

**BOARD TRANSMITTAL
MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: Michael J. Johnson, AICP Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Adoption of the Cosumnes, American, Bear, and Yuba Rivers Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

DATE: January 08, 2008

SUMMARY: The Planning Department is asking the Board of Supervisors to approve a resolution adopting the Cosumnes, American, Bear, and Yuba (CABY) Rivers Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP). The approval of the resolution will allow the County to apply for state grant funds pursuant to guidelines established by Propositions 50 and 84. The purpose of the IRWMP is to embrace a watershed approach to coordinating and integrating water resource management efforts across a broad spectrum of agencies and organizations.

BACKGROUND: The Cosumnes, American, Bear, and Yuba Rivers Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) effort was initiated in 2005 by water suppliers, power utilities, and watershed conservation groups with interests in the four watersheds that comprise the CABY (Cosumnes, American, Bear, and Yuba) region. As a participant in the IRWMP effort, Placer County will be eligible for grant funding from Propositions 50 and 84. A significant amount of the funding in these two propositions is limited to those organizations that are a part of an IRWMP process.

These grant programs can provide significant help implementing Placer County's water-related programs, including fuel load management, Placer Legacy, flood control projects, water supply and distribution, sewer infrastructure improvements, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements, habitat restoration projects, flood control projects, and other watershed level projects. If the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP) is adopted, IRWMP funding can assist with water-related acquisition efforts and habitat restoration projects.

Staff has concluded that adoption of the CABY IRWMP has several broad benefits for Placer County:

- Access to Proposition 50 and Proposition 84 grant funds for project implementation which otherwise would be unavailable.
- Engagement at an existing stakeholder forum allowing staff to represent Placer County interests concerning water-related matters that affect the CABY region.
- Recognition as a participant in this regional planning endeavor fostering stronger regional ties, information sharing and establishing partnerships with water agencies, non-governmental agencies, and private sector concerns.

One of the immediate and direct benefits of participating in CABY will be our ability to immediately qualify for grant funds for Placer Legacy's salmon/steelhead fish passage efforts in several western Placer County streams (Auburn Ravine, Coon Creek and Dry Creek). If the CABY IRWMP is adopted before January 15, 2008 Placer County will be included on a list of projects to be funded by CABY including funding for fish passage projects on Auburn Ravine. Other direct benefits include assistance on the implementation of programs that meet our NPDES regulatory mandates, assistance on fuel load management and biomass projects, support for infrastructure improvement projects that improve water quality (including wastewater improvement projects) and the FERC Relicensing project of 2013. Proposition 50 funds are presently available and CABY will be applying for funding in January 2008. Proposition 84 funding guidelines are expected to be completed in Spring 2008.

Lastly, we believe that participation in CABY will make our Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant applications and other State grant applications more competitive. It will also allow us to partner with 501 (c) 3 members of CABY as well as other agencies and entities such as Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) and Nevada Irrigation District (NID).

To date the CABY IRWMP has been adopted by PCWA, the El Dorado Irrigation District (EID), NID, and El Dorado County.

FISCAL IMPACTS: There is no cost to Placer County associated with the Board's adoption of the CABY IRWMP. Individual projects may require County funding for staff time (grant funding and project administration) and implementation costs.

CEQA: In the opinion of staff, the subject project is not subject to environmental review. The IRWMP is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 because the Plan is a planning study that identifies potential projects, programs, and policies for possible future actions. Similarly, the IRWMP is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Sections 15306 (Class 6), 15307 (Class 7), and 15308 (Class 8) because the Plan consists of basic data and information collection and includes possible actions, subject to future adoption and approval, which would protect natural resources and the environment.

Adoption of the IRWMP indicates concurrence with the IRWMP regional goals and objectives. This adoption is not a direct commitment of resources, but rather an agreement with other regional priorities. In addition, as made clear by the proposed resolution, the County is not legally bound by adoption of the IRWMP to undertake any aspect of the IRWMP. As such, programmatic environmental analysis under CEQA is not triggered.

A Notice of Exemption will be filed following the Board's action. Individual projects implemented through grant funds may be subject to environmental review at a later date.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Planning Department, with support from the County Executives Office, the Department of Facility Services, and the Department of Public Works recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

1. Approve the attached Board of Supervisors resolution (Exhibit B) acknowledging the value of integrated water resource planning and adopting the CABY Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (Exhibit C).
2. Determine that the project is Categorical Exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 because the Plan is a planning study which identifies potential projects, programs, and policies for possible future actions; and Sections 15306, 15307, and 15308 because the Plan consists of basic data and information collection and includes possible actions, subject to future adoption and approval, which would protect natural resources and the environment.
3. Direct staff to apply for grant funds available through Propositions 50 and 84 to restore Placer County streams, and implement projects that improve the region's water supply and water quality.

