EQUITABLE INTEGRATION of WATER & LAND USE

OVERVIEW

The Local Government Commission is conducting a situation analysis of the equitable integration of water and land use, on behalf of the Community Foundation Water Initiative, a cohort of 5 regional community foundations working together to address water issues in California. We're hoping to:

- Evaluate the extent to which water and land use are currently integrated across the state;
- Identify opportunities to improve integration; and
- Recommend ