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10 FINANCING STRATEGIES

Research conducted as part of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Planning process includes investigating funding opportunities for the implementation of projects. This section begins with the review of these programs providing information on available:

- Local government funding to the IRWM Plan member agencies
- Grants and loans that may be applied for by IRWM Plan stakeholders

A comprehensive list of the current state and federal funding programs is included as a resource for existing and future project sponsors wishing to pursue government financial support in the implementation of their projects.

For additional project support, a definition on how the IRWM Plan's adaptive approach is based on the project type and the current stage of planning, design, and construction is included in **Section 6 - Project Selection Process. Section 10** expands upon the two funding approach methodologies first discussed in **Section 1 - Introduction** by utilizing the available funding sources and strategies described herein. Project specific funding mechanisms, such as rate structures, for project construction and project operation and maintenance are described within the List of Projects (**Table 6-5**) approved for IRWM Plan implementation.

This section includes the following:

Funding for the IRWM Plan – Describes the funding sources, programs, and grants used for the long-term development and funding of the IRWM Plan.

Local Government Funding – Describes local funding mechanisms/sources in the IRWM Planning region for consideration by the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) in implementation of IRWM Plan capital projects and programs, including the funding certainty for maintenance and operations after construction.

Grants and Loans (State and Federal) – Details the currently available funding programs from state and federal sources.

Funding Recycled Water/Desalination Programs – Details the potential funding of a regional recycled/desalination project in the IRWM Planning region.

Grant Funding Matrix – Lists the different grant and loan programs currently on-going with specialized funding based on appropriations given to the program, and according to the project type, project benefits, agency, etc.

Project Implementation Strategy – Includes an expanded methodology of funding based on the regional and local benefits of a project.

10.1 FUNDING OF THE IRWM PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

To date, the IRWM Planning effort has been funded through the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District). The District serves as the approving body and lead agency for the IRWM Plan's development and implementation. While the District is governed by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, its board members and shared County staff act separately.

The District receives local funding through its general property tax allocations and from revenues provided by participating agencies, organizations, and other parties benefiting from District services. Both the District and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) provide funding for developing and updating the IRWM Plan. DWR funding for planning and implementation of the IRWM Plan has historically been obtained through the District's application for publicly supported grants issued as part of California water bond measures (Propositions 50, 84, and 1). Past grants awarded to the SLO IRWM Region are included in **Table 10-1**. Awardees also contribute to the cost of IRWM Program efforts, such as IRWM Plan updates, in accordance with the RWMG MOU.

In-kind staff time is provided by members of the RWMG. As noted in **Section 2 - Governance**, the RWMG is a volunteer group of water resources stakeholders representing water entities throughout SLO County. Members are expected to actively participate in all aspects of the SLO IRWM Plan Update process including, but not limited to, the following activities:

- Actively communicate IRWM Planning activities to all stakeholders including represented interest groups, and individuals
- Review and provide guidance in the preparation of the IRWM Plan Update
- Adopt elements of the IRWM Plan Update to elevate to a policy level
- Prepare and attend RWMG meetings and actively participate in discussions
- Attend workshops and other outreach activities
- Work with the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) subcommittee in responding to questions and concerns
- Approve the Final IRWM Plan Update and forward to the WRAC for their recommendation of approval to the SLO County Board of Supervisors

Table 10-1: Past State Grants Awarded to the IRWM Region

Grant Title	Year	Amount	Description of Benefit/Work Product
Proposition 50 Chapter 8 IRWM Planning Grant	2008	\$500K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Enhancement Plan • Flood Management Plan • Groundwater Banking Plan • Regional Permitting Plan
Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation Grant (Round 1)	2011	\$10.4M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Plan B” Water Supply Replacement Projects
Proposition 84 IRWM Planning Grant	2012	\$1M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRWM Plan Update • Salt & Nutrient Planning • Groundwater Modeling • Recycled Water Planning • Watershed Planning
Proposition 84 Expedited Drought Grant	2014	\$6.3M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA 23-Atascadero MWC-Garden Farms Emergency Intertie • Heritage Ranch CSD Emergency Turnout • Cambria CSD Emergency Water Supply
Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation Grant (Round 2)	2015	\$3.7M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Templeton CSD Upper Salinas River Basin Conjunctive Use • San Simeon CSD Well Head Treatment • Oceano CSD Water Resource Reliability Program Planning Study
Proposition 1 IRWM Planning Grant	2016	\$200K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRWM Plan Update • Region-wide Stormwater Resource Plan
Proposition 1 Disadvantage Community Involvement Grant	2017	\$940K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRWM Region DAC Needs Assessment • Projects in the five recognized DACs

10.1.1 Funding Snapshot of the Implementation List

As detailed in **Section 6**, this plan includes 25 projects that RWMG members intend to implement over the next plan-cycle. A key component of any project development and implementation is the funding strategy. **Table 10-2** below summarizes each projects funding source(s), certainty of those funding sources, and how operations and maintenance will be financed.