EXHIBITS: The following exhibits are provided for the Board's consideration:

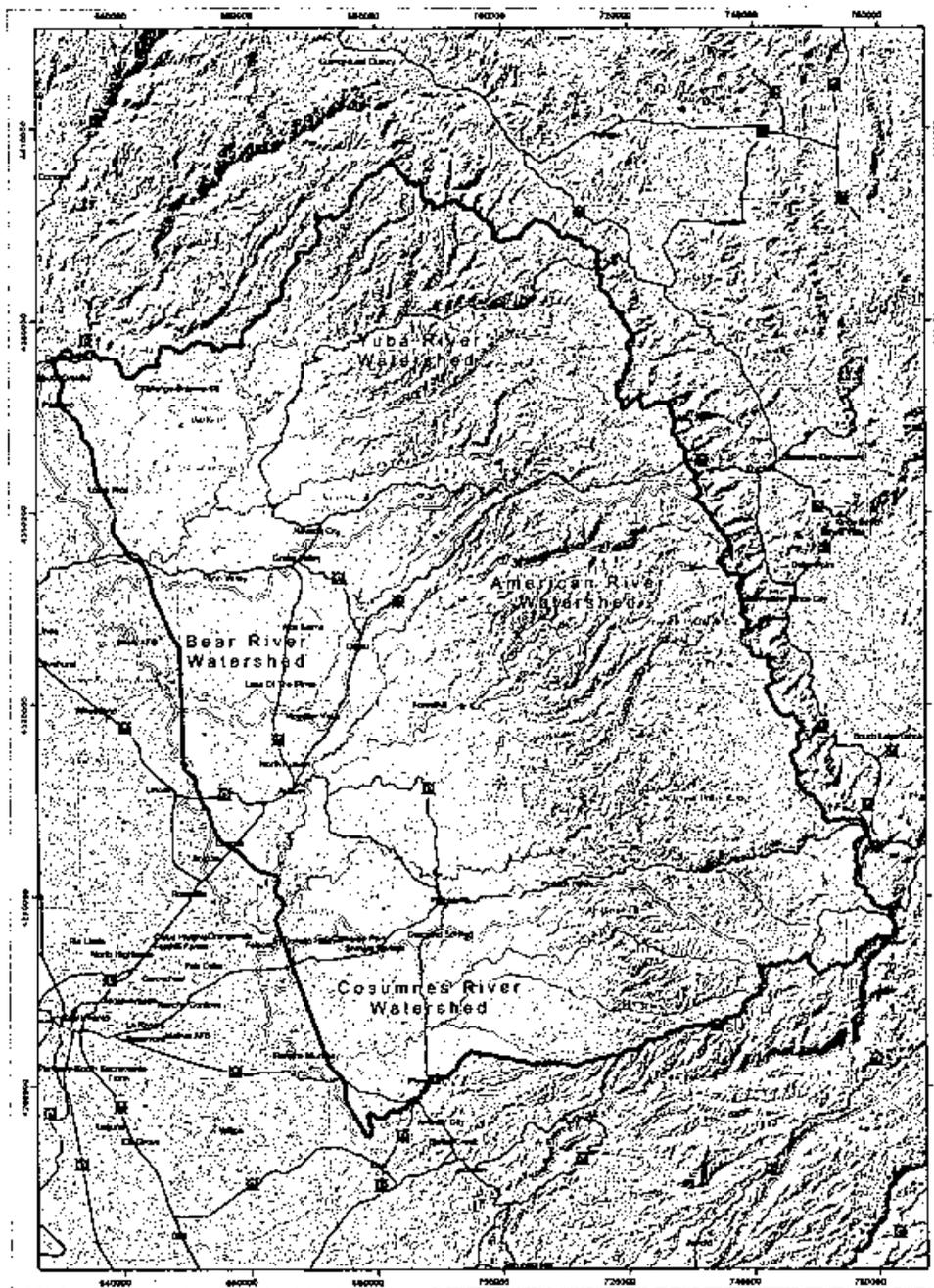
- Exhibit A:** Map of the CABY Region
Exhibit B: Resolution adopting the CABY Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Exhibit C: Copy of the CABY Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (a CD Copy is included with this report. A hard copy is available at the Clerk of the Board's Office)

