

Sacramento Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Plan – Public Comment and Response Summary

The draft Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) was released for a 45-day public review on August 30, 2006. During the review period, public workshops were held in Colusa on September 5, 2006, and Durham on October 3, 2006. Interested parties were emailed a notice of the Colusa meeting on August 15, and a press advisory was sent to the major newspapers in the valley. The Durham public meeting notice was sent to interested parties on September 13, 2006. In response to requests for additional time to review the document, the comment period was extended 14 days to October 30, 2006. Several comments were submitted as form letters and email, some consisted of several individual comments, and others addressed one recommendation, issue, or suggested revision. These comments are on file with Northern California Water Association (NCWA) and will be made available to the public.

Most of the comments focused on concerns related to groundwater monitoring and proposed groundwater production, primarily in Butte County. Comments that suggested specific changes were addressed through text edits, as appropriate, and other sections of the document were revised or clarified in response to more general comments. Sections 4.1.1, 5.2, and 7.0 of this IRWMP were significantly revised in response to comments regarding groundwater monitoring and use. Below are comment summaries and responses.

NCWA also responded by letter to address comments that were not specific to the document. These letters are available from NCWA by request. The public comment period is described in Section 3.3.3 of the IRWMP.

Summary of Comments

Table 1 lists all comments, letters, and email received on the IRWMP by NCWA during the public comment period. Each comment was assigned a number. In some cases, one individual submitted more than one comment, which was assigned a separate number and tracked individually. The following comment summaries are organized by commenter and reference the comment number as listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Sacramento Valley IRWMP Comment Summary

Comment	First Name	Last Name	Agency or Group	# Pages Submitted	Format
1	Susan	Strachan	Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance	10	Email
2	Linda	Cole	Interested Individual	1	Email
3	Natalie	Wolder	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	1	Email
4	Susan	Strachan	Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance	2	Email
5	Susan	Strachan	Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance	1	Letter
6	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	3	Email
7	Barbara	Hennigan	Butte-Sutter Basin Area Groundwater Users	3	Letter
8	Susan	Strachan	Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance	1	Letter
9	John	Schoonover	CH2M HILL	2	Minutes
10	Shandin	Rudesill	Interested Individual	1	Email
11	Natalie	Wolder	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	1	Email
12	Isla Jean	Klein	Interested Individual	1	Email
13	Isla Jean	Klein	Interested Individual	1	Email
14	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	7	Email
15	Alan	Gair	Interested Individual	1	Email
16	O.J.	McMillan	Interested Individual	1	Email
17	Marty	Dunlap	Interested Individual	1	Email
18	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	13	Email
19	Jean	Klein	Interested Individual	1	Email
20	Susan	Strachan	Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance	2	Email
21	Olen	Zirkle	Ducks Unlimited	24	Letter
22	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	1	Email
23	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	1	Email
24	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	1	Email
25	Jim	Brobeck	SVEWC	1	Email
26	Toccoy	Dudley	Butte County	2	Letter
27	Susan	Strachan	Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance	10	Letter
28	Jim	Sequeira	Natomas Central Mutual Water Company	2	Letter
29	Melissa	Nall	Interested Individual	1	Email
30	Lev	Kavvas	Interested Individual	1	Email

TABLE 1
Sacramento Valley IRWMP Comment Summary

Comment	First Name	Last Name	Agency or Group	# Pages Submitted	Format
31	Ren	Fairbanks	Interested Individual	1	Email
32	Ren	Fairbanks	Interested Individual	1	Email
33	Carole	Yuhnke	Interested Individual	1	Email
34	Barbara	Hennigan	Butte-Sutter Basin Area Groundwater Users	5	Letter
35	Jeffery	Sutton	Family Water Alliance	1	Email
36	Reece	Cordi	Sutter County Resource Conservation District	1	Letter
37	Rick	Massa	Orland Unit Water User's Association	2	Letter
38	Toccoy	Dudley	Butte County	2	Letter
39	Natalie	Wolder	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	3	Letter
40	Maria	Solis	Yuba City	1	Letter

Note:

SVEWC = Sacramento Valley Environmental Watershed Caucus

Susan Strachan (Comments 1, 4, 5, 8, 20, 27)

Susan Strachan of the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance requested for clarification of the Big Chico Creek discussion in the IRWMP, recommended edits, and requested for copies of outreach materials to be sent to the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance. She also submitted general comments regarding basin management objectives implementation throughout the Sacramento Valley.

Response

Section 1.4.2, Groundwater, was revised to include “deep percolation of precipitation and streams.”

Section 1.4.2, Groundwater, was revised to include citation, DWR Bulletin 118, 2003 California’s Groundwater Update, Sacramento River Hydrologic Region, Chapter 7, and Page 159.

Section 1.8.3, Groundwater Monitoring and Management, and Section 4.1.1 (4.1.1.1-5 Groundwater Monitoring, Groundwater Recharge, Groundwater Modeling, Groundwater Production, and Regional Coordination) were revised to address groundwater concerns, such as groundwater modeling and monitoring.

