

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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Prepared for  
Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan  
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**B R O W N   A N D   C A L D W E L L**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities in the Greater Los Angeles Region.....	1
Defining “Disadvantaged Communities” .....	2
Ongoing Work of Ad Hoc Committee .....	2
Responsibility of Implementing Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities .....	3
1. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES IN OUTREACH TO DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES .....	1-1
Goals:.....	1-1
Objectives:.....	1-1
Strategies to Achieve the Objectives of Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities: .....	1-1
2. TARGET AUDIENCES IN AND REPRESENTING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES .....	2-1
3. OUTREACH PLANNING AND TRAINING .....	3-1
Objectives.....	3-1
Strategies .....	3-1
Outreach Activities .....	3-2
Training.....	3-2
Planning Outreach; Selecting DAC Projects for Outreach and Technical Support .....	3-2
How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan .....	3-4
4. COORDINATION WITH LOCAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN ADVANCE OF OUTREACH TO DACS.....	4-1
Objectives.....	4-1
Strategies .....	4-1
Outreach Activities .....	4-2
How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan .....	4-3
5. GRASS ROOTS OUTREACH.....	5-1
Objectives.....	5-1
Strategies .....	5-1
Outreach Activities .....	5-2
Update and expand the stakeholder database.....	5-3
How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan .....	5-4
6. MEDIA RELATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT IRWMP DAC-RELATED EFFORTS AND OPPORTUNITIES.....	6-1
Objectives.....	6-1
Strategies .....	6-1
Outreach Activities .....	6-1
How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan .....	6-3

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## INTRODUCTION

The Greater Los Angeles Region Integrated Resources Water Management Plan (IRWMP) is a visionary plan that integrates water supply, water quality, and open space management strategies; and maximizes the utilization of local water resources for an area 2,058 square-miles in size with a population of over 10 million people. The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Region IRWMP is to address the water resource needs of the Region in an integrated and collaborative manner. Stakeholder involvement in the IRWMP process has been crucial in establishing the vision for and carrying out the integrated plan.

The IRWMP organizational structure is a Leadership Committee and five Subregional Steering Committees. The Leadership Committee is an 11-member group includes the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, representatives of each Subregional Steering Committee and five stakeholder agencies.

The five Subregional Steering Committees are made up of agencies, cities, stakeholder representatives, and other representatives for the watersheds. These committees meet monthly and, among many other responsibilities, they have primary responsibility for conducting outreach to communities within their respective watersheds.

Greater Los Angeles Region IRWMP Subregions:

- Lower San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers Watersheds
- North Santa Monica Bay Watersheds
- South Bay Watersheds
- Upper Los Angeles River Watershed
- Upper San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo Watersheds

## Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities in the Greater Los Angeles Region

IRWMP Leadership and Steering Committees have identified outreach to disadvantaged communities (DACs) as one of its highest priorities. Meaningful public participation goals, objectives, and strategies are critical to involving DACs in the process of recommending and pursuing projects and programs in their communities. This outreach plan was prepared to help coordinate and guide the outreach activities led by the five Subregional Steering Committees to reach and involve DACs in their communities, about water resource issues that are important to them.

Extensive comments were made on the May 2008 Draft Outreach Plan Targeting Disadvantaged Communities in the Greater Los Angeles Region. Most comments received have been incorporated into this September 2008 Interim Outreach Plan; and the resultant document has not only been edited and expanded, but it has also been re-structured.

## Defining “Disadvantaged Communities”

For the purposes of this outreach plan, the accepted definition of Disadvantaged Communities will concur with the State of California’s current definition:

***Any community where the median household income (MHI) is below 80% of the statewide household income (SMHI).***

Further, a DAC project is any project that meets the targeted benefits designed to meet the particular needs of one or more DACs and agreed upon by members of the DAC(s). For example, a Subregional Steering Committee may identify and outreach to one or more DACs outside of the subregion’s boundaries, as long as the DAC-project(s) developed is based on benefits to those communities and the environment.

This outreach plan is “Interim” in part to allow time for further discussion of how the IRWMP will define DACs in the future. Other factors that were suggested to be considered for refining the definition include:

- Income analysis by census block
- Areas adjacent to DACs
- Below 80% of MHI in Los Angeles
- Per capita income analysis
- Average of Mother’s highest level of education
- Percentage of homeless population
- Percentage of children on a free lunch program
- Lowest achieving schools
- Proximity to polluting industries, air quality, and health indicators

## Ongoing Work of Ad Hoc Committee

An ad hoc committee of IRWMP participants who have worked closely with many of Los Angeles’ disadvantaged communities formed to provide additional comments on the outreach plan. The ad hoc committee will continue to meet and discuss major policy issues as indicated in the box that follows.

