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River Exchange Awarded Grant for Regional Water Management Planning

Two- year planning process the first of its kind in the region

The River Exchange has been awarded \$590,000 in new grant funding to oversee the development of an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) for the Upper Sacramento Region. The grant is funded by voter-approved Proposition 84, and will be administered by the state Department of Water Resources (DWR).

IRWM planning involves a collaborative effort to identify critical water-related needs and agree upon priorities, then apply for funding to implement sustainable solutions regarding water resources in the region. Our region includes the watersheds of the Upper Sacramento and McCloud Rivers from their headwaters to Shasta Lake, as well as the Lower Pit River. The region intentionally crosses geographic and political boundaries, bringing together stakeholders of differing perspectives to reach mutually beneficial solutions.

The purpose of the plan is to cooperatively develop projects that address the watershed goals and objectives of multiple stakeholders in the region, while maximizing the use of limited financial resources. An additional benefit of this integrated approach is an increased awareness of how changes in the management of one aspect of water resources can affect others, such as water supply and quality. County Supervisor, Ed Valenzuela said, "It's great news that our region has been awarded this funding. I'm confident that we will be able to work toward funding infrastructure and other important water management projects".

The two-year planning process will be guided by a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) with representatives from federal, state, and local agencies, non-profit organizations, private industry, and Native American tribes, among others. Public involvement sessions will be coordinated for each sub-region and announced after the RWMG initiates the planning process. This will be the largest and most comprehensive watershed planning effort undertaken in our region to date, and development of the cooperative network necessary to complete the work will provide benefits to our region's watersheds for years to come.

For more information, call the River Exchange at (530) 235-2012, or email mail@riverexchange.org. The River Exchange is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting healthy watersheds through community involvement in stewardship, restoration and education.

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