Table 10-2: Funding Snapshot of Implementation List

2019 Implementation List Projects Financing Snapshot			
Project Sponsor Project Name (Alphabetical by Sponsor)	Implementation Funding Mechanisms / Source	Certainty / Longevity of Funding, if known.	Source of Operation & Maintenance Funding
Cambria CSD <i>WWTP Nutrient Removal and Efficiency Improvements</i>	PG&E Rebates, SRF Loan, Rate Payers, Local Share Funding, PG&E financing	Partially secured	Rate Payers
Cayucos Sanitary District <i>Cayucos Sustainable Water Project, Phase 1</i>	USDA Grants, Low interest loans	Secured	Rate Payers
Cayucos Sanitary District <i>Cayucos Sustainable Water Project, Phase 2</i>	TBD	Unsecured	Rate Payers
City of Pismo Beach <i>Central Coast Blue</i>	Clean Water SRF, USDA, Prop 1 GWGP	Partially secured	Rate Payers
City of San Luis Obispo <i>One Water SLO</i>	SRF Loan, FEMA Grant (secured), Rate payers	Secured	Rate Payers
City of San Luis Obispo <i>Mid Higuera Bypass</i>	TBD	Unsecured	TBD
City of San Luis Obispo <i>Recycled Water Distribution System Expansion</i>	TBD	Unsecured	Rate Payers
City of San Luis Obispo <i>Meadow Park Stormwater Capture and Use</i>	TBD	Unsecured	TBD
Coastal San Luis RCD <i>Remediation and BMP Implementation in the Oso Flaco Watershed</i>	State Parks, SWRCB	Partially secured	TBD
Coastal San Luis RCD <i>Livestock and Land Program</i>	TBD	Unsecured	Unknown
County of San Luis Obispo <i>Oceano 13th St. Drainage</i>	CalTrans, County, CDBG, FEMA, others	Secured	County of SLO
County of San Luis Obispo <i>Mountain Springs Road Sediment Control</i>	TBD	Unsecured	City of Paso Robles
Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District <i>Huer Huero Recharge Project</i>	TBD	Unsecured	TBD
Los Osos CSD <i>8th Street Well Construction</i>	Local funds, grants	Partially secured	Rate Payers

2019 Implementation List Projects Financing Snapshot			
Project Sponsor Project Name (Alphabetical by Sponsor)	Implementation Funding Mechanisms / Source	Certainty / Longevity of Funding, if known.	Source of Operation & Maintenance Funding
Morro Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) <i>Los Padres CCC Center Stormwater LID</i>	TBD, grants, other State funding	Unsecured	Rate Payers
Morro Bay NEP <i>Water Conservation Partnerships in Chorro Valley</i>	Local funds, TBD	Unsecured	N/A
Morro Bay NEP <i>Baywood Park 2nd Street Stormwater Management</i>	TBD	Unsecured	Rate Payers
Nipomo CSD <i>Supplemental Water Project, Final Phase</i>	Rate Payers, Grants	Partially secured	Rate Payers
Oceano CSD <i>Oceano LID Project</i>	Oceano CSD reserves, Grants	Partially secured	Rate Payers
San Miguel CSD <i>Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion</i>	TBD	Unsecured	Unknown
San Miguelito Mutual Water Company <i>Lower San Luis Obispo Creek Fish Passage Improvement and Seawater Intrusion Barrier</i>	SMMWC Funds, Grants, TBD	Partially secured	Rate Payers
San Simeon CSD <i>Reservoir Expansion Project</i>	USDA Loan, District funds, grants	Unsecured	Rate Payers
Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD <i>Santa Rosa Creek Floodplain Feasibility Study</i>	TBD	Unsecured	N/A
Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD <i>Santa Rosa Creek Streamflow Enhancement</i>	TBD	Unsecured	N/A
Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD <i>SLO County Key Percolation Zone Study</i>	TBD	Unsecured	N/A

10.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The information presented below identifies potential sources of local funding used for capital projects and management programs needed to implement the IRWM Plan. This includes sources of funding that RWMG member agencies will use to meet maintenance and operations obligations for IRWM projects. It also describes the constraints that local governments face in generating revenues. Each member that seeks grant funding will need to demonstrate that maintenance and operations funds are to be committed to the projects. This could include proof through an adopted capital improvement plan, other engineering feasibility studies and reports, rate studies, or approved funding programs adopted pursuant to California requirements.

10.2.1 Integrating Funding Authorities and Sources

Because most grant programs require a local match, integrating local funding authorities and sources could help the SLO Region pursue grant-funded projects and seek state and federal funding. Integrating available local funding, supporting an approach, and cost sharing may be needed to meet local match contributions or to fund project feasibility studies, design and environmental review. Planning and permitting work often require local investments prior to obtaining state or federal grants or loans for construction.

Under their general government authority, the cities, County, and District generate local revenue from a variety of sources including general funds or enterprise funds, water and/or sewer rates, developer or impact fees, connection fees, property taxes, sales taxes, etc. SLO County can also generate fees pursuant to County ordinance and state law.

Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) are often formed to coordinate shared project funding. The County of SLO and the SLO County Flood Control and Water Conservation District entered into a joint exercise of powers authority (JPA) by forming the SLO County Financing Authority on August 22, 2000. This agreement creates a single public agency capable of arranging financing of the acquisition and improvements for public projects that benefit multiple agencies. This was done to avoid duplication of effort, inefficiencies in administration, and excessive costs related to the financing of these projects.

