

Comments from Public Hearing (August 26, 2010)

Convener Wyatt Troxel commented that it must be understood that the ranking of these 297 projects may change during the vetting process. In the second funding round, this process will be continually refined. He requested that each speaker limit their comments to three minutes, and then opened the public hearing at 3:27 p.m.

Richard Bell of MWDOC commented that they are the third largest agency of Metropolitan Water District and provides wholesale imported water to over 28 agencies. Their key staff couldn't meet the "call for projects" June 30th deadline, and requested that the Steering Committee to consider two items: 1) to allow MWDOC to submit a proposal for the North Orange County Water Smart Landscaping Program; and 2) to commit a block of funds to a watershed water use efficiency program for a demand and supply component. Convener Troxel thanked him for his comments and suggested that they prepare a project submittal for the next round.

Lo Tan of Orange County Water District thought that some of the information was missing on the project information application. He suggested the importance of including the amount of water produced by each project sponsor would have been helpful. Convener Troxel noted that the data is posted on our Website and thanked him for his comment.

Betty Anderson of Jurupa Community Services District (JCSD) stated that JCSD is one of the sponsors of the Chino Desalter II. JCSD has projects on this list that are not highly ranked. Those projects were developed as to not tap into other potable water uses. She expressed concerns with the rankings, as the first page of the project list reflects one big agency with several projects ranked quite high. She questioned whether the big agencies, which have more resources than smaller water districts, be pushed back to bottom of pile, so more diversity could exist in order to spread out the first round of funding to other smaller districts.

Eugene Spindler of Shea Properties referenced Project No. 1288, and requested a higher ranking, which he believed was more appropriate due to recognition of water supply and effects on water quality. He expressed concern that this project will address an issue that will only get worse if not changed – Borrego Reach in the upper Newport Bay (a by-pass channel designed for this reach). This project was identified by the County of Orange as a viable and practical solution to the problem. He stated that the project can be shovel-ready by the end of this year, and CEQA has been completed.

Robert Ennis of Orange County Water District (OCWD) requested clarification of how the list will be re-opened for manipulation for future rounds. He had heard that agencies would be able to add to the master list for future funding rounds, but then heard something different. Convener Troxel stated, "... that the process, as a whole, is on-going and it is a dynamic process that we hope will continue for future decades. After this first round, it is the intent that projects can be changed or updated..." Again, Robert Ennis requested clarification that anyone could update their projects on the master projects list after the first round of funding. Celeste Cantú stated that after Round 1, all applicants could better refine their project submittal information forms for the next round of funding.