Interested Individual Comments (2, 9, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, 30, 33 through 37)

These comments concerning groundwater were submitted by interested individuals (Table 1). Most of these comments suggested more study was needed, and that impacts on groundwater users were not adequately addressed.

Response

Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.1.1-5, Groundwater Monitoring, Groundwater Recharge, Groundwater Modeling, Groundwater Production, and Regional Coordination, were revised to address these comments.

Natalie Wolder (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation) (Comments 3, 11, 39)

Comments on Sections 5.2.1 through 5.2.6, Sacramento, Delevan, Colusa, Sutter, Sacramento River, and Gray Lodge National Wildlife Refuges, suggested text changes or rewording of the discussion on water delivery to the National Wildlife Refuges in the region.

Response

Sections 5.2.1 through 5.2.6 were revised to address these comments.

Sacramento Valley Environmental Watershed Caucus – Jim Brobeck (Comments 6, 14, 18, 22 through 25)

These comments included direct and indirect statements about the IRWMP, and focused on groundwater use and monitoring. Sacramento Valley Environmental Watershed Caucus indicated that agricultural statistics for Butte County had been slanted toward rice by NCWA. (Section 6.5.1.1, Butte County and Sections 4.1.1.2 and 4.1.1.3, Groundwater Recharge and Groundwater Modeling) The commenter stated that emphasis on groundwater recharge and groundwater modeling are flawed. The commenter also suggested that the IRWMP inappropriately linked Basin Management Objectives currently in place in Butte County with conjunctive use, which mischaracterizes the Butte Integrated Regional Water Plan. There were also concerns about inadequate involvement of the public in the planning process.

Response

Section 6.5.1.1, Local Setting, was revised to include recent trends in agricultural statistics, and to clarify land use and commodity value statistics in Butte County.

Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.1.1-5 were revised to address comments on groundwater monitoring, groundwater recharge, groundwater modeling, groundwater production, and regional coordination.

As mentioned in Section 6.5.1, Butte County was involved in IRWMP development, and the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation reviewed the Butte County land use section (Section 6.5).

Text was added to Section 3.3.3, Outreach and Input Process, to describe the IRWMP public outreach process.

Butte-Sutter Basin Area Groundwater Users – Barbara Hennigan (Comments 7 and 34)

Butte-Sutter Basin Area Groundwater Users submitted the following six concerns regarding the IRWMP:

1. The IRWMP should indicate that rice is not the dominant crop in Butte County.
2. The IRWMP should also represent Lower Tuscan groundwater users.
3. The IRWMP should integrate groundwater management across jurisdictional lines.
4. The IRWMP should include a discussion on aquifer safeguards and “safe yield.”
5. The IRWMP should describe consequences and actions to prevent aquifer overdraft.
6. The IRWMP should have enforceable mechanisms to prevent overdraft.

Response

Section 6.5.1.1, Local Setting, was revised to include recent trends in agricultural statistics for Butte County.

Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.1.1-5 were revised to address comments on groundwater monitoring, groundwater recharge, groundwater modeling, groundwater production, and regional coordination.

Text was added to Section 3.3.3, Outreach and Input Process, to describe the IRWMP public outreach process.

The IRWMP is a plan, and as such, cannot be used to create basinwide or cross-jurisdictional basin management objectives. The IRWMP is the first step toward this level of regional coordination and groundwater management. NCWA does not have, and the IRWMP does not provide the authority to enforce groundwater actions in the region.

Marty Dunlap (Comment 17)

Comment 17 from Marty Dunlap was to clarify that the comment period had been extended.

Response

Following the public meeting in Durham, the comment period was extended by 14 days.

Ducks Unlimited – Olen Zirkle (Comment 21)

Comments from Ducks Unlimited were primarily editorial comments to Section 5 of the IRWMP.

Response

Section 5 was updated to address these comments.

Orland Unit Water User’s Association – Rick Massa (Comment 37)

Comment 37, from Rick Massa of the Orland Unit Water User’s Association, concerned descriptions of Stony Creek operations and East Park Reservoir.

Response

Sections 5.1.9, Stony Creek, and 1.3, Regional Description, were updated to address this comment.

Family Water Alliance – Jeff Sutton (Comment 35)

Comment 35, from Jeff Sutton of the Family Water Alliance, requested inclusion of the small fish screen program implemented by the Family Water Alliance.

Response

Sections 5.1.8, Sacramento River, and 5.1.11, Future Actions, were revised to include a discussion on the Family Water Alliance small fish screen program.

Natomas Central Mutual Water Company – Jim Sequeira (Comment 28)

Natomas Central Mutual Water Company commented that Sacramento County had not been included in the planning region.

Response

The planning region includes the Natomas Central Mutual Water Company areas; however, only a small portion of Sacramento County is part of this region.

Yuba City – Maria Solis (Comment 40)

Yuba City submitted several comments regarding Table 4-1 and Appendix A.

Response

Table 4-1 and Appendix A have been updated to include all projects from Yuba City.