San Simeon CSD | Reservoir Expansion Project | Design |
| Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD | Santa Rosa Creek Floodplain Feasibility Study | Ready for Implementation |
| Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD | Santa Rosa Creek Streamflow Enhancement | Design |
| Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD | SLO County Key Percolation Zone Study | Ready for Implementation |

## 6.4 GRANT OPPORTUNITY SPECIFIC LIST

The Grant Opportunity Specific List is created in response to a specific funding opportunity opened by DWR for IRWM projects. Each opportunity has its own eligibility and scoring metrics, as well as priorities and preferences for project types and methods. Because of these vary from opportunity to opportunity, each new opportunity requires the formation and vetting of its own local list of projects.

DWR has overhauled the grant process for IRWM after the passage of Proposition 1 (2014). The local selection process is intended to mirror DWR's process for the Prop 1 IRWM Implementation grants. This overhaul includes a fillable form-based application and funding area-wide presentations. In response, the San Luis Obispo County Region will utilize the same form and require presentations by prospective applicants, as described below.

The basic schedule for responding to a Prop 1 grant opportunity is as follows:

1. Review Draft PSP at Regular RWMG Meeting.
2. Call for projects.
3. Project showcase.
4. Application Recommendation by RWMG Working Group.
5. Application Recommendation by RWMG.
6. Application Recommendation by WRAC.
7. *Funding Area Workshops with DWR.*
8. Application approved by Board of Supervisors for submittal to DWR.

### 6.4.1 Review of Draft PSP at Regular RWMG Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to review the eligibility criteria, timeline and funding available. This meeting will also highlight priorities and preferences of DWR for the solicitation and review the opportunity-specific scoring criteria.

### 6.4.2 Call for Projects

This would be based on the provided eligibility forms, scoring summary and project information form, or similar, as provided by DWR. Information, forms and references for this local solicitation of projects are communicated via the mailing list and the website. The Project Information Form (PIF) is supplied by DWR and connects directly the scoring rubric used by DWR to evaluate projects.

### 6.4.3 Project Showcase

Immediately following the close of the call for projects, a project showcase will be held at a regular RWMG Meeting. Agencies/organizations who submit a project for the funding opportunity will be required to present their projects at a regular RWMG meeting.

Presentations are intended to be brief, but highlight the need, design, financing and benefits of the project.

### 6.4.4    Application Recommendation by RWMG Working Group

District staff will provide a list of submitted projects and their files to the RWMG Working Group for review.  Approximately one week after supplying this information, the Working Group will meet in a public setting to discuss the projects. Discussion will be facilitated in the following order: eligibility, scoring and Funding. Eligibility and scoring are based on the information provided by DWR in the Proposal Solicitation Package. Once the Working Group confirms a project's eligibility and score, the Group will prepare an application package recommendation to be reviewed by the entire RWMG at their next meeting. In addition, the Working Group will heed any direction provided by the entire RWMG. For example, the RWMG could direct the Working Group to identify the top 3 critical needs, match these with DWR's guidance and then provide a recommendation. In the end, the recommendation will include not only a list of projects, but a funding recommendation for each.

### 6.4.5    Application Recommendation by RWMG

Upon receipt of the recommendation of projects and funding for the application from the RWMG Working Group, a regular RWMG meeting will be held.  At this meeting, the RWMG at large will formally approve, reject or approve with modifications the recommended application package.

### 6.4.6    Application Recommendation by WRAC

Per the RWMG MOU (**Appendix B**), the pathway of an IRWM funding application moves from the RWMG, to the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) and then the District's Board of Supervisors. (See **Section 2 – Governance** for more information about the relationship of the RWMG, WRAC and the District's Board of Supervisors.) Upon recommendation of the RWMG for inclusion in a specific funding opportunity, project sponsors will present their projects to the WRAC. These presentations are intended to be informational. After these presentations and any questions, the WRAC will entertain a motion to recommend the presented projects for submittal to DWR.

### 6.4.7    Funding Area Presentation to DWR

As part of the implementation grant program for Proposition 1 (2014) IRWM, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) will be hosting each funding area for application-level presentations by each submitting agency. These presentations will include DWR and other State agencies. These workshops are designed to increase engagement between DWR and the funding areas. Each project applicant will be required to present their project to DWR and other State

representatives. Initial application feedback will be provided by DWR for each Region's application, looking ahead to the formal application submittal 12 weeks after the presentations.

### 6.4.8    Application Submittal Approval by Board of Supervisors

The final local step in the application process is to receive approval of the selected projects by the Board of Supervisors of the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (District). This approval authorizes District staff to officially submit the grant application and provides District staff authority to enter into grant agreements, funding agreements and any future amendments to either.

## 6.5    PROJECT LIST COMMUNICATION AND UPDATES

### 6.5.1    Communication of Project List Updates

Updates to project lists and distribution of submitted documentation occurs on the San Luis Obispo County Region's IRWM website, www.slocounty.ca.gov/irwm. The primary channel for all communication from the District, the Lead Agency, is through the mailing list. These emails occur once a month, and more frequently when a call for projects or another similar event is taking place. Additionally, information is provided at the regular RWMG meetings. In all three of these primary communication methods – website, mailing list, meetings – RWMG members, interested stakeholders and members of the public are able to receive and review available information.

### 6.5.2    Future of Project Lists

As part of the Plan implementation, the project list will be updated on a biennial basis (or more often if needed) to keep the list of included projects current.  The project solicitation process described above will be used to update the Full Project List. Project solicitations will be conducted biennially, or more frequently when new opportunities arise in order to ensure that the Region's Project List is current, comprehensive and reflects existing project statuses. The updated Full Project List will be published as an addendum to the IRWM Plan, not requiring re-adoption of the plan. Future IRWM implementation grant opportunities will be offered to the best suited projects/ programs.

The region seeks to create an online database where concepts, projects, and programs can be submitted, and/or existing concepts, projects, and programs can be updated, between solicitation periods. These submittals would not be scored and ranked until the next Biennial Project List Update.

## 6.6    PROJECT INTEGRATION

Lastly, as understanding expands regarding the interconnectedness of our water systems, project integration is an essential component of water management in the 21st century.

As shown in the RWMG member list (**Table 2-1**), San Luis Obispo County IRWM includes the County, municipalities, services districts, county-wide resource groups and other specific resource programs (i.e. Morro Bay National Estuary Program).

This plan cycle intends to include integration workshops, primarily between restoration/ecosystem groups and agencies implementing water/wastewater service projects. The opportunities for integration exist and the benefits are well known. Integrated projects, particularly those between restoration and municipal partners, maximize resources, serve a population while stewarding the environmental and provide a more advantageous position for additional funding opportunities.

Another opportunity for project integration is in the "information sharing" and the unique place IRWM has to create and be the catalyst for conversation. For example, in preparation for the Proposition 1, Round 1 Implementation Grant opportunity, each submitting agency/group, presented their projects at the April 3rd, 2019 regular RWMG meeting. This meeting served as the "Project Showcase" described in **Section 6.4.3**.  Members, interested stakeholders as well as members of the public attended this meeting. In all, 14 projects were presented, and Q&A followed each presentation. In addition to these formal conversations, after the meeting, many conversations ensued including various wastewater plant general managers discussing treatment processes/technologies/operating strategies, project managers discussing permitting timelines and design challengers, and others. Few other places bring together wastewater plant managers from across the County and the RWMG will continue to foster these conversations and opportunities during the 2019 plan cycle.