

SUBJECT: Lower Santa Cruz River Basin Study Update

Meeting	Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
Regional Council	May 24, 2018	Consent Information	4j

REQUESTED ACTION/SUGGESTED MOTION

This is an information item.

ASSOCIATED OWP WORK ELEMENT/GOAL

Work Element 1711, Regional Integrated Watershed Planning

SUMMARY

Introduction:

The study objectives are to identify where future physical water resources are needed to mitigate supply-demand imbalances, and to develop adaptation measures to improve water reliability for municipal, industrial, agricultural and environmental sectors in the Lower Santa Cruz River Basin. PAG leads the stakeholder engagement process for the study, as agreed upon in the MOA. In this role, PAG has recruited participation from its committees to the study sub-teams and promoted public events.

Advanced Notice of Change:

There is an interest in a 19-month extension to the performance period for the study changing the end date from January 2018 to September 2020. The Department of Reclamation is planning to request an internal budget increase of \$325,000. PAG will be asked at a future date to sign an amendment to the memorandum of agreement to authorize the additional in-kind cost-share.

Progress Update:

During the first year of the study in 2016, stakeholders provided input on the selection of modeling methods and the driving forces that affect water demand. During the second year of the three- to four-year study, the study team developed water demand scenarios, reviewed the supply/demand assessment model (CAP:SAM), evaluated climate projections, and created a scope of work for the riparian assessment.

PAG held a meeting in January 2018 at which the study's water provider members were invited to review PAG's method for land use projections. The study uses PAG's adopted projections, and by evaluating variations between PAG results and water modeling, members discussed water factors that PAG may be able to consider which could affect growth locations.

In March 2018, PAG's Watershed Planning Subcommittee and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee co-hosted a second public meeting supporting the Lower Santa

Cruz River Basin Study. This year's public meeting drew over 50 participants from a variety of backgrounds, including state and local government agencies, Native American nations, public and private utilities, consulting groups, researchers, educators, economic development professionals and community interests. The purpose of the second public meeting was to provide updates on study progress and gather feedback. The meeting featured presentations by co-study Managers Kathy Chavez of Pima County and Eve Halper of Reclamation, Ken Seasholes with Central Arizona Project, and Katharine Jacobs of the University of Arizona's Center for Climate Adaptation Science and Solutions (CCASS). Sharon Megdal, director of the UA's Water Resources Research Center, facilitated the meeting.

In coming stages, study participants will assess impacts to water infrastructure and the environment and develop strategies to adapt to these challenges. The final step of the study involves a trade-off analysis of adaptation strategies.

Results from the study, public meetings and stakeholder meeting are available on the study [website](#).

Background:

Secure water planning remains a key component of southern Arizona's economic vitality, and our region continues to provide leadership in ensuring long-term reliability through partnerships. This study will add to the region's long-term planning efforts by assessing the impacts of increased temperature and drought on water supply and demand to the region's long-term planning efforts.

The geographic scope of the study focuses on the groundwater basin designated by the Arizona Department of Water Resources as the Tucson Active Management Area and also will provide insight on subregional water supply and demand imbalances. The study team will use scenario planning and surface and groundwater models projected to 2060, downscaling the models you may have seen in global assessments.

PAG's goal as a partner in this study is to engage local officials and diverse stakeholders throughout the study process so that the results can be used to enhance planning for the public health and safety of our region. As part of our stakeholder engagement role, PAG staff leads the study's environmental sub-team. The Environmental Sub-Team features representation from a wide array of groups, and is specifically focused on developing the scope of work for the analysis of riparian areas.

Cost-share partners include the Bureau of Reclamation, PAG, Southern Arizona Water Users Association, Cortaro-Marana Irrigation District, Arizona Department of Water Resources, Central Arizona Water Conservation District and the University of Arizona.

PRIOR BOARD AND/OR COMMITTEE ACTION

April 8, 2015 - Management Committee – [Memo](#) - PAG Director's Letter of Support to apply for study

May 26, 2016 - Regional Council Memo – [Announcement](#) of the Bureau of Reclamation's selection of Tucson Region for the study

June 2016 - PAG Regional Objective [Newsletter](#)

November 30, 2016 - Watershed Planning Subcommittee (WPS) hosted the first Public Meeting, Invited Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (EPAC), Management and Regional Council - [Meeting Invitation](#)

January 11, 2017 - Management Committee Memo - Informational Update for Consent, Recruiting additional Stakeholder Advisors, Results of Public Meeting

January 26, 2017 - Regional Council [Memo](#) - Recruiting Additional Stakeholder Advisors, Results of Public Meeting

February 24, 2017 - PAG UA Transportation Research [Seminar](#): Technologies for Watershed Planning and the intersection with Land Use, Transportation, Climate Change, and Growth

April 24, 2017 - WPS hosted Stakeholder Advisors Mtg

September 2017 - PAG Regional Objective [Newsletter](#)

September 28, 2017 - Regional Council - [Memo](#) - Results of Stakeholder meeting, additional outreach, invitation to Second Public Meeting

January 29, 2018 - Study's Water Demand Sub-Team joined PAG's land use projections meeting

March 12, 2018 - WPS/EPAC hosted Second Public Meeting

Management Committee reviewed this information at its May 9 meeting.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

None.

TECHNICAL, POLICY, LEGAL OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None.

ATTACHED ADDITIONAL BACKUP INFORMATION

None.

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