10.2.2 San Luis Obispo County Financing Authority

The SLO County Financing Authority has been instrumental in the efficient financing of several large wholesale water projects that serve multiple agencies throughout the County. This includes the Lopez Dam Seismic Remediation Project which serves the City of Arroyo Grande, City of Pismo Beach, City of Grover Beach, Oceano Community Services District, and County Service Area 12 directly and many other entities indirectly. The JPA also financed the Nacimiento Water Pipeline Project currently serving the City of Paso Robles, City of San Luis

Obispo, Atascadero Mutual Water Company, Templeton Community Services District, and County Service Area 10.

The SLO County Financing Authority has issued both tax-exempt bonds to serve municipal agencies and taxable bonds to serve private water companies. Any agency can become an associate member of the JPA to issue debt specific to their individual needs. For example, the City of San Luis Obispo became an associate member, so the City could issue Bond Anticipation Notes to finance preliminary costs for its share of the Nacimiento Water Pipeline Project.

10.2.3 Benefit Assessments

Funding for a large regional project such as a drinking water or recycled water treatment plant, or large water conveyance systems, is often obtained through benefit assessments. Benefit assessments are special charges levied on property to pay for public improvements that benefit property in a predetermined district. Regional drinking water, recycled water, flood control and storm water, ecosystem management, groundwater storage, and water quality protection are all project types that have been identified as high priority candidates in the SLO Region.

Benefit assessments link the cost of public improvements to those landowners who specifically benefit from the improvements. Benefit assessment zones are defined geographically, and levies are put on all properties within a designated benefit assessment zone. The boundaries of a benefit assessment district may coincide exactly with those of a city, county, or other existing special district, or they may cover only part of those jurisdictions.

A comprehensive engineer's report is needed to form a benefit assessment district. The report must outline the proposed area, key projects, estimated project costs, annual cost to each property, and the benefit formula used to determine each property's share of the cost. It forms the legal basis for a benefit assessment district and must be formally approved by the governing body that will administer the district. In November 1996, California voters approved [Proposition 218](#), the Right to Vote on Taxes Act, which among other constraints (see **Section 10.2.4**, below), established a strict definition of special benefits and instituted a common formation and ratification process for all benefit assessment districts.

10.2.4 Local Funding Constraints

The RWMG defines how monies are collected and decisions are made for the IRWM Program. One aspect of this role is the RWMG's responsibility to identify stable sources of funding for shared programs that are determined to provide benefits to member agencies. The RWMG provides mechanisms for ongoing and stable funding for projects with shared benefits.

Local government funding is required for multiple purposes and the ability for local governments in the SLO Region is constrained by economic and political realities. Like other regions of the state, the SLO Region has a limited ability to pay for all necessary improvement

projects or programs. Grants and loans become important in leveraging the limited local financing capacity.

Passed in 1978, Proposition 13 created limits on the ability of city and county governments to raise property taxes. Proposition 218 creates similar constraints for agencies and special districts, including specific procedural requirements related to generating fees and assessments. Any efforts to generate new charges and assessments would be subject to property owner and/or customer approval. Planning or construction of new facilities requires a full evaluation of benefits and costs and an electoral process, as defined by the proposition and amendments to state law.

For specific projects to be implemented under the IRWM Plan, it is important to note that one of the evaluation criteria for project prioritization was the presence of the local cost share, and the presence of a solid plan to define stable funding for construction and long-term maintenance and operations of proposed projects.

10.3 GRANTS AND LOANS (STATE AND FEDERAL)

Like other regions of the state, the SLO IRWM Region has a limited ability to pay for further projects. With numerous areas of the Region designated in the 2010 census as low income (in addition to state-designated DACs), there is a constrained ability to raise local revenue. Fortunately, grants and loans are available that can facilitate implementation of IRWM Plan projects.

Various international, federal, and state agencies provide technical assistance and program funding for IRWM projects. Additionally, there are often grant programs that are specific to, or prioritize, DACs. SLO RWMG member organizations have received funding for the following project types:

- Groundwater management
- Water recycling
- Water quality protection and improvement
- Desalination of brackish groundwater
- Support for meeting critical water supply treatment, storage, and quality needs of DACs and other small cities

The number and type of grant or loan programs available to public agencies and utilities in any given year can vary significantly based on whether the Legislature targets appropriations to the programs. Many of the grant programs below are on-going with rounds of grant monies provided upon availability of funding. It should be noted, the cost to prepare a grant application is typically the responsibility of the benefitting agency/agencies.

The remainder of this section includes descriptions of grant and loan programs relevant to IRWM projects. This is not a comprehensive list of financing strategies but rather a snapshot of notable grants and programs at the time of the Plan's update.

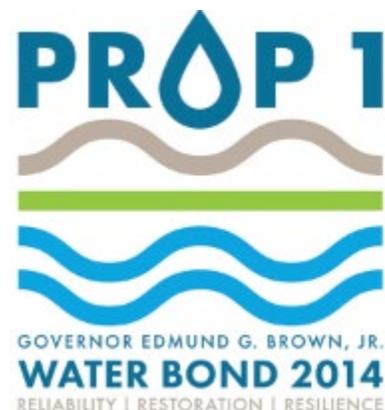
10.3.1 Proposition 68

The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018, or [Proposition 68](#) (Prop 68), allocates a total of \$4 billion for various projects and programs outlined in the act. While Prop 68 does not allot funds for an IRWM grant program, there are several water-related provisions that could provide funding opportunities for projects within the IRWM Plan. Here are some of the specified allocations that could be relevant to IRWM projects:

- \$10 million to DWR for the Urban Streams Restoration Program
- \$80 million to SWRCB for competitive grants awarded to projects preventing or reducing groundwater contamination
- \$35 million for California Ocean Protection Trust Fund grants
- \$20 million to State Coastal Conservancy for grants for coastal forest watersheds
- \$30 million to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Fisheries Restoration Grant Program and related projects
- \$10 to Department of Food and Agriculture for grants that promote agricultural practices supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation
- \$60 million to Natural Resources Agency for competitive grants for projects promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation or support natural, cultural, historic, and Native American resources
- \$250 million for projects and programs that provide safe drinking water and improve water quality
- \$100 million to the Natural Resources Agency for competitive grants for multi-benefit projects that address flooding in urban areas
- \$290 million for investments (some through competitive grants) in drought and groundwater projects aimed at achieving sustainability

10.3.2 Proposition 1

The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 – also known as Proposition 1 or Prop 1 – is a bond act authorizing \$7.12 billion for California water supply infrastructure projects. Of this total, \$510 million is designated for IRWM grants administered by DWR. The Prop 1 IRWM Grant Program is divided into three parts: IRWM Planning, IRWM Implementation, and Disadvantaged Community Involvement. Developed by DWR, the [2016 IRWM Grant Program Guidelines](#) outline how the agency will allocate the Prop 1 funds. The funds are earmarked by Funding Area with a total of \$43 million allotted to the Central Coast Funding Area.



10.3.2.1 IRWM Planning Grant

In 2016, DWR awarded 15 applicants with a total of \$4.2 million to be used for IRWM Plan updates or for the development of new IRWM Plans. The SLO Region received \$204,183 through this grant to update the IRWM Plan and develop a regional Stormwater Resource Plan (SWRP) according to the 2016 IRWM Plan Standards. In addition to the SWRP component, most of the updates to the 2016 Guidelines pertain to evaluation of and preparation for regional impacts of climate change on water resources and systems.

10.3.2.2 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program

A minimum of \$1 million is required to fund the [Disadvantaged Community Involvement \(DCI\) Program](#). This program ensures that disadvantaged communities (DACs), economically disadvantaged areas (EDAs), and underrepresented communities – collectively referred to as DACs by DWR – are involved in their region’s IRWM planning process. Along with increasing the involvement of DACs in IRWM planning, the DCI program aims to identify and comprehend the water management needs of DACs and promote efforts to address those needs. At least \$51 million of the Implementation Grant funds must be awarded to projects directly supporting DACs.

The official [DCI Request for Proposals](#) was released on August 1, 2016. To receive funding, each IRWM Funding Area was required to submit a single proposal for the entire area. The Central Coast Funding Area Agreement, signed in February of 2018, awards the area with a total of \$4.3 million. The SLO Region was allocated a total of \$938,570, which was subdivided as specified in **Table 10-3**.

Table 10-3: SLO DCI Grant Awards

Funded Project	Project Sponsor	Award
IRWM Region DAC Needs Assessment	SLO Flood Control District	\$58,353
Water Resources Reliability Program Phase 2	Oceano CSD	\$177,750
Turnout Pump Station Design and Water Master Plan Update	City of Grover Beach	\$177,750
Water Resource Recovery Facility Project Value Engineering at 60% Design	City of San Luis Obispo	\$78,125
Reservoir Expansion Project Development & Water Master Plan Update	San Simeon CSD	\$177,750
Wastewater Plant Upgrade Study and Recharge Basin Study	San Miguel CSD	\$177,750
Funding Administration – Central Coast Funding Area	Central Coast Funding Area Applicant	\$70,392
Funding Administration – SLO Region	SLO Flood Control District	\$20,700

10.3.2.3 IRWM Implementation Grant

The IRWM Implementation Grant includes two rounds of project solicitation (planned to occur in 2018 and 2020). DWR plans to release a Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) for Round 1 of

the IRWM Implementation Grant in Fall of 2018. To be eligible for implementation grants, a region's IRWM Plan must be updated to comply with the 2016 Guidelines. While detailed project evaluation criteria will be outlined in the PSPs, the Implementation Grant will fund projects that support the Statewide Priorities for water (described in [2016 IRWM Guidelines](#)):

1. Make conservation a California way of life
2. Increase regional self-reliance and integrated water management across all levels of government
3. Achieve the co-equal goals for the Delta
4. Protect and restore important ecosystems
5. Manage and prepare for dry periods
6. Expand water storage capacity and improve groundwater management
7. Provide safe water for all communities
8. Increase flood protection
9. Increase operational and regulatory efficiency
10. Identify sustainable and integrated financing opportunities

Once the Round 1 PSP is released, the RWMG will develop a corresponding grant-specific project list to determine which projects will be included in the region's application for Prop 1 Implementation Grant funds.

