

Gateway Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

Executive Summary

Gateway Water Management Authority Members

City of Artesia
City of Bell
City of Bell Gardens
City of Bellflower
Central Basin Municipal Water District
City of Cerritos
City of Commerce
City of Cudahy
City of Downey
City of Huntington Park
City of La Mirada
City of Lakewood
City of Long Beach
Long Beach Water Department
City of Lynwood
City of Montebello
City of Norwalk
City of Paramount
City of Pico Rivera
City of Santa Fe Springs
City of Signal Hill
City of South Gate
City of Vernon
City of Whittier
Ex-Officio Participant:
City of Hawaiian Gardens

The cities of the Los Angeles Gateway Region (Gateway Region), water agencies, and interested parties are developing an integrated regional water management plan (IRWMP). These cities share water resources, have common water quality, water supply, and storm runoff problems and issues, and are demographically similar. These common traits provide a unique opportunity to jointly find common, integrated, and coordinated solutions for the region's water-related issues through the IRWMP process. The Gateway Region formed an official joint powers authority (JPA) under California law to steer its planning efforts and provide solid governance for plan development and implementation.

There are currently 25 signatories to the JPA, and they are actively engaging in both stakeholder and public outreach programs and expanding JPA membership. The map on page 8 shows the boundary of the Region and the current cities that are participating in the JPA. The JPA is now officially known as the Gateway Water Management Authority (GWMA).

This Plan is being produced and sponsored by GWMA, funded in part through a Proposition 84 IRWMP Planning Grant from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The development program is being administered by GWMA Executive Officer, Grace Kast. The Plan Consultant Team is led by GEI Consultants, Inc.

Additional information and a full copy of the Public Review Draft Gateway IRWMP are available at www.gatewayIRWMP.org.

IRWMP Process

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to manage all aspects of water resources in a region. IRWM crosses jurisdictional, watershed, and political boundaries; involves multiple agencies, stakeholders, individuals, and groups; and attempts to address the issues and differing perspectives of all the entities involved through mutually beneficial solutions. The Gateway IRWMP development process began in Early 2012.



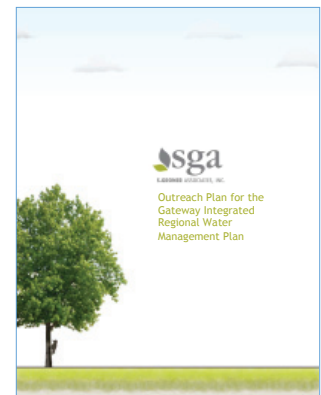
The Gateway IRWMP development process has the following major steps:

1. Gather information on the Region's water management
2. Define the Region's water problems
3. Suggest strategies that will help alleviate those issues
4. Brainstorm projects that will implement those strategies
5. Filter the projects to make sure the projects are feasible, integrated so that they are both compatible with and complementary of other suggested or existing projects, do not adversely affect certain populations, and meet other requirements
6. Prioritize filtered projects for implementation
7. Develop a procedure to implement projects collectively
8. Determine methods and tools to monitor implementation of the projects within the IRWMP as well as the overall plan
9. Complete a written Plan
10. Adoption of the Plan by GWMA and member agencies.

Stakeholders and Outreach

Decisions for the GWMA are made by the GWMA Board, made up of member agency representatives. Each member agency is allowed one representative on the governing board with one vote. A diverse Stakeholder Group has also been formed to provide recommendations to the GWMA on important decisions and to help guide the IRWMP process. GWMA members also participate directly in stakeholder meetings. Stakeholders include cities, water districts, water companies, water wholesalers and groundwater suppliers, wastewater agencies, watershed-based environmental advocates, watershed organizations, and State and federal agencies.

GWMA has continuously conducted outreach to Stakeholders since its formation so that they can be included in the IRWMP process. This includes individual invitations, public notices, public meetings, and open monthly and special GWMA meetings. An Outreach Plan for the Gateway IRWMP was developed and adopted by the GWMA Board in May 2012 which included finalizing IRWMP messaging, developing a basic flyer in English and Spanish, creating an editable design piece, and producing a newsletter, among other steps. Special emphasis and techniques were employed in the outreach plan to provide disadvantaged communities (DACs) with the opportunity to participate as stakeholders or individually as members of the public even though they may already be represented by a city representative to the GWMA. While the Region has no tribal reservations or facilities, tribal representatives were included in all meeting correspondence to stakeholders. Communication efforts were active, current, dependable, and provided an opportunity for a two-way dialog for all participants.



Goals and Objectives

Stakeholders compiled and finalized the Goals and Objectives of the IRWMP by consensus and then advanced the list to GWMA for final review and unanimous adoption on April 12, 2012.

Gateway Region IRWM Plan Goals and Objectives

- Identify and address the water dependent natural resources needs of the Gateway Region Watersheds.
- Protect and enhance water quality.
 - Objective:* Attain required TMDL levels in accordance with their individual schedules.
 - Objective:* Effectively reduce major sources of pollutants and environmental stressors in the region.
- Optimize and ensure water supply reliability.
 - Objective:* Continue and enhance water use efficiency measures to meet 20 X 2020 per capita water use targets.
 - Objective:* Expand regional water recycling facilities and recycled water distribution to help provide reliable water sources.
 - Objective:* Systematically upgrade aging water infrastructure in the Region.
- Coordinate and integrate water resource management.
- Provide stewardship of the Region's water dependent natural resources through enhancement of amenities and infrastructure.
 - Objective:* Create habitat, open space, and water-based recreational opportunities in the Region.
- Manage flood and storm waters to reduce flood risk and water quality impacts.
 - Objective:* Install or optimize water monitoring to effectively manage storm water in the Region. Obtain, manage, and assess water resources data and information.

Goals

- ✓ Identify
- ✓ Protect
- ✓ Optimize
- ✓ Coordinate
- ✓ Steward
- ✓ Manage



Studies

To inform stakeholders of possible issues, the Consulting Team performed technical studies on groundwater and water quality, storm water and flooding, and water supply and demand for the Region. Those studies identified the location and extent of groundwater and flooding issues, suggested additional monitoring, recommended Best Management Practices for stormwater issues and confirmed the Region's water supply was generally adequate through 2030.

The effect of climate change on the Region's water resources was analyzed. Climate may alter the water demand in the region, raise sea levels, or effect the imported water supply. The analysis also looked at the vulnerability of water supply, ecology, and water-energy relationships and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission. Projects suggested for inclusion of the IRWMP were each reviewed for climate change issues and vulnerabilities.

Strategies and Projects

An important and necessary step in the IRWMP process is to formulate strategies that will be effective in addressing critical water needs and issues for the region. Stakeholders recommended twenty-three Water Management Strategies be considered, including flood management, conjunctive use, ecosystem restoration, groundwater management, storm water capture and management, water recycling, watershed planning and water conservation.

Stakeholders

recommended
twenty-three water
management strategies

73 Water Management Projects

were suggested for
the Region

Stakeholders were asked to suggest projects for the IRWMP that would apply the water management strategies and meet the IRWMP goals. Projects were solicited beginning in late June 2012 and continuing until September. The full list of projects is included in Appendix C of the IRWMP. Seventy-three (73) projects were collected, reviewed, and ranked by a Technical Review Team of eight individuals; each assigned various scores based on their expertise. The GWMA adopted the project review criteria used to evaluate and rank projects as required by the DWR IRWMP Guidelines. The ranking criteria included project feasibility, environmental justice, climate change, DAC effects, and integration. Reviews also evaluated how well the project addressed goals of the plan, state preferences and State priorities, cost effectiveness, timeliness, and regional benefits.



Fifteen of the 25 members of GWMA submitted project ideas for the IRWMP. The projects generally span the geographical extent of the Gateway Region. Project types were varied, but the predominate project type was water quality. The final project ranking can be found in Appendix C of the IRWMP.

Projects were also evaluated by the Technical Team in an “integration” step to make sure that:

1. Projects do not adversely impact one another, or current water management systems
2. Projects complement each other and improve the benefits beyond those developed from individual projects
3. Single benefit and similar projects are appropriately bundled into more comprehensive and collective regional program alternatives to save effort and cost in administration, permitting, planning, and design-construction and generally make them ready for funding opportunities
4. The plan considers merging or adding parts or components of projects that would further increase benefits

Several program “Alternatives” resulted from bundling complementing projects, including Systems Interties, Well Rehabilitation, Recycling and Conservation, Outfall Monitoring, Improving Catch Basins, Infrastructure Replacement, Groundwater Treatment, and Treatment of Low Flow Drainage. These programs were further advanced as regional projects and analyzed for benefits and impacts. The integration step also looked at compatibility and impacts of projects from neighboring IRWMP regions on Gateway projects.

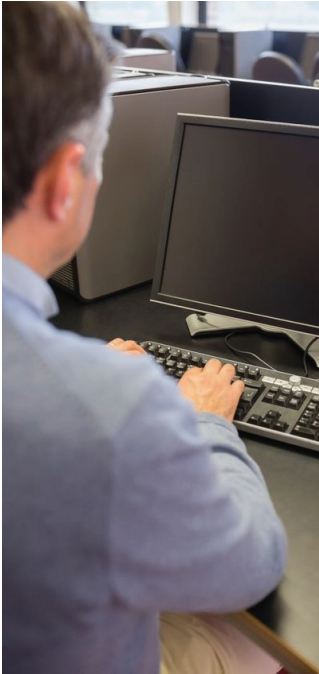
Coordination between other water planning and non-water related planning efforts is considered in the Plan. The IRWMP must align with land use and water planning within the Region, water planning in neighboring regions, and planning with various State, federal, and local agencies.

The IRWMP includes a discussion of potential impacts and benefits of IRWMP implementation, including both impacts and benefits within the IRWM Region, between regions, and those directly affecting DACs and Environmental Justice related concerns. It also includes discussion of how the effects of individual projects are to be addressed by project proponents and the compliance and approach to meeting California Environmental Quality Act requirements.

Implementation of the IRWMP will require money. Funding alternatives and opportunities are discussed in the Plan, both in the local government level and in the form of grants and loans from federal and State sources. A chart of past and current funding programs is provided.

Integration Step

- ✓ No Negative Impacts
- ✓ Complementary
- ✓ Bundled As Appropriate
- ✓ Added Benefits

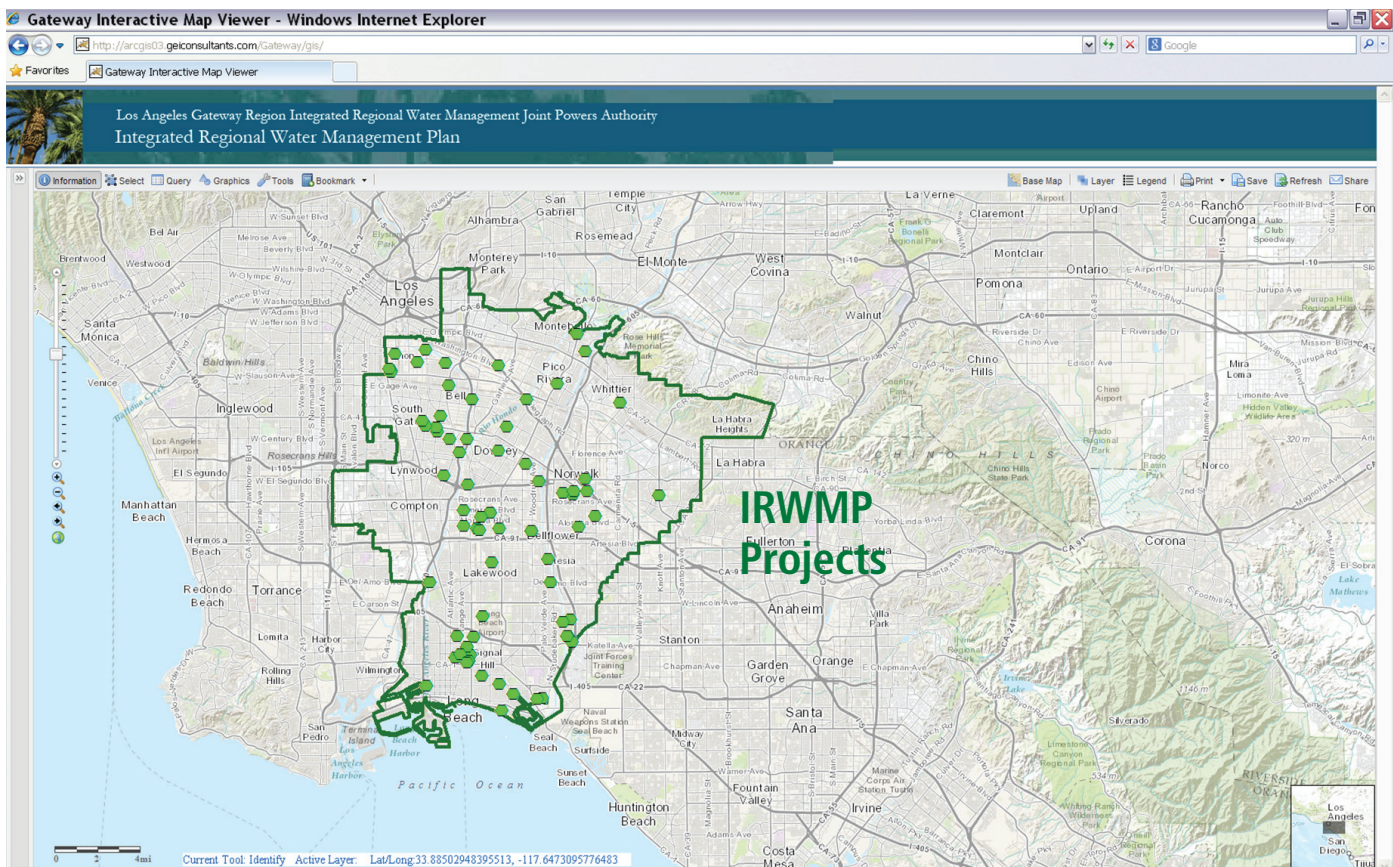


Data Management

Data for the IRWMP is managed with a web-enabled, Geographical Information System (GIS) database tool. The tool's map viewer is linked to a database that allows storage and display of layers of information, such as groundwater levels, project sites, demographic information, city/county/district boundaries as well as geo-referenced reports, texts, memoranda, and other documents. This information can be easily retrieved for use and analyzed to help identify project impact benefits to water resources. The Plan contains a user manual and examples of common data retrieval. The tool can be found at <http://arcgis02.geiconsultants.com/gateway2/gis/>.

The IRWMP standards require that Plans include performance measures and monitoring to document progress toward meeting plan objectives. The Gateway IRWMP includes a Plan Performance and Monitoring strategy to document how the IRWMP objectives are to be measured, how the program alternatives are being implemented to meet the objectives; and that the anticipated IRWMP benefits are being delivered. As a living document, the IRWMP also includes general procedures for major or minor updates to the plan.

IRWMP GIS Database



IRWMP Conclusions include:

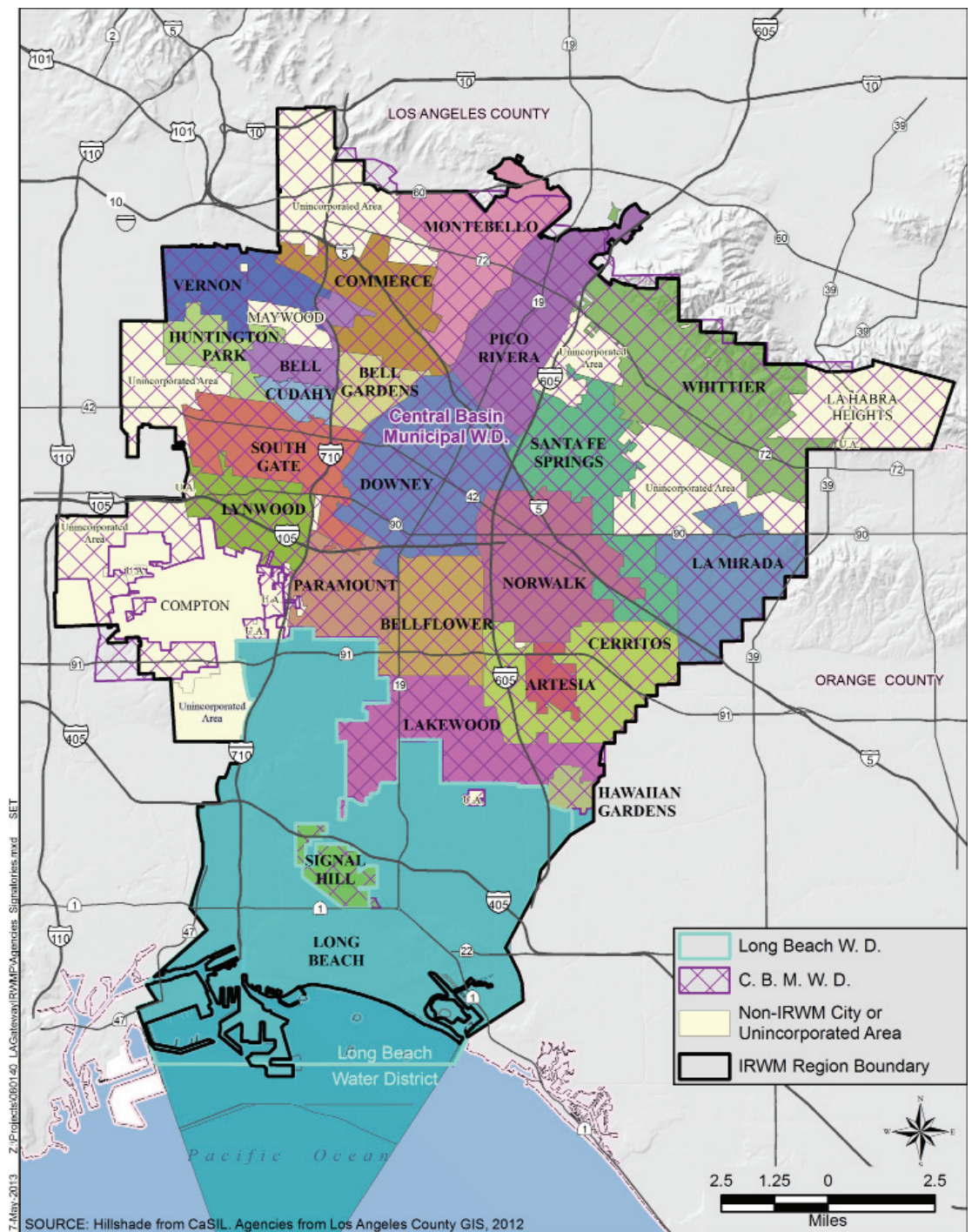
- GWMA has led an open, participatory, collaborative public process for the development of the Gateway IRWMP. A stakeholder group was formed to make recommendations to the GWMA and guide the process.
- Stakeholders formulated a list of Goals and Objectives that were adopted by the GWMA to address the major water management issues in the Region, including water quality protection and enhancement, water supply reliability, flooding, storm water management, and environmental stewardship.
- The IRWMP process included studies on groundwater supply, groundwater quality and monitoring, storm water and flooding, water supply and demand, and climate change.
- A wide range of projects were suggested and incorporated in the plan to carry out water management strategies addressing IRWMP Goals and Objectives. Project Alternatives provide regional solutions for regional problems.
- Coordination with other planning efforts, effective communications, and plan performance monitoring are important continuing steps for GWMA in the ongoing effective management of the Gateway Region's water resources.

IRWMP Recommendations include:

- GWMA should continue to coordinate regional water management efforts and be active in implementing solutions to water management issues.
- Update Projects list as necessary and as grant opportunities are identified.
- Address Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Permit/Order Watershed Monitoring and Reporting Program.
- Define Funding and a finance plan for taking actions to cost effectively implement actions and best management practices to comply with orders and requirements.
- The GWMA should continue to provide leadership to influence local water planning and develop unified positions to other regional water management entities to ensure economic justice and the fair distribution of grants, program funding and projects.



Gateway Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Region



For More Information

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You may also refer to our website at www.gatewayirwmp.org