An ad hoc committee of IRWMP participants convened for the purposes of providing comments to the draft plan and adding more substance in several areas. The group settled on three main tasks that will be undertaken to strengthen and facilitate implementation of this Interim Plan. After the ad hoc committee completes its work, its recommendations will be offered for consideration as amendments or supplements to the Interim Plan.

Tasks the ad hoc committee has taken on include:

1. Write language to articulate the overarching mission and purpose for this outreach. Essentially, the group would pose and answer the question: “Why do this outreach in the first place?”
2. Consider alternative methods for defining and identifying DACs. While acknowledging the criterion of <80% of the State Median Household Income set forth in law, the ad hoc committee may suggest other methods as supplementary or as cross-check to the utility of MHI criterion.
3. Create and implement a spreadsheet or Web form to generate an initial outreach list from all IRWMP participants. Data captured will include all basic contact information for individual leaders, their organizational affiliation, and information on the primary focus of the organizations with relevance to IRWMP.

## Responsibility of Implementing Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities

This Interim Plan reflects that the Subregional Steering Committees have the primary responsibility of outreach to stakeholders within watersheds of the Greater Los Angeles Region. At present, consultants are under contract to provide a limited amount of support to each Subregional Steering Committee: to organize one workshop and provide technical assistance for up to two DAC projects per watershed.

DAC outreach will be conducted in a phased manner, increasing and broadening over time. Some of the outreach activities identified in this Interim Plan will have to wait until additional resources are acquired.

The amount of time and effort to implement the entire plan are significant. For resource planning purposes only, the total level of effort equates to a minimum of one and up to three full-time dedicated outreach staff. This depends greatly upon the complexity and volume of outreach undertaken at any time and the in-kind resources that may be available. Certain important outreach services are specialized: translation, website programming, and technical support. Most of the activities described in this outreach plan can be readily implemented by those who have experience in working with disadvantaged communities and who have a familiarity with the IRWMP.

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## 1. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES IN OUTREACH TO DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

### Goals:

- Identify and address the water-related needs of disadvantaged communities in the Greater Los Angeles region.
- Reach and involve DACs in the IRWMP process and in identifying and developing projects and programs that benefit their communities.

### Objectives:

- Use a phased approach to implement the outreach plan; gradually reaching more people living and working in the region's disadvantaged communities with water resource issues to address.
- In the near-term, given the current resources of the IRWMP, work with disadvantaged communities to develop projects from the current IRWMP projects list. This includes providing technical support and helping DACs identify leads, funding sources, and other resources.
- Over time, work with identified disadvantaged communities and their representatives to develop a comprehensive analysis of the water-related needs of these communities throughout the region.
- Also over time, as additional resources are available to the IRWMP, work with disadvantaged communities to develop a suite of projects to address the identified needs and include them in the IRWMP.

### Strategies to Achieve the Objectives of Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities:

- Involve DAC representatives in IRWMP project identification, development, and implementation.
- Build a comprehensive database of disadvantaged communities and community representatives in each subregion and use this to target outreach to neighborhoods in order to increase the number of representatives and residents of DACs who are participating in the IRWMP process and in each subregions IRWMP Steering Committee meetings.
- Inform representatives and residents of DACs about opportunities to be involved with their IRWMP subregional planning activities.
- Inform DACs about realistic benefits and opportunities for their communities through IRWMP collaboration and through partnerships with agencies and organizations.
- Conduct outreach in disadvantaged communities to gather information on community needs.
- Conduct outreach to assist DACs in developing existing projects by providing in-kind planning, design, environmental, and engineering assistance – and where needed, add new projects to the IRWMP projects list.

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## 2. TARGET AUDIENCES IN AND REPRESENTING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

- Cities and agencies that represent disadvantaged communities with proposed DAC-projects, especially smaller cities and agencies that may not have resources to pursue those projects without support.
- Residents of disadvantaged communities with proposed DAC-projects.
- Residents of disadvantaged communities that do not currently have DAC-project(s) identified in the IRWMP list of projects.
- Major houses of worship serving disadvantaged communities, some of which may have already organized committees around environmental and social justice issues.
- Parent-Teacher Associations and Principals of large high schools in disadvantaged communities.
- Economic-development agencies or organizations representing areas encompassing disadvantaged communities (e.g., FAME Renaissance, Figueroa Corridor Partners).
- Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts representing areas encompassing disadvantaged communities.
- Health providers – major hospitals and clinics – serving disadvantaged communities.
- Neighborhood Councils and Neighborhood Watch groups with DACs in their jurisdictions.
- Community-based and environmental organizations that have relationships with DACs.
- Councils of Governments.
- Organizations that represent disadvantaged communities in the Greater Los Angeles Region.