10.3.3 Proposition 68



The California [Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018](#) – also known as Proposition 68 or Prop 68 – is a bond act authorizing \$4.1 billion for California various public parks/access, ecosystem and water projects. While there are now specific IRWM funds identified in the bond, numerous funded programs and priorities support the goals and objectives of state-wide IRWM and San Luis Obispo County. These programs include:

- Ch.7 – California River Recreation, Creek, and Waterway Improvements Program
- Ch. 9 – Ocean, Bay, and Coastal Protection
- Ch. 10 – Climate Preparedness, Habitat Resiliency, Resource Enhancement and Innovation
- Ch. 11 – Clean Drinking Water and Drought Preparedness
 - Ch. 11.1 – Groundwater Sustainability
 - Ch. 11.5 – Flood Protection and Repair
 - Ch. 11.6 – Regional Sustainability for Drought and Groundwater and water Recycling

State agencies with Prop 68 programs include the Department of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board, Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Coastal Conservatory, and

many more. A complete list of programs is available on the [California Natural Resources Agency](#) website.

10.3.4 Proposition 84 and Proposition 1E

The DWR IRWM Grant Program was first created under the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 50). Continued funding for the program was provided by the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84). Complementary funding was also provided by the Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 1E) for the Stormwater Flood Management Grant Program.

Both funding programs are administered by DWR and awarded funds to local public agencies and non-profit organizations for projects to enhance water supply reliability a

nd improve and protect water quality. DWR developed Program Guidelines that met the requirements of Proposition 84 and Proposition 1E and required awarded projects and programs to be consistent with an approved IRWM Plan. The revised Program Guidelines were adopted and released by DWR in August 2010 and updated in November 2012. The guidelines included general program requirements, eligibility specifications, proposal selection information, and the IRWM Plan standards. The guidelines established three grant programs: IRWM Planning Grant, IRWM Implementation Grant, and Stormwater Grant.

10.3.4.1 Proposition 84 Grant Funding

General obligation bonds totaling \$5.388 billion were authorized with [Proposition 84](#) (Prop 84) to fund safe drinking water, water quality and supply, flood control, waterway and natural resource protection, water pollution and contamination control, state and local park improvements, public access to natural resources, and water conservation efforts. Of the total Prop 84 funds, \$823 million were awarded through the IRWM Grant Program.

The SLO Region was awarded a total of \$21.427 million through Prop 84 to support IRWM projects and plans. **Figure 10-1** depicts the various projects awarded and their funding amounts. The four colors represent different Prop 84 funding rounds: green for 2012 planning grants; orange for 2011 implementation grants; blue for expedited drought grants from 2014; pink for final round implementation grants.

