



2/20 BA Mtg Item 6
IRWM
Deadline: 2/8/07, 12pm

TH

Copy
DFA control
with response
for Tom's signature
by 2/14/07

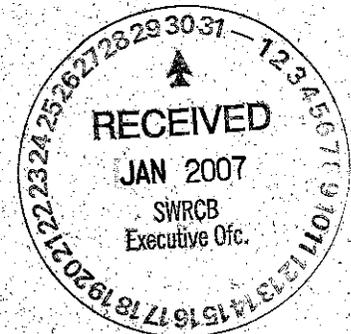
Santa Barbara County Public Works Department
Flood Control & Water Agency

Song - Board agenda
item

January 22, 2007

Mr. Lester Snow
Director
California Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94235-0001

Ms. Celeste Cantu
Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 "I" St.
Sacramento CA 95814



Re: IRWMP Grant Program: Round 2 Awards.

Dear Mr. Snow and Ms. Cantu:

On behalf of twenty-nine public agencies actively preparing an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP), the staff of the Santa Barbara County Water Agency submits these comments regarding eligibility for Prop 50 Round 2 funding, and we request a response. A similar letter is being sent to Ms. Tracie Billington at DWR and Ms. Sheila Farahnak at SWRCB, but we are also writing directly to you in light of the importance of this issue.

It has come to our attention that there is active lobbying being undertaken by several Step 2 applicants who were not successful in obtaining Round 1 funding. These spurned applicants are recommending that SWRCB and DWR limit access to Round 2 funding to only those applicants that were asked to submit in Step 2 Round 1. We strongly object to any such limitation, especially in light of our active coordination among 29 agencies spending our own local money to develop an IRWMP in conformance with State-issued guidance.

We urge the SWRCB and DWR to adhere to your own IRWM Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines) issued November 2004 by DWR and SWRCB. In those Guidelines, two funding cycles were established, each with open competition for the IRWMP Implementation Grants funds from Chapter 8 of Proposition 50.

The adopted Guidelines are very clear that the process for Round 2 is to be an open and competitive one. The Guidelines were deliberated upon for two years prior to their release in 2004. All stakeholders had the opportunity during that time period to weigh in on the approach to competition for Round 2. At that time, the concept of limiting access to Round 2 funding to Round 1 applicants was considered and rejected. Nothing has changed since then

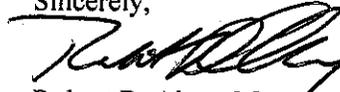
except that those who did not receive Round 1 funding are understandably disappointed they did not receive funding and therefore are making a case for an advantage in the Round 2 process.

Many regions from throughout the state have been investing countless hours and millions of dollars to prepare for the Round 2 grant process. For many sound reasons, not all those regions competed in Round 1 of the Implementation Grant process, while others who competed unsuccessfully are now in a different state of readiness. It would be an egregious act to take any action that would give an advantage to any region for Round 2. When applications for Round 2 are submitted later this year, the quality of each application should speak for itself.

Proposition 50 IRWMP Guidelines are clear that bond funds are to be granted during two rounds of funding. This two-part process motivates other regions to engage in integrating planning, which is the goal of the Proposition Chapter 8 process. Limiting the participation in Round 2 to a small number of regions is not in the interest of increasing participation in integrated regional planning in California or getting bond funding to regions with worthy IRWM Plans and project implementation plans. And at a more fundamental level, changing the rules in the middle of this process would be unfair.

Santa Barbara County urges SWRCB and DWR to keep the Proposition Chapter 8 Round 2 funding process an open and competitive one. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Almy, Manager
Santa Barbara County Water Agency