

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

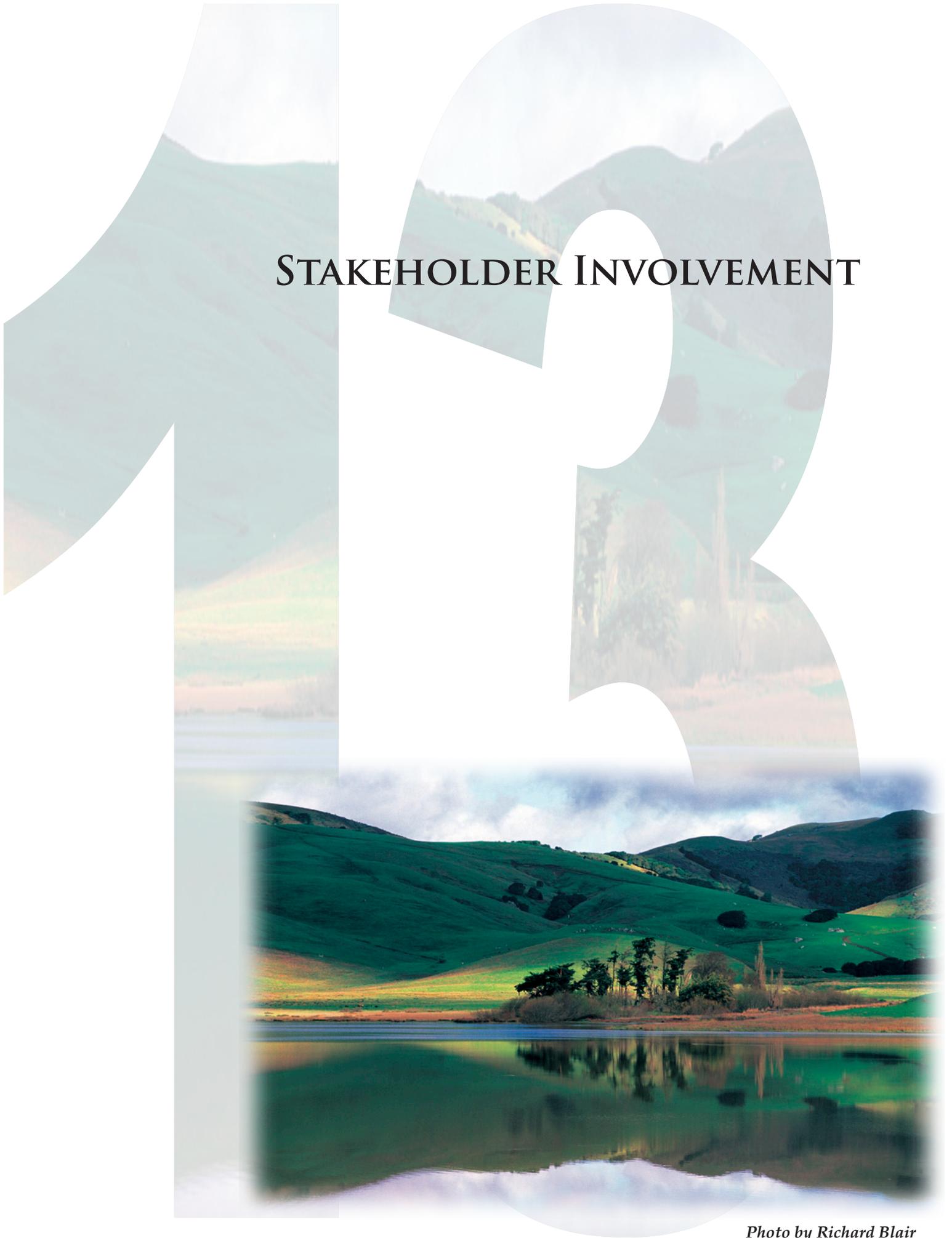


Photo by Richard Blair

13. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENTS

STATE IRWM REQUIREMENTS: N. Stakeholder Involvement - Identify stakeholders included in developing the Plan. Identify how stakeholders were identified, how they participate in planning and implementation efforts, and how they can influence decisions made regarding water management. Include documentation of stakeholder involvement such as inclusion of signatory status or letters of support from non-agency stakeholders, i.e., those who have not “adopted” the Plan. Include a discussion of mechanisms and processes that have been or will be used to facilitate stakeholder involvement and communication during implementation of the Plan. Discuss watershed or other partnerships developed during the planning process. Discuss disadvantaged communities within the region and their involvement in the planning process. Discuss efforts to identify and address environmental justice needs and issues within the region. Identify possible obstacles to Plan implementation.

13-1 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION



Stakeholder involvement has been essential in many of the projects and programs that have been undertaken in the Tomales Bay region. The area is unique from a statewide perspective in the number and types of public agencies and stakeholders involved in managing, monitoring and overseeing natural resources. The Tomales Bay Watershed Council (TBWC) is an existing stakeholder group which represents these interests from west Marin County and the Marin County critical coastal areas. Thus, the

complete integration of natural resource and water agency stakeholders has been included in the process through the participation of the TBWC as manager of the Prop 50 Planning Grant.

The Tomales Bay Watershed Council (TBWC) was formed in January 2000 to develop a plan to improve the water quality of Tomales Bay and tributary streams and to protect and restore the entire watershed in a manner that sustains both human activities and natural resources. The aim of TBWC is to provide an ongoing, collaborative forum to comprehensively manage and protect Tomales Bay, its watershed and the interests of stakeholders. The TBWC is currently the only non-governmental organization considering issues facing the future of the Tomales Bay watershed in which all natural

resource managing entities and water agency stakeholders participate. TBWC has used consensus successfully to make decisions for over 7 years, thereby ensuring the long-term participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders in watershed stewardship.

The TBWC's 32 members are drawn from local interest groups and agencies affected by or responsible for the watershed and its resources. The TBWC includes representatives from local, state and federal agencies; water districts; environmental organizations; citizen and residential groups; agricultural and shellfish industry interests; and recreational interests. Many of these entities already are involved in efforts to protect and improve the health of the watershed, either individually or through partnerships with others. All partners who manage water resources within the watershed or areas that drain to critical coastal areas (including Tomales Bay and "Areas of Special Biological Significance") are included.

Thus, the public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other entities that were necessary to address the objectives and water management strategies of the ICWMP were involved in the planning process. The combination of these agencies and groups addresses all key issues identified in the ICWMP planning process: water supply and reliability, water quality, stormwater and flood management, habitat and ecosystem protection and enhancement, and watershed management.

Represented agencies and organizations on the TBWC include:

- Federal Agencies (National Park Service – Point Reyes National Seashore, Gulf of Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO) Conservation Science)
- State Agencies (Regional Water Quality Control Board, Department of Fish and Game, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Health Services, UC Cooperative Extension)
- Water Suppliers (BCPUD, IPUD, MMWD, NMWD)
- Local Agencies (Marin County Community Development Agency, County Supervisor for the area)
- Special Districts (Marin Resource Conservation District)
- Non-profit Organizations (Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, Salmon Protection and Watershed Network [SPAWN], Tomales Bay Association, Cypress Grove Research Center – Audubon Canyon Ranch)
- Agricultural & Shellfish Industry Interests (Marin County Farm Bureau, Tomales Bay Agricultural Group, Marin Agricultural Land Trust, Sonoma-Marín Cattlemen's Association, Hog Island Oyster Company)
- Citizens Groups, Associations and Residents (East Shore Planning Group, Inverness Association, Inverness Yacht Club, and local watershed residents)

While all of the organizations and agencies with resource management responsibility/authority for watershed resources are represented on the TBWC, there may be stakeholders who are not represented through Council membership. For instance, a few agencies and business community interests are absent. The business community, which has no statutory or other direct responsibility, is clearly affected by decisions made about resource management. Business, as a constituency, is not well represented on the Council and has been designated as a recruitment priority for the coming year, as will be other agencies and entities that are identified throughout the process.

13-2 STAKEHOLDER PROCESS

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS DURING ICWMP PREPARATION

TBWC and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings

The monthly meetings of the TBWC have included status reports and updates regarding the ICWMP. Additionally, the TBWC reviewed and provided direction on key elements during the preparation of the ICWMP: key management issues, objectives and regional priorities, as well as project prioritization. Thus, all stakeholders have been kept informed and have participated in the ICWMP process.

In February 2006 the Executive Committee for the TBWC identified 16 people/organizations that they felt should participate on a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that would guide the development and preparation of the ICWMP. This list was then forwarded to the full TBWC at their meeting in March 2006 for approval. Current TAC members include representatives from:

- Federal Agencies (National Park Service)
- State Agencies (Regional Water Quality Control Board, UC Cooperative Extension)
- Water Suppliers (NMWD with BCPUD, IPUD and/or MMWD as alternate)
- Local Agencies (Marin County Public Works, Marin County Department of Environmental Health)
- Special Districts (Marin Resource Conservation District)
- Non-profit Organizations (Environmental Action Committee of West Marin/Sierra Club)
- Citizens Groups and Associations (East Shore Planning Group and local watershed residents)

The TAC has met monthly or twice a month, sometimes more often, since March 2006 and has reviewed key elements of the ICWMP planning process and plan document and made suggestions. This includes reviews of key management issues within the region, definition of objectives, review and prioritization of projects, and review of ICWMP document sections. Five TAC subcommittees were formed to deal with specific key issues: water supply, ASBS areas, stormwater management, septic solutions, and project review. These subcommittees have met as needed to review pertinent issues and technical study methods for these topics. In addition, a Project Proponents meeting was held by the Project Subcommittee to allow for further presentation of project information, how best to handle excellent project proposals received that do not fit well under Prop 50 guidelines, how to keep updating the projects list, opportunities for collaboration (e.g., on fundraising), and the like. An additional Project Proponents meeting was held in June 2007 to discuss the final project rankings/prioritization and to solicit input from the 16 project proponents as to the best processes for updating both the plan and the project ranking as new projects are identified, or already submitted projects are refined.

Public Outreach, Meetings and Workshops

Public outreach during the course of the ICWMP was a composite of publicly advertised meetings, notices in local newspapers, items in TBWC member newsletters, and reports from TBWC representatives back to their own organizations at board meetings and through internal communication. All TBWC meetings are open to the public. In the interest of full disclosure and transparency the following TBWC meetings were advertised locally as ICWMP meetings and the agendas published in local media to encourage participation: December 19, 2006, and June 19, 2007.

Finally, an important element of the public involvement program was implemented as a result of the Septic Solutions Report (SSR) (See Appendix L). The scope for the SSR included the evaluation of existing management plans to document findings and/or conditions within selected communities, prioritization of “problem” communities and provision of forums for community-based discussions to identify management options, and submittal of the report summarizing project activities to review by the TAC and, ultimately, the Council.

A Subcommittee formed was formed in mid-2006 specifically to implement the SSR component of the ICWMP to evaluate the data gathered during preparation of the ICWMP. The Subcommittee identified four target communities based on this data: Inverness, Woodacre, Bolinas and the San Geronimo Valley. The SSR involved two primary components: outreach to the community of Inverness through the Inverness Association, and outreach to the Woodacre community via the formation of a new citizens group. The communities of Bolinas and the San Geronimo Valley will be approached in the fall of 2007 through already existing groups. The two communities will have the opportunity to organize community efforts (with some support of the TBWC).

The Inverness effort involved seven members of the Inverness Association (IA). The IA is over 75 years old, and over the years has been very active in planning matters, especially in the development of the Community Coastal Plan mandated by the Coastal Act. The IA serves as the contact point for the County in any proposed construction where design review is required, and also serves as a community forum within which neighborhood issues can be discussed. The IA works to mediate various kinds of community issues. The Inverness Planning Area extends north to Sea Haven, a development immediately south of Shell Beach, and south to Fox Drive, that being just under 3 miles from the village of Inverness. The community plan is called the Inverness Ridge Plan and covers that entire area.

The Inverness Association developed a handout about septic system monitoring and maintenance that ultimately was distributed to over 1,000 residents in the Inverness Ridge Planning Area. This brochure also was distributed at the annual meeting of the Inverness Association in July 2007 and was the subject of a segment of the meeting.