SLO Region Prop 84 Awards

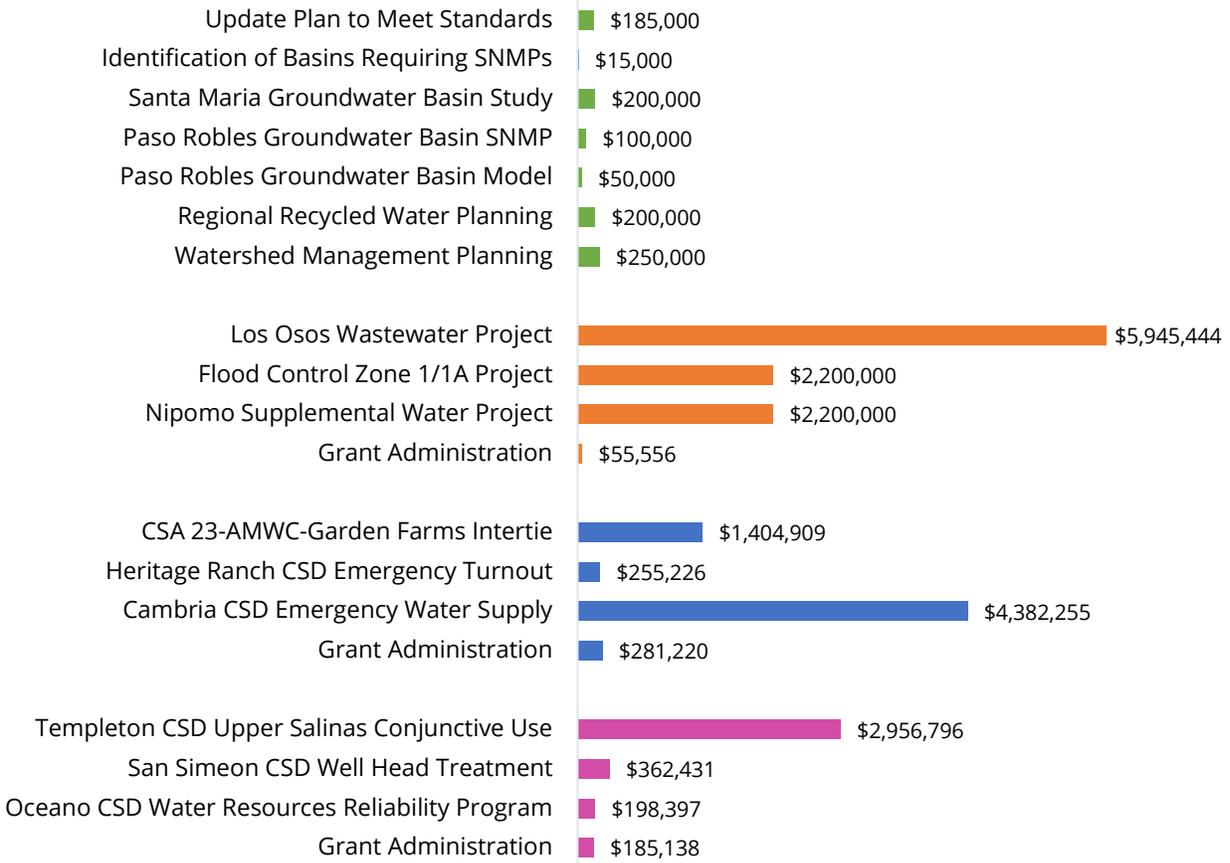


Figure 10-1: Proposition 84 Funds Awarded to the SLO Region

10.3.4.2 Proposition 1E Grant Funding

The California State Legislature was authorized to appropriate \$300 million for grants via [Proposition 1E](#) (Prop 1E) for Stormwater Flood Management projects. To be eligible, projects had to be within an approved IRWM region, and special consideration was given to projects with multiple benefits. Prop 1E Stormwater Flood Management Grant funds were split into two rounds of funding; during Round 1, one project in the SLO Region was awarded \$2.797 million.

10.3.5 State Revolving Funds

10.3.5.1 Clean Water State Revolving Fund

The [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#) (CWSRF) program, in place since 1987, operates as a partnership between the US EPA and states. In California, the SWRCB manages the [CWSRF program](#) to finance the protection and improvement of water quality. The program is funded by federal grants, state funds, and revenue bonds, and offers low interest financing agreements for eligible projects. Local governments and public agencies, Native American Tribal

organizations, nonprofits, and National Estuary Programs can receive low-interest financing agreements in the range of \$1 million to \$100 million for projects that provide clean drinking water, reduce water pollution, or protect aquatic habitats.

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis. See the [CWSRF Forms and Instructions](#) for more details.

10.3.5.2 SWRCB Small Community Grant

One of the SWRCB's financial assistance programs is the [Small Community Grant \(SCG\) Program](#), which is administered as part of the CWSRF. This program provides financial assistance to small DACs for wastewater facility infrastructure projects. The Proposition 1 Water Bond included a \$260 million allocation to the SCG program.

10.3.5.3 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

The [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund](#) (DWSRF) was established in 1996 by an amendment to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The EPA provides states with funds for the DWSRF, and states provide a 20 percent match in funding. States use this money in a revolving fund that provides low-interest loans to community water systems and nonprofit non-community water systems for drinking water infrastructure projects.

The California SWRCB oversees this program, and only considers projects included on the Board's Comprehensive List of public water systems seeking funds for drinking water infrastructure projects. This list is updated on a quarterly basis and applications can be submitted at any time. See the [DWSRF Forms and Instructions](#) webpage for more information.

10.3.6 Additional Resources for Small and/or DAC Water Systems

Financial assistance for small and/or DAC water systems can be found through multiple programs where attention is focused on ensuring assistance is technically and economically feasible. Some of the notable programs for these communities are summarized in the following subsections.

In addition to the available funding opportunities, there are many other resources and organizations targeted at small or disadvantaged water systems, such as those listed below:

- [Rural Community Assistance Corporation \(RCAC\)](#)
- [California Rural Water Association \(CRWA\)](#)
- [Expense Reimbursement Grant \(ERG\), CPS Human Resources Services](#)
- [California State University Sacramento, Office of Water Programs \(CSUS\)](#)
- [American Water Works Association \(AWWA\)](#), California-Nevada Section

10.3.6.1 *Proposition 1 Technical Assistance*

A recent effort aimed at supporting DACs is the [Proposition 1 \(Prop 1\) Technical Assistance \(TA\)](#) program overseen by the SWRCB's Office of Sustainable Water Solutions. The Prop 1 TA provides project development, legal, and other types of assistance for projects related to drinking water, wastewater, groundwater, and storm water.

10.3.6.2 *USEPA Environment Justice Grants and Funding*

The EPA's [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program](#) is aimed at helping local nonprofits, tribes, and tribal organizations address environmental and public health issues. The funding agreements are intended to facilitate cooperative solutions to local issues. In 2018, ten projects will be selected for a maximum award of \$120,000 over two years.

The [Environmental Justice Small Grants Program](#) provides up to \$30,000 to projects that address environmental or public health issues, including those improving water quality or enhancing aquatic habitats. Organizations that are eligible for these grants are nonprofits, tribal governments, and tribal organizations.

The award amounts for these programs vary from year to year depending on available funding.

10.3.6.3 *HUD Community Development Block Grant Program*

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has several opportunities under its [Community Development Block Grants](#) (CDBG). Grant money is given to California, which then allocates the funds to the chosen cities and communities. The CDBG programs cover an array of community development needs including grants for public facilities and infrastructure that support potable water and wastewater systems. The overall goal of the CDBG programs are to ensure low-income communities have suitable, affordable housing and access to necessary community services. HUD CDBG Programs that may be applicable to the IRWM Region include:



Entitlement Program

This program allocates annual grants to larger cities and metropolitan areas to develop housing, enhance economic opportunities, and provide community services to populations of low or moderate income.

CDBG State Program

States award grants to local governments for community development activities benefiting vulnerable communities. Annually, each state develops funding priorities and criteria for selecting projects.

Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program

This loan program offers funding for communities to spend on housing, public facilities, economic development, and other revitalization projects. These can include projects that enhance community resilience to natural disasters.

10.3.6.4 USDA Rural Development Programs

The USDA Rural Development [Water and Environmental Programs](#) (WEP) provides loans, grants, and loan guarantees for drinking water and wastewater projects in rural areas. WEPs target rural communities with 10,000 people or fewer, and public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and Federally-recognized tribes are eligible for funding. The USDA Rural Development programs are a resource for rural and disadvantaged communities in the SLO Region planning to develop their water and wastewater facilities. The USDA [Rural Utilities Service](#) can assist communities with preparing projects for other funding sources. Funds can be used for construction, land acquisition, legal fees, engineering fees, capitalized interest, equipment, initial operation and maintenance costs, and costs to complete a project.

Through the [Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant Program](#), the USDA provides funding to rural or tribal communities for projects that support preparation for or recovery from various emergencies threatening safe and reliable drinking water supplies. Possible awards include up to \$150,000 for repairs or improvements to distribution systems and up to \$500,000 for construction of water supply or treatment facilities. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

The local USDA Rural Development office is in Santa Maria and oversees the administration of local grants and agreements.

10.3.6.5 Economic Development Administration Grants

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) – a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce – oversees [Economic Development Assistance Programs](#) that benefit economically distressed areas in the US. Through the [Public Works and Economic Development](#) program, the EDA awards grants and cooperative agreements for projects that promote economic prosperity and support job development. Public agencies, tribal organizations, higher education institutions, and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for these investment opportunities; applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

10.3.7 Recycled Water, Desalination, and Groundwater Funding Programs

The IRWM Plan identifies several projects for recycling of wastewater, desalination of ocean water, and groundwater recharge (see **Appendix F –Project List**) Implementing such projects will help the Region to live within current and projected water supply limits. Financial support for recycled water projects is available to the SLO Region through programs at both the state and federal level.

10.3.7.1 SWRCB Water Recycling Funding Program (WRFPP)

Proposition 1, Proposition 13, and the CWSRF have all contributed funds to the SWRCB's [Water Recycling Funding Program](#). The program awards loans and grants for both construction and planning of water recycling facilities. Local public agencies are eligible for planning grants, and local public agencies, water utilities, Federal and State Tribes, and mutual water companies can all apply for financial assistance for construction. Detailed information on the program is contained in the [Water Recycling Funding Program Guidelines](#).

10.3.7.2 DWR Desalination Grant Funding Program

The [Desalination Grant Program](#) is designed to assist local public agencies to enhance local water supplies through the construction of brackish water and ocean water desalination projects. Funds from Proposition 1 and Proposition 50 have supported this initiative, which provides grants for planning, design, construction, and research projects. Four finite funding rounds have been executed; however, a Continuous Application Process was implemented as of March 30, 2018.

10.3.7.3 Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act – Title XVI

Title XVI of Public Law 102-575, the [Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act](#), authorizes the federal government to partially fund the capital cost of water recycling and reuse projects. The Title XVI act directs the Secretary of the Interior to undertake a program to research and identify opportunities for water reclamation and reuse of wastewaters and impaired ground and surface waters. The Act also allocated funds to support local agencies plan, design, and construct water reclamation projects. Overseen by the Bureau of Reclamation, funding opportunities vary in availability; more information can be found on the [Title XVI – Water Reclamation and Reuse](#) website.

10.3.7.4 Proposition 1 Groundwater Grant Program

Prop 1 included a provision of \$900 million to support a Groundwater Sustainability Program. A total of \$800 million in grant funds will be awarded by the SWRCB for the prevention and cleanup of groundwater contamination. These funds will be awarded to public agencies, utilities, tribes, and mutual water companies through two rounds of funding. Round 1 grant agreements will be completed in Fall of 2018, and Round 2 preliminary grant awards will be announced at the end of 2018.

10.3.8 EPA Grants

California is part of the EPA Region 9 (shown in the adjacent image). The EPA maintains a [website](#) with information on grants available to Region 9.



The EPA also has a general [EPA Grants](#) website; some of the grant programs and resources relevant to the IRWM Plan are listed below:

Beach Grants

Learn about BEACH Act grants awarded to eligible coastal and Great Lakes states, territories, and tribes to develop and implement beach monitoring and notification programs.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

The CWSRF provides attractive, low-cost funding for projects that improve water quality, renew wastewater infrastructure, and support local economies. See **Section 10.3.5.1** for more information.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

The Safe Drinking Water Act, through the DWSRF, makes funds available to drinking water systems to finance infrastructure improvements. The program also emphasizes providing funds to small and disadvantaged communities and to programs that encourage pollution prevention as a tool for ensuring safe drinking water. See **Section 10.3.5.3** for more information.

Fed FUNDS

Federal Funding for Water/Wastewater Utilities in National Disasters (Fed FUNDS) features federal disaster funding programs for water and/or wastewater utilities to obtain information on federal disaster funding programs from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), EPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Small Business Administration (SBA). Using Fed FUNDS, a utility can easily identify appropriate funding opportunities, gain insight on the application process, access customized forms to document costs, download successful utility applications, and contact utility funding mentors.

Grant Programs for Tribes

The EPA maintains a directory of grants available to Tribes, which includes a section dedicated to water-related funding opportunities.

Health Watersheds Consortium Grants (HWCG)

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, in partnership with the EPA, oversees the HWCG. The Program funds the protection of watersheds and freshwater ecosystems through land management efforts. Nonprofits, for-profit companies, local agencies, water utilities, and states are all eligible to apply for grants.

Performance Partnership Grants (PPG)

States, some interstate agencies, and tribes can combine multiple environmental program grants into one PPG to reduce administrative costs and direct EPA grant funds to priority environmental problems or program needs.

Section 106 Water Pollution Control Grants

Section 106 of the Clean Water Act authorizes the EPA to provide federal assistance to states, interstate agencies, and tribes for water pollution control programs.

Watershed Funding

Visit this Web site to find tools, databases, and information about sources of funding to agencies and organizations that serve to protect watersheds.

Wetlands

Along with a few other opportunities, the EPA provides funding for wetland protection through the Wetlands Program Development Grants and the 5 Star Wetland and Urban Waters Restoration Programs.

10.3.9 WaterSMART Grants

Congress recognized the growing stress on water supplies and water resources throughout the nation and developed the SECURE Water Act of 2010. The Act authorizes federal water and science agencies to work together with state and local water managers to plan for climate change and the other threats to water supplies and to take action to secure water resources and the benefits they provide.

To implement the SECURE Water Act, the WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow) program was implemented in February 2010. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (or Reclamation), as the Department of the Interior's main water management agency, oversees the [WaterSMART program](#). To implement the WaterSMART Program, the Reclamation manages grants, scientific studies, technical assistance, and scientific expertise.

Listed below are the various grant and cost-share funding programs within WaterSMART:

Applied Science Grants

Various agencies with water or power authority can submit proposals to receive funding for the development of tools and information, which will be used to improve water resources management.

Basin Studies

This program offers cost-sharing for basin studies completed by the Reclamation and non-Federal partners. The basin studies evaluate water supply and demand and are used to develop strategies to address imbalances.

Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP)

The CWMP provides funds to watershed groups to improve stakeholder involvement and develop local initiatives to solve watershed management issues.

[Desalination Construction Program](#)

Through the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, the Reclamation is developing a program to fund the construction of desalination projects.

[Drought Response Program](#)

Water managers can receive funding through this program to increase drought resiliency through two routes: by updating or creating a drought plan, or by implementing a project that increases the community's drought resiliency.

[Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects](#)

Water districts, states, tribes, and local agencies can receive 50/50 cost share funding for small-scale water efficiency improvement projects, such as installing flow measurement systems.

[Title XVI](#)

Title XVI is the Reclamation's water recycling and reuse program through which projects implemented in partnership with local agencies can receive funding. See **Section 10.3.7.3** for more information.

[Water and Energy Efficiency Grants](#)

Projects that improve water efficiency, generate hydropower, reduce future conflicts over water, and increase water supply reliability can receive 50/50 cost share funding through this grant program.

[Water Marketing Strategy Grants](#)

States, local governments, and tribes can receive financial support for the planning and development of water marketing strategies, which will expand water markets or marketing activities.

10.3.10 Funding Opportunity Resources

Table 10-4 below describes various websites and resources that provide information about water-related funding opportunities.

Table 10-4: Funding Opportunity Resources

Resource	Description
SWRCB Grants and Loans Website	The SWRCB Division of Financial Assistance lists the agency’s current funding opportunities along with links to the details about each opportunity. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/
DWR Grants and Loans Websites	DWR provides information on its funding opportunities organized by topic area. This webpage includes a brief overview of each opportunity and a link to more details about each program. https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans
CNRA Grants Website	The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Grants webpage includes links to the Agency’s current grant programs. It also includes a “Funding Opportunities” link, which directs viewers to a regularly updated spreadsheet of all the grant programs overseen by the CNRA and its Departments and details on those programs. http://resources.ca.gov/grants/
CNRA Statewide Bonds Oversight Website	This webpage includes links to program descriptions, balances, and projects for statewide bonds that have allocated funds to the CNRA. http://resources.ca.gov/bonds_and_grants/statewide_bonds_oversight/
Grants.gov	Grants.gov is an online database of federal grants that provides detailed information on the opportunities and instructions for applicants. It can be searched based on eligible applicant, funding type, topic area, or supervising agency. https://www.grants.gov/web/grants
SAM.gov	The U.S. federal government’s official website for listing financial assistance opportunities. Opportunities can be queried by eligible applicant types and supervising agency. https://beta.sam.gov/

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