

SAWPA Proposal to Conduct

Santa Ana Watershed

Regional Water Quality Outreach Program

Mission and Goals:

To create a collaborative strategy by which a single unified voice could be established to educate the public about water quality and counter false accusations regarding water quality, and to address these issues proactively with fact-based information.

- Increase public's knowledge that their water is healthy and safe based on the efforts to maintain excellent water quality (e.g. testing, compliance with federal and state guidelines, health risks or issues, sources of contaminants, treatment, etc.)
- Communicate regional water quality information early and often, leaving little gap for misinformation
- Develop media's knowledge of water quality issues to improve accuracy of reportage
- Build, through information, public skepticism regarding dubious claims of unreliable organizations
- Reaffirm safety of local water, which meets current state and national standards
- Foster increased trust of water agencies, both among media sources and general consumers, rate payers and stakeholders
- Serve as a third-party, credible voice on water quality
- Train media and public to rely on this entity and local water agencies for accurate information regarding their water supply
- Ensure communications tools and outreach is interactive among stakeholders, media, etc.

Benefits to SAWPA member agencies and participants

- Centralized and consistent messaging
- Collation and distribution of science based information
- Unified media response
- Reduced labor and PR efforts by individual agencies to counter dubious claims and misinformation
- Create communication and outreach tools that can be linked to participating agencies websites

Scope of Work Revision

Assign SAWPA as manager of project development with full authorization to manage the Regional Water Quality Outreach Program.

Request that \$66,000 collected from the Regional Water Quality Outreach Committee original intended to be used for operation and maintenance of developed product be used instead to develop the product.

Obtain consultant support for services oriented in social media and communication and less on science.

Seek authorization of new consultant contract at SAWPA Commission meeting.

Schedule quarterly meetings with consultant, water agency PIOs and SAWPA.

Obtain new time frame estimate of project completion.

Suggested Main Scope Revisions:

Direct remaining consultant hours to focus outreach material on safety of potable water supplies rather than on detailed technical analysis of specific water quality constituents.

Modify draft website or create new SAWPA webpage on SAWPA website for program. Orient website or webpage for lay public rather than info website for water professionals. Incorporate comments from Regional Water Quality Outreach Committee meeting.

Direct consultant to provide citations of potable water safety based on involvement of universities in watershed.

Include social media functions to enhance outreach.

Define labor and funding requirements to operate and maintain Outreach Program and web functions.