Respectfully Submitted,

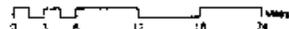
MICHAEL J. JOHNSON, AICP
Director – Department of Planning

cc: Jim Durfee, Director, Facility Services
Ken Grehm, Director, Public Works Department
Katie Burdick, Director, CABY
Einar Maisch, PCWA

EXHIBIT A - CABY REGION MAP



CABY Region and Watersheds



Basemap for Field Research
 April 2006
 Prepared by:
 Ecosystem Sciences Foundation



**Before the Board of Supervisors
County of Placer, State of California**

**In the matter of: A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
THE COSUMNES AMERICAN, BEAR, AND YUBA
(CABY) RIVERS INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER
MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRWMP)**

Resolution No. _____

**The following resolution was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the
County of Placer at a regular meeting held January 08, 2008, by the following vote:**

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Attest:

**Ann Holman
Clerk of said Board**

Jim Holmes, Chairman

WHEREAS, population growth and development in the State of California will continue to pressure water resources. Balancing the needs of urban, agricultural, environmental and recreational water supplies will be a challenge for all involved in water management; and

WHEREAS, the CABY planning region consists of the foothills and upper watersheds of the Cosumnes, American, Bear, and Yuba Rivers; and

WHEREAS, the CABY Planning Committee's diverse group of public agencies, water providers, agriculture, business, residential water users, community, recreation, and environmental organizations and tribal interests have jointly developed an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP); and

WHEREAS, the IRWMP identifies a broadly supported vision, guiding principles, goals, objectives and projects to enhance the beneficial uses of water for the CABY region; and

WHEREAS, an integrated regional approach to water management will streamline individual efforts and increase efficiencies. The CABY IRWMP will also increase

partnership, collaboration and organizational capacity. Collaborative management will provide a forum for stakeholder input and support for projects that address the common goals and objectives for the CABY region; and

WHEREAS, this collaborative planning effort is intended to formulate water management strategies for the region and prioritize projects that address watersheds and regional issues, coordinate with other IRWMPs, address local, state and federal plans' priorities, achieve multiple benefits, encompass more than one watershed, and meet short- and long-term water resource needs; and

WHEREAS, the CABY IRWMP will improve regional competitiveness for grant funding for projects and efforts to implement the IRWMP and achieve agency or organizational goals; and

WHEREAS, Placer County recognizes the value of being a participant in this regional planning endeavor fostering stronger regional ties, information sharing and establishing partnerships with water agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector concerns; and

WHEREAS, in November 2002, the California electorate approved Proposition 50, the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Water Code Section 79560 et seq), which included \$500 million under Chapter 8 for projects included in an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, in November 7, 2006, the California electorate approved Proposition 84, the Water Quality, Safety and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 which included \$1 billion for projects included in an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, as a participant in the IRWMP effort, Placer County will be eligible for Proposition 50 and Proposition 84 grant funding necessary for implementation of Placer County programs, including fuels management, Placer Legacy, flood control projects, biomass reduction, water supply and distribution, sewer infrastructure improvements, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System implementation, habitat restoration projects and other water-related projects; and

WHEREAS, the CABY IRWMP was developed through a comprehensive stakeholder process and provides for ongoing data gathering, planning, design, implementation, and evaluation through a long-term, iterative, community-based process; and

WHEREAS, the County of Placer has reviewed the CABY IRWMP and has determined that the IRWMP is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 because the Plan is a planning study which identifies potential projects, programs, and policies for possible future actions; and Sections 15306, 15307, and 15308 because the Plan consists of basic data and information collection and includes possible actions, subject to future adoption and approval, which would protect natural resources and the environment; and

WHEREAS, Placer County has prepared a Notice of Exemption for the CABY IRWMP

in accordance with CEQA and the County's Ordinance for the implementation of CEQA; and

WHEREAS, The CABY IRWMP serves as a voluntary guidance document which does not legally bind Placer County to undertake any aspect of the IRWMP. Rather, it will be a regional compact with commitments to work together as a region to implement the plan; and

WHEREAS, The IRWMP will be a living document, reviewed and updated over time. Individual signatories can remain involved or terminate their involvement at any time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF PLACER adopts the Cosumnes, American, Bear and Yuba River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan as a voluntary document for Placer County that provides broadly supported, identified goals, objectives, strategies, and projects to meet the integrated water needs of the people and the rivers of the Cosumnes, American, Bear and Yuba region now and into the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors has determined that the adoption of the CABY IRWMP as a guidance document for water resource projects and programs in Placer County is exempt from the requirements of CEQA pursuant to Sections 15262, 15306, 15307, and 15308 of the State CEQA Guidelines and that the Planning Department is hereby authorized and directed to file a Notice of Exemption.