The community of Woodacre did not have an existing citizens group or organization. With the assistance of the ICWMP consulting team, a series of meetings were held in the community to determine whether there was sufficient interest and commitment among members of the community to design and implement a local education program. In the community of Woodacre the public outreach effort began with a targeted mailing to residents, soliciting their participation in a discussion about possible

local solutions for ongoing problems with septic tanks in the community. The committee meetings extended over six months and culminated in a community-wide meeting on June 7, 2007. After two meetings and discussion of potential alternatives for onsite wastewater management, it was decided that another community meeting would be held in fall 2007.

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

For plan implementation, stakeholders will participate in the same manner as with preparation of the ICWMP. The contracts with project proponents will be coordinated by the TBWC staff to assure that funded projects are completed on schedule and within allocated budgets. The TBWC will require each of the project proponents to submit to the Council monthly progress/status reports detailing the status of project implementation and progress of their funded projects. The TBWC will appoint an Implementation subcommittee that will meet quarterly to review each of the funded projects with regard to status and progress toward completion and will report back to the Council. The Council also will review quarterly reports to assess how well the projects are achieving their stated objectives and to ensure that completed projects contribute to achieving the objectives of the ICWMP.



Photo by Greg Filbrandt

For projects that are funded outside of the Prop 50 context, the TBWC will continue to serve as a focal point for exchange of information regarding project status, ongoing implementation efforts and communication among project proponents. The Council's monthly meetings will also serve as a forum through which new and evolving projects can be added to the plan. Because the council represents all the regional stakeholders, the council is the logical entity to coordinate ongoing implementation of projects seeking

funding from other funding sources. The council further serves as a venue for project proponents to develop ideas for new projects as ongoing studies and projects are completed that reveal the need for new strategies to achieve the objectives stated in the plan.

Regular council meetings and subcommittee meetings will provide a forum for stakeholder input into ICWMP implementation. The TBWC has working rules of order that formalize stakeholder input. Additional stakeholders will be identified through the planning efforts, advertisement, and active recruitment throughout west Marin among those individuals and communities potentially affected by the plan. Furthermore, each water agency has a board of directors and local outreach efforts that will be utilized to involve stakeholders in the ICWMP development and implementation.

13-3 PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPED DURING ICWMP PROCESS

The TBWC is 7 years old, and successfully developed the *Tomales Bay Stewardship Plan* in 2003. Upon initiation of the ICWMP, the Council reassessed its membership to determine whether other participants should be included to ensure that all stakeholders within the planning area were fully represented within the Council. As a result, several water agencies and other environmental stakeholders were recruited into the Council with full membership. Through the ICWMP process, water supply issues and interests were added, the Bolinas Community Public Utility District was brought on the Council, and the planning area has expanded in response to the region's concerns.

Over the course of the preparation of the ICWMP, this expanded Council worked together to identify not only projects for consideration from individual proponents, but also opportunities for proponents to collaborate and form partnerships. These partnerships were sought to develop specific projects or long-term strategies for addressing the objectives identified in the plan in a collaborative way. In particular, following "the call for projects," diverse proponents within the Council met in small groups and in the context of the TAC and project review subcommittee meetings to identify opportunities for short- and long-term partnerships within the watershed.

13-4 DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A "disadvantaged community" is defined by the State of California as a community with an annual median household income (MHI) that is less than 80% of the statewide MHI (CA Water Code, Section 79505.5[a]). Census data from 2000 were collected and reviewed to identify any disadvantaged communities in the region. The 2000 State MHI was \$47,493; therefore, communities with an average MHI of \$37,994 are considered disadvantaged communities. Based on the 2000 census data, none of the Tomales Bay communities are considered disadvantaged communities under this definition (see Appendix C).

However, it is estimated that up to 15.9% of families in the Tomales Bay watershed are below U.S. poverty levels (Tomales Bay Watershed Council, June 2006). The majority of these families reside in areas outside of the settled areas of West Marin (see Figure 21-*Percent of Families Below Poverty Line*). Although these communities are not disadvantaged according to the State definition, one of the primary goals of the Council is to engage and include these "locally-defined" disadvantaged communities through outreach activities.

In addition, the Tomales Bay ICWMP planning efforts seek to ensure that environmental justice concerns in general are addressed. Pursuant to State law, this involves the "fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and income with respect to development, adoption and implementation of environmental laws, regulations and policies (Government Code section 650401(c)). The Latino Community is considered a local environmental justice (EJ) focus.

The Latino community is extremely diverse; it is comprised of undocumented immigrants, documented immigrants, naturalized citizens, first-generation immigrants, as well as Latinos whose family settled region prior to the 1800s. According to the 2000 census, Latinos represent about 19 percent of West Marin's total population – 8 percentage points higher than the countywide Latino population. In contrast, Latinos make up 32.4 percent of the state's population. Twenty-eight percent of Marshall's population is Latino – just ahead of Inverness (including the northwestern National Seashore), with Latinos representing 27 percent of the population. Other towns with high Latino populations include Olema (27 percent), Nicasio (13 percent), Tomales (10 percent), and the Point Reyes Station-Inverness Park area (9 percent).

The local Latino community was comprised of Mexican immigrants who earned their living as farm and dairy workers within the watershed, becoming the backbone of the dairy industry in this Marin County. Many of the older generation of Latino residents are less educated than the subsequent generations who have gone through the local school system and have found work outside of the ranches, working in other areas of interest throughout the County and beyond. While Spanish is the dominant language within this demographic group, by no means are all local ethnic Latinos Spanish-speaking. Currently, Latinos' predominant professions are construction, landscaping and service industries, however, they are increasingly found in professional fields, i.e. administrative positions in business and education. Similarly, home ownership among Marin's Latino population is low, but increasing.

Both the disadvantaged and Latino communities of the region experience the same water related issues and needs as the rest of the community. The rural disadvantaged and Latino communities in the region experience water supply problems because they are either outside the service area of local water agencies and, thereby, dependent on wells, or experience water distribution problems due to aging infrastructure. Those residents who rely on wells experience localized water quality issues that result from contamination by bacteria or metals. Statistical documentation of constituency-specific water related needs is unavailable. Virtually all of West Marin is dependent upon onsite wastewater disposal systems (septic systems). The lack of water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure throughout the rural portions of the county will continue to be an issue.

The goals of the outreach program for both disadvantaged and EJ communities are the same. As previously mentioned, the TBWC made outreach to these communities from the inception of the ICWMP process, during plan development, and have determined to continue such efforts during plan implementation. The initial approach of the TBWC's outreach consisted of four goals: (1) to educate local residents on watershed-related issues and gain insight into projects that would address local concerns; (2) create relationships with constituencies to support ongoing participation in plan development and refinement; (3) recruit participants and members for the TBWC from these communities; and (4) provide opportunities for participation to community members without the time and/or interest to attend TBWC meetings.

In the Tomales Bay plan area, it rapidly became apparent that both the disadvantaged and EJ constituencies were geographically dispersed (and therefore experienced long distances between meeting venues and their residence), did not have formal community representation, lacked staff and/or financial resource to participate in an ongoing process, and were uncertain of how water

management related directly to their constituency concerns. As a consequence, it became difficult for the TBWC to achieve their implementation goals through traditional methods of public involvement (i.e.: public meetings and newsletters).

Therefore, the TBWC adapted its approach and developed an alternative strategy for outreach. In October of 2006, discussions began to determine the best way to involve the Latino community of the Tomales Bay Watershed in the ICWMP process. A strategy was developed and presented to the TAC for consideration. This strategy was developed in part based on conversations with staff of organizations that are external to the ICWMP process, which specialize in diversity consulting (i.e., The Institute for Conservation Leadership in Washington, DC and Visions, Inc. of Arlington, MA). The strategy involves the following components: identification of local representatives, direct personal contact with those representatives, briefings and relationship building activities, and other similar tasks.

The strategy also involves “taking the process to the community” instead of asking the community to come to the process. In other words, rather than design a process and impose it on the local community, the decision was made to ask community leaders within the Latino community to design their own process to involve their community in the ICWMP process. A meeting was convened to solicit input from leaders in the West Marin Latino Community, with a goal to develop the most suitable outreach for the local Latino community on watershed issues. This group determined that education would be an initial requirement prior to community involvement.

The product of this collaboration by the TBWC and local Latino leaders was the Latino Outreach Project. The goals of the project were to:

1. raise awareness of watershed issues among the Spanish-speaking population,
2. determine what future activities might be undertaken to build ownership of the watershed within the Latino community,
3. determine how to communicate the Latino concerns about watershed issues to decision-makers,
4. inform the Latino community about the development of project and implementation priorities within the watershed,
5. provide direct outreach to a constituency that otherwise would be excluded from the local decision-making about watershed management, and
6. raise awareness among the school-age community about just what a watershed is, what their place in the watershed is, how their behaviors can affect the watershed, and what actions they can take to be good citizens of the watershed.

As a result of the coordination meeting, a number of Latino outreach activities were considered and selected including a church-related outreach. The event was advertised on a local Spanish speaking radio show and on flyers at the Church and windows of local businesses. After mass, parishioners were invited outside the church to watch *Madre Tierra Solo Hay Una* (*There is only one Mother Earth*). After the film, TBWC president, Carlos Porrata, led a discussion about water management, avenues

for watershed activism, and the role that individuals can play in water quality. Because of the church-related outreach, several follow-up actions have been planned by Latino community leaders including an educational program for the workers of a Latino businessman's landscape company.

In addition to the church-related outreach, the TBWC identified the importance of developing educational programs. Environmental stewardship is not always the highest priority within disadvantaged communities; however environmental education in local schools has demonstrably affected the stewardship values of school-aged children. Education to help citizens understand the role they can play in water-supply, water quality, and environmental habitat and restoration will continue to be a plan priority. Educational outreach plans include: helping teachers expand school curriculum, school-based art projects, community-wide contests, and library-based outreach.

Working through previously established relationships, the Council will provide stipends to ensure participation and attendance, direct technical assistance to build capacity for participation within targeted communities, informal "at-home" meeting opportunities to facilitate wider participation, distribution of materials at public gathering points and through the mail, and identification of partners with whom to collaborate in project development. On-going outreach will be designed to take these factors into account.

13-5 POTENTIAL OBSTACLES TO PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Obstacles to implementation of the Plan primarily include availability of funding, durability of consensus and continued stakeholder participation. Most of the TBWC partners do not have the financial resources to implement the projects they have identified as important for the plan area. This situation is unlikely to change in the near future. Thus, the availability of funding will continue to be a limitation to plan implementation.

During the ranking and prioritization of the projects the TBWC members showed themselves to be remarkably altruistic. Many of the project proponents willingly moved their projects out of contention for Prop 50 funding under the assumption that their projects would be eligible or more competitive for funding under Prop 84. They also moved up projects for funding consideration that might have a lesser ability to compete under Prop 84. This focus on the plan as a vehicle for funding may contribute to problems later if high priority projects do not get funded while lower priority projects do get funded. Implementation of the Plan will depend on all stakeholders continuing to pursue project funding regardless of the availability of state bond funds. This competition for funding has already been identified as an obstacle for plan implementation.

Some of the entities in the TBWC are participating directly because of the funding requirements of Prop 50. It is not yet clear whether the Boards of these organizations will want to continue their association with the TBWC after Prop 50 is complete. If these groups were to separate from the Council, the ongoing implementation effort could suffer as regular communication and direct conversation diminish.

Potential conflicts could arise in the future over water supply and/or as a result of global climate change. Potential conflicts between land uses, water supply and environmental protection could arise in the future that may result in conflicts over funding needs, consensus and continued stakeholder participation. Unresolved questions and issues raised during the ICWMP process are addressed in Chapter 3. With regard to septic systems, there has been an underlying significant struggle regarding how to resolve water quality issues without raising growth and development concerns. Additionally, two other significant impediments are (1) the lack of available public financial assistance to septic system owners to fund replacement or repair systems and (2) regulatory resistance to and/or prohibition of demonstrated successful alternative technologies as options for property owners to repair/replace existing systems.



- Legend**
- Study Area Boundary
 - ▒ Areas of Special Biological Significance
- Percent of Families Below the Poverty Level**
- ▒ 4.3%
 - ▒ 5.5%
 - ▒ 5.6%
 - ▒ 6.7%
 - ▒ 12.6% - 15.9%



TOMALES BAY INTEGRATED COASTAL WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN
Figure 21. Percent of Families Below Poverty Line