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## 3. OUTREACH PLANNING AND TRAINING

The IRWMP Steering Committees have the primary responsibility of implementing outreach to disadvantaged communities. At the present time, the work of outreach will likely be shared among Steering Committee members so many people will have a role in outreach to potentially thousands of people in diverse communities throughout the Greater Los Angeles Region.

Outreach planning and training are recommended to help Steering Committee members plan, coordinate, and prepare to successfully communicate with DAC target audiences.

### Objectives

- Develop a unified message and coordinated approach for the outreach program, building upon the relationships and efforts of Steering Committee representatives already involved in the IRWMP and DACs.
- Identify DAC-projects for each subregion to focus outreach to DACs, ultimately to develop with DACs and submit proposals for grant funding.
- Help Steering Committees have a better understanding of environmental justice issues and working with disadvantaged communities.
- Build on existing relationships.
- Identify potential collaborators; reduce fragmentation of outreach efforts.

### Strategies

- Organize at least one DAC-outreach planning workshop for each Steering Committee, annually.
- Because time and resources are limited and the Greater Los Angeles Region is so vast, much of the 2008/2009 outreach will be focused on a manageable number of projects within each subregion. Projects prioritized for DAC outreach in 2008/2009 should be reasonably conceptualized and preferably already have DACs involved in or aware of the IRWMP process.
- Consultant support is available to each Steering Committee to develop two DAC projects per subregion for grant funding submittals. This, however, doesn't limit Steering Committees to targeting only two disadvantaged communities or developing more than two DAC-projects.
- Over the longer term, new projects may be added to the IRWMP projects list and pursued in partnership with DACs. Over time, Steering Committees will create a region-wide needs assessment to determine where communities with greatest needs are, and to help focus DAC outreach efforts.
- At present, there are no disadvantaged communities identified in the North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) Subregion. At its DAC-outreach planning workshop(s), the NSMB Steering Committee will identify:
  - potential DAC-projects to be implemented within the subregion that will benefit DACs outside of the subregion
  - a means of justifying and confirming the connection between those potential projects in the subregion and target DACs

- partnering opportunities

## Outreach Activities

- In the first year, each Steering Committee will organize at least one DAC-outreach planning workshop; more may be needed to consider all of the planning and coordination needed to implement outreach. In the DAC-outreach planning workshops, Steering Committees will make a number of decisions, identified below, about how and where to focus efforts and resources. Recommended activities include:

### Training

- It is recommended that each Steering Committee educate themselves about environmental justice and disadvantaged communities. One way to accomplish this is to invite a social/environmental justice organization with experience in working closely with Los Angeles area DACs to give a presentation to Steering Committee members and share experiences and case studies.

### Planning Outreach; Selecting DAC Projects for Outreach and Technical Support

- Each Steering Committee will begin by locating where DACs are within each sub-region using the IRWMP maps of the watersheds. Assess current projects in the IRWMP project database that fall within DACs in the respective sub-region to determine what additional information and resources are needed to elevate those projects to viable proposals that can be submitted for funding.
- Since several DAC-projects could be viable, the Steering Committee will narrow down the list and determine which ones they will pursue this year. The assessment described immediately above will help Steering Committees make DAC/project selections based upon criteria they agree upon (e.g. communities with greatest needs, water resources issues that can be addressed, where there are existing relationships with DACs, etc.).
- The NSMB Subregion will identify which projects within the subregion would have clear benefits to DACs located in other subregions. (Example: Projects that would improve water quality at Surfrider or other public beaches would serve DAC recreational opportunities.) The NSMB Steering Committee will have to also determine methods of correlating the projects to identify and target DACs. (One example given was to survey riders of the National Park Services beach bus to NSMB public beaches to determine which communities are coming from outside of the sub-region to enjoy the beaches and who would benefit from IRWMP improvements.)
- Each Steering Committee will identify the water resource problems in DACs that are expected to be addressed by implementing the proposed DAC projects. This may need to be explored in more detail and confirmed through the technical support provided by consultants and others as projects are developed, but the problems that may be solved should be at least preliminarily identified up-front.
- For those DAC projects identified in the step above, the Steering Committee should also identify entities in the subregion that are familiar with the target communities. These may be:
  - representatives of local governments: such as field deputies of City Council offices, and/or community outreach coordinators for cities or other agencies
  - members of the Steering Committees or participating in the IRWMP in some way
  - non-government organizations (NGOs)
  - a person or group referred by local governments
  - or may already be leading outreach to the target DACs.

- Determine whether those entities could help perform outreach, provide in-kind services, potentially serve as leads for DAC projects, and/or provide other partnership support.
- The NSMB Steering Committee will have to first identify the disadvantaged communities outside of their sub-region that will be targeted for DAC outreach and DAC project development. Once the target DACs are identified, the Steering Committee would then identify entities that have existing relationships with the target DACs and who may also be familiar with IRWMP processes. While other Subregional Steering Committees have the benefit of at least having the target DACs within their watersheds, the NSMB Steering Committee may not have existing relationships with DACs outside of the watershed. If that is the case, the Steering Committee is urged to meet with the local agencies of the target DACs (e.g., the field offices of Los Angeles City Council districts; City Managers or Administrators; See Section 2 for more information on coordinating with local agencies and organizations.) The local agencies should be willing to participate with the NSMB and/or refer to others who would be able to help build ties between the Steering Committee and the target DACs.

NOTE: The ad hoc committee of IRWMP participants will undertake the creation of a spreadsheet or Web form to generate an initial outreach list from all IRWMP participants. Data captured will include all basic contact information for individual leaders, their organizational affiliation, and information on the primary focus of the organizations with relevance to IRWMP. Each Subregional Steering Committee is encouraged to consult this list to identify entities in their watershed that are familiar with the target communities.

- Identify what others are doing in the targeted disadvantaged communities to (a) determine potential collaborators and (b) avoid duplicating outreach efforts.
  - Each Steering Committee will also identify agencies (local, regional, other) that can potentially partner with the DACs to provide other resources, additional technical assistance, and help the communities with project implementation.
  - Coordinate messages and responsibilities for outreach activities targeting DACs in each subregion. When considering which Steering Committee members will take on responsibilities for implementing outreach activities, experience in working with DACs in the Greater Los Angeles Region, familiarity with targeted communities and their local governments, and familiarity with the IRWMP process all help make the outreach process more streamlined and successful.
- In subsequent years, Steering Committees will:
    - Assess resources available for outreach, determine a reasonable number of DAC projects to pursue, and establish criteria for the types of DAC projects the Steering Committee would like to focus on.
    - Criteria for prioritizing the types of DAC projects and which communities are selected should be developed with full buy-in from the Steering Committee. Examples of criteria include location within the subregion, degree of community need, the potential for benefits to DACs and water quality within the subregion, potential partners available, and other considerations.
    - Determine which of the planning and training activities above (completed in the first year) were most successful, which should be modified to work better, or eliminated as an outreach strategy. Incorporate lessons learned and implement the planning and training activities.
    - Steering Committees should be open to identifying new DAC projects, developed in partnership with DACs.
  - Recommended for further study:
    - Determine appropriate region-wide needs assessment tools that would enable each Subregional Steering Committee to determine the communities with greatest needs, and to help focus DAC outreach efforts. All the Steering Committees and/or the Leadership Committee should agree upon the needs assessment tools.

## How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan

1. Did the Steering Committees arrange for a presentation about environmental justice and working with DACs?
2. Did the Steering Committees identify DACs and/or DAC-projects for outreach?
3. Did the Steering Committees also identify the water resource issues that DAC projects could address?
4. Were people and/or organizations who are familiar with the target DACs identified?
5. Did the Steering Committees look into whether or not others in the region are working on similar efforts or with the same DACs, and if so, did they identify whether or not there are opportunities for collaboration and/or partnerships?
6. Were other potential partners considered?
7. Did the Steering Committees discuss the key messages for their DAC outreach and did they identify which members of the committees would take specific responsibilities?

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Each Steering Committee	IRWMP watershed maps showing location of DACs IRWMP projects database IRWMP stakeholder database For specialized training: experts in environmental justice, with experience working with DACs

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## 4. COORDINATION WITH LOCAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN ADVANCE OF OUTREACH TO DACS

Local agencies and organizations are critically important partners in outreach to targeted disadvantaged communities. They have local knowledge, existing relationships, and an awareness of key issues and concerns. Some will already be familiar with the IRWMP. The IRWMP Steering Committees will coordinate with local agencies and organizations in advance of outreach to DACs to gain awareness and sensitivity to community-specific issues. Each community is unique, and by coordinating with local agencies and organizations, the Steering Committees implementing outreach to DACs should have better communications to the targeted groups, stronger relationships with local partners, and more effective outreach from the start.

Local agencies and organizations may be understaffed, so Steering Committee members are encouraged to go to these local entities. They may not have time or people to participate in IRWMP outreach to their DACs, but it is imperative to extend the invitation, and to provide timely information about outreach results to the local agencies and organizations if they cannot participate.

### Objectives

- Inform and involve local agencies and organizations in the IRWMP process, coordinating closely with them in advance of and throughout outreach to DACs who are their constituents.
- Learn from local agencies and organizations; they will have valuable insights that will help facilitate successful outreach to the Region's DACs and successful DAC-project development.
- Build on existing relationships between local agencies/organizations and DACs to increase DAC participation in identifying and developing projects.

### Strategies

- Meet with representatives of local agencies and organizations to identify key leaders of targeted disadvantaged communities and appropriate means of communicating with them.
- Also jointly identify other entities that have good, existing relationships with targeted disadvantaged communities that could be involved in facilitating successful communications with the DACs.
- Coordinate with representatives of local agencies and organizations to jointly conduct interviews with key constituent leaders of disadvantaged communities and explore appropriate means of communicating with larger numbers of the targeted DACs.
- Encourage local agencies/organizations and DAC leaders to participate in and/or become members of Steering Committees.
- Coordinate with local agencies/organizations to identify resources, opportunities, and other non-IRWMP activities that could benefit the target DACs in their efforts to identify, develop, and implement DAC projects.
- Coordinate with local agencies/organizations to identify potential leads for DAC projects.
- Update and expand the existing stakeholder database with current contact information for local agencies and organizations in disadvantaged communities.

## Outreach Activities

- Each Steering Committee will identify and meet one-on-one with local agencies and organizations with whom members of the committee have existing relationships.
  - Suggestions for representatives of local agencies and organizations include:
    - Elected officials including City Council field offices, other local government/agency representatives (City Managers or City Administrators’ offices may refer to key knowledgeable staff)
    - School principals and/or ministers working in disadvantaged communities
    - Local DAC-focused NGOs
    - Executive directors of local Chambers of Commerce; and
    - others as identified in the target audiences list.
  - Meet with as many people as needed to help begin to understand local issues and to be introduced to local DAC-community leaders.
  - Discussions will focus on IRWMP issues, with emphasis on facilitating and coordinating local DAC participation and projects. A “highlights” pamphlet has been developed to help keep the focus on IRWMP.
  - When meeting with local agencies organizations, Steering Committee members and local representatives will not only discuss opportunities, but also reasonable expectations and possible other (non-IRWMP) partners that could also participate in helping DACs develop projects for their communities.
- To be accomplished during these one-on-one meetings:
  - Strengthen existing relationships between Steering Committees and local agencies/organizations to cooperatively work towards DAC-participation in IRWMP.
  - Ask local agency/organizations for the names and contact information of grass-roots level leaders of DACs (e.g., major churches serving DACs; major schools to be contacted in DACs; major health providers and clinics serving DACs; active business organizations/Chambers of Commerce; and others with strong ties to DACs and their interests).
  - Ask local agency/organization representatives for their insights regarding how to best outreach to constituents; where needs are greatest; where opportunities for collaboration on projects may exist; for suggestions of potential leads for DAC projects; where there may be one or more grant funding opportunities that may become more successful with IRWMP support; and to help identify needs in DACs where future projects may be identified and pursued through the IRWMP process.
  - Ask local agency/organization for their insights on languages spoken and read by the target DACs, and for suggestions of existing publications that would be most appropriate for DAC-communications (e.g., church bulletins; local weekly papers; school bulletins; other).
  - Ask local agency/organization about any other similar efforts to address water quality, water supply, and/or open space issues in the targeted DACs. Ask for an introduction to the proponents of those efforts to meet and discuss common ground.
  - Identify “next steps” of working together towards increasing DAC-participation in the IRWMP process.
  - Ask local agency/organizations to join Steering Committee members in outreach to their DAC constituents. Inform them of relevant outreach goals and timelines, and discuss reasonable expectations.

- Personally invite representatives of local agencies and organizations to participate in – or co-sponsor -- IRWMP workshops for DACs and other DAC-outreach. Workshops and community meetings that are sponsored or co-sponsored by local agencies and organizations are likely to be better attended and received by DACs.
- Personally invite local agency/organization representatives to join as members and/or participate regularly in Steering Committee meetings. They may not have time to participate, but the invitation should be extended and remain open. If they cannot participate, let them know where to find information (e.g., website.)

## How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan

1. Did representatives of the Steering Committees identify and meet with representatives of local government and/or local organizations representing the targeted DACs?
2. Did they develop a preliminary understanding of water- and community-issues facing the target DACs; a preliminary understanding of communications methods that are appropriate for the targeted DACs; including the languages spoken and read in the communities, and any publications that the DACs may receive at home or work, houses of workshop, from their children’s schools, or other means?
3. Were representatives of Steering Committees introduced to (or at least informed of) leaders of disadvantaged communities?
4. Do the Steering Committees have an increased understanding of how best to outreach to members of disadvantaged communities, based upon credible, local experience of the representatives that met with Steering Committee representatives?
5. Did any potential local partners agree to co-sponsor and/or assist in outreach to target DACs?
6. Did representatives of Steering Committees invite the people they met (local governments and/or organizations) to participate in IRWMP Steering Committee meetings and/or let them know the invitation to participate is always open?

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Steering Committee Members	Time to meet individually with representatives of local agencies and organizations  IRWMP Highlights pamphlet, IRWMP projects list, and subregional watershed maps showing DACs

# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## 5. GRASS ROOTS OUTREACH

For DAC projects to be successful, they need the cooperation, knowledge, and commitment of the people who live and work in the targeted communities. Using primarily grass roots outreach, the IRWMP Sub-regional Steering Committees will provide opportunities for target DACs to become informed and involved as equal partners in projects that would benefit their communities. Public participation with DACs needs to be inclusive and democratic, and to allow time for thorough communication of issues, potential solutions, potential impacts and benefits, responsibilities, and partnerships.

DACs will be encouraged and helped to understand, review and modify projects that have been already identified through IRWMP processes to-date to meet their communities' needs for water supply, water quality, and open space. DACs will also have opportunities to propose and explore new projects that would address these needs.

While people who live and work in DACs will be invited to participate in ongoing IRWMP Steering Committees, the vast majority of the meetings and other interaction with DACs will take place in the targeted communities. By implementing the coordination with local agencies and organizations described in the previous section, those leading grass roots outreach to DACs should already be aware of the languages spoken by targeted DAC members, who many of the local community leaders are, most of the optimal methods of communications, and current important issues.

If at all possible, outreach to DACs should be led by people or entities that have existing relationships with the targeted communities and an understanding of the IRWMP processes.

### Objectives

- Involve disadvantaged communities in developing projects – and where needed, adding new projects to the IRWMP projects list that will serve DACs to address water resource needs.
- Learn from DACs; their local knowledge and commitment are essential for successful DAC-project development.
- Improve the chances of DAC-projects being approved for grant funding and implementation.

### Strategies

- Build upon existing relationships.
- Support existing outreach to DAC-projects.
- Where there is no known existing outreach to support, build upon relationships of local agencies and organizations, and use local groups to help with outreach implementation.
- Hold community meetings and other grass roots interaction in the communities of potential DAC-projects.
- Organize enough grass roots public participation and allow ample time and opportunities for DACs to become informed, involved, and committed to the success of projects that will benefit their communities.
- Update and expand the IRWMP database of stakeholders.

## Outreach Activities

- The preferred situation would be for the IRWMP Steering Committees to coordinate with existing, successful DAC-outreach efforts, as identified in the subregional DAC-outreach planning workshops described earlier (Section 1). Wherever possible, build on these existing relationships.
  - The existing outreach efforts should have processes in place that are working well, so the DAC-project discussions would become an additional topic in an ongoing program. The Steering Committee would provide the support needed to help this occur without excessive burden to the ongoing program.
  - Support may be in the form of funding, sharing outreach responsibilities, attending and staffing meetings with DACs, developing presentations, organizing tours related to potential DAC-projects, and/or providing resources ranging from bringing easels to providing technical assistance. The support would be provided by in-kind services offered by Steering Committee members, and to the degree possible through the IRWMP consultant contract, consultants (technical and outreach) will provide services to augment the existing outreach.
- Where there are no known existing outreach efforts for the project(s) or DACs selected by the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee will identify a task leader to organize grass roots outreach to involve DACs in proposed project needs assessment, planning, development, and grant applications. Other members of the Steering Committee will assist and, to the degree possible through the IRWMP consultant contract, consultants (technical and outreach) will provide services to augment this outreach.
  - In collaboration with local agencies / organizations, a series of community meetings will be organized in the immediate vicinity of the project proposed for each target DAC.
  - Work with community members, non-profit and/or other community-based organizations or other locally-respected groups to conduct door-to-door outreach to residents and businesses in DACs to invite residents and businesses to attend community and/or house meetings.
  - Likewise, work with these entities to conduct other grass roots outreach – like providing information through schools (e.g. PTAs) and senior centers, phone trees, church bulletins. Coordinate outreach with other DAC-representatives, such as local houses of worship, health institutions, ESL programs, job training centers, and others. Local agencies and organizations will help the outreach task leader learn which methods of communication work best in the specific and unique communities. While suggestions of different outreach opportunities are offered here, Steering Committees and their outreach leaders are encouraged to maintain flexibility to conduct the types of outreach that will best reach residents and effectively provide meaningful public participation opportunities that will be culturally-appropriate to the community.
  - Neighborhood-level discussions will focus on the proposed project and details that reflect questions, water issues, water management needs, and local benefits to the DAC.
  - With participation of each DAC, assess not only their water management problems, but also how those water resource issues get addressed: through education? ... through engineering and capital improvements? ... through a combination of behavior changes and structural solutions?
  - The agendas and documentation of each community meeting will include a discussion of community's needs, priorities, and points of agreement and disagreement indicated by participating representatives of DACs.
  - Information should be made readily available to DACs.
    - The ease of the target DACs getting information about public participation opportunities and/or projects being discussed with them is critical for successful outreach.

- Information should be culturally appropriate, sensitive to the languages read/spoken in the community, and not so technical as to be confusing or difficult to understand.
- Distribution should not be confined to a small, immediate area but made widely throughout the community. Wide distribution encourages inclusiveness and democracy within the DACs.
- Distribution should also be done in ample time before meetings; late notification works against good community outreach.
- Use plain language and avoid jargon. Explain technical terms. Use commonly understood pictures or graphics to illustrate more complex concepts.
- Provide translators for community members who do not speak English to participate. It is reasonable to ask those community members to let meeting organizers know 48 hours in advance that translation may be needed. It is also good to be prepared regardless of advance notification in communities where English is clearly the second language.
- Explain relevant IRWMP processes so that the “procedure” does not overwhelm the goal of good communication.
- Listen and learn from the audience.
- Provide technical support to DACs to develop projects for grant funding applications
  - Technical support will be needed to develop projects for grant funding, implementation, and maintenance. Consultants to the IRWMP will provide technical support for two projects per subregion in the first year of this outreach program. DACs and Steering Committees, through outreach and coordination with local agencies and organizations, will arrange for additional technical support needed to carry the DAC-projects to fruition.
  - Technical support to DACs will include:
    - One-on-one support with selected DAC groups to provide technical assistance such that more complete information on each project can be provided to the IRWMP database. Steering committees in each sub-region will be responsible for identifying up to two projects in each sub-region that meet the recommended guidelines and approving them to receive one-on-one support. One-on-one engagement will take place immediately before or after the scheduled Steering Committee meetings or subregional workshops.
    - Providing information to project proponents necessary to update the project information in the IRWMP database
    - An implementation plan for each project that outlines the steps needed in order for the project to be implemented. The implementation plan for each project is expected to be used to clarify the project's readiness to proceed and in potential grant applications.
    - Support will be limited to 20 hours per project or 40 hours per sub-region.
    - No translation services will be provided.

## Update and expand the stakeholder database.

- Add all contact information gathered through one-on-one interviews, community meetings and other outreach.
- Review current databases of other programs with stakeholders in common with IRWMP and add potentially interested parties.
- Add all certified Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils and Neighborhood Watches countywide.

- Update the database regularly to include organizations involved in emerging social and environmental justice programs in the region.
- New contact information should be provided to Steering Committee representatives to update subregional sections of the stakeholder database.

## How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan

1. Was a leader for the DAC-outreach identified for each targeted DAC?
2. Did the outreach involve residents, businesses, leaders and representatives of disadvantaged communities -- working with IRWMP Steering Committees to assess local needs, and to develop, prioritize, and support projects for implementation?
3. Were meetings, workshops, or events well attended, and did members of DACs begin to understand, get involved, and commit to the success of project(s) to benefit their community(s)?
4. Were meetings, workshops, or events held in the targeted DACs, at times and venues convenient for community members to participate?
5. Were translators provided when/where needed?
6. Were materials and other information distributed in a timely manner?
7. Have members of DACs taken a lead role in project(s) proposed for their community(s)?
8. Have new projects been recommended and needs assessed by DACs, with the support and help of IRWMP Steering Committees?
9. Have other partners been identified?
10. Were local governments and elected officials involved, or at least kept informed, of outreach with their constituents?
11. Did any projects receive the technical support of the IRWMP consultants, and were the participating DACs satisfied and engaged in the process?
12. Were two DAC-projects per subregion submitted in 2008/2009 for grant funding?
13. Have members of each disadvantaged community that was targeted for outreach invited to participate and/or become members of IRWMP Sub-regional Steering Committees? Did any accept the invitation? Do they know that the invitation is open, if/when they can participate in the regional format?
14. Was the IRWMP stakeholder database updated to show all who participated in DAC outreach meetings, workshops, and events?

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Outreach to DACs: Task leaders identified by Steering Committee assisted by IRWMP consultants	Staffing, technical support, AV, presentation materials, translation expertise, meeting support such as refreshments, name tags, etc., possibly transportation
Technical support to DACs: IRWMP consultants and/or other in-kind services	Technical expertise, grant guidelines, presentation materials, translation expertise
Updated stakeholder-database: Each Steering Committee is responsible to give stakeholder information to IRWMP consultants to enter and update database	Sign-in sheets, other clearly printed/typed contact information from all IRWMP DAC-outreach meetings, interviews, workshops, other



# INTERIM OUTREACH PLAN TARGETING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION

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## 6. MEDIA RELATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT IRWMP DAC-RELATED EFFORTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Media relations will augment the IRWMP grass roots outreach efforts described in the previous section. Community newspapers look for stories about local people and issues, and will often publish information that local readers need – such as when and where to meet to get involved with one of the projects being undertaken by IRWMP Steering Committees in partnership with DACs. Further, as the DACs and IRWMP Steering Committees work together to develop and implement projects that improve water quality, supplies and/or open space to the benefit of local communities, those success stories will be told through the media and should be viewed as encouragement for other disadvantaged communities to pursue similar projects.

Other public information tools are needed to keep the IRWMP accessible to the general public and members of disadvantaged communities who may not be reached through the outreach activities described earlier in this plan. These tools are aimed at those who seek out the IRWMP: a dedicated phone number to call for information and the website which contains up-to-date information about local, subregional and regional IRWMP efforts.

### Objectives

- Build awareness of opportunities for DACs to become involved in local projects.
- Build awareness of successful DAC-IRWMP projects so that other communities can find encouragement to pursue similar efforts that will benefit more disadvantaged communities.
- Give representatives and residents of DACs in the Greater Los Angeles Region access to information about opportunities to be involved in their IRWMP Steering Committees and planning activities.

### Strategies

- Distribute a press release to local (community) newspapers or other local media about each DAC outreach opportunity where the public is invited.
- Encourage representatives of each DAC project to encourage their local media outlets to cover their stories.
- Report success stories and thereby provide information about IRWMP process through media relations focusing on publications in DAC communities.
- Establish a dedicated phone number for IRWMP information and include it in DAC-outreach related press releases.
- Maintain the IRWMP website and update it at least quarterly with information related to DAC outreach and projects.

### Outreach Activities

- Identify local media outlets. Some of the ways to do this are:
  - Find out from local governments and/or organizations who are familiar with the target DACs

- News racks located in the DACs (e.g., on sidewalks, in convenience stores and restaurants, in supermarkets)
  - Local library
  - Internet search
  - Civic and business organizations' newsletters
  - School newsletters
  - Newsletters from houses of worship
  - Neighborhood Councils' websites
- Prepare and distribute announcements of outreach events, workshops, and/or meetings open to the public at least two weeks in advance. The purpose of this activity is to supplement invitations to residents and businesses in the target DACs to become aware of -- and invited to -- meetings, workshops, and/or other public participation opportunities.
- Contact the local media outlet to find out deadlines for announcements and articles.
  - Occasionally refer to scheduled Sub-regional Steering Committees and include an open invitation for the public to attend.
- Prepare and distribute press releases about significant project milestones. The purpose of this media relations activity is to publicize progress and to encourage others to undertake similar efforts through the sharing of success stories.
- If appropriate and possible, include quotes from members of DACs who are participating in the development of the project, local elected officials who are well informed of the progress of outreach and the benefits of the potential project(s), and members of the IRWMP Subregional Steering Committee.
  - Include information that would enable DACs to inquire about opportunities for their communities to participate in Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings (e.g. contact local government and/or organizations; IRWMP information phone number and website address.)
- Coordinate ground-breaking events to publicize projects that have been successfully developed with DACs to the major milestone of beginning the construction phase.
- Coordinate these events in the community with DACs.
- Establish a dedicated phone number for public inquiries and to invite residents, businesses, or representatives of DACs to consider participating in the IRWMP process.
- Include this phone number in press releases related to DAC outreach and projects.
  - When beginning outreach in a DAC, prepare an announcement to be included in newsletters disseminated by large houses of worship, hospitals and clinics, large high schools, senior centers, recreation centers and community centers located in disadvantaged communities that advises of the start of the collaborative effort and gives the information phone number.
- Maintain the IRWMP website and update it at least quarterly with information related to DAC outreach and projects.
- Continue to publicize the dates, times, and locations of Subregional Steering Committee meetings.

## How to Measure the Effectiveness of this Element of the Outreach Plan

1. Was a press release prepared and distributed for each DAC-outreach opportunity that was open to the public?
2. Did members of the target disadvantaged community(s) report they saw something in their local media outlets (newspapers, newsletters, others) about the event/workshop/meeting?
3. Has a dedicated information phone number been established and was that number included in press releases?
4. Was the website updated quarterly and can people who use the website easily find information about Subregional Steering Committees being held in their watersheds?

Responsible Party	Necessary Resources
Media relations – To be led by the designated outreach task lead	Sample media advisory; sample news release; list of local media outlets; list of potential local sources to provide quotes and/or information for the press release
Approvals – Draft press releases to be reviewed and approved in advance by chairs of the respective Steering Committee involved in the DAC-outreach	Reviewer needs to be informed of deadlines
Dedicated phone number and monitoring - LA Co. DPW	Dedicated phone number for public calls
Website – LA Co. DPW	Information provided by chairs of Subregional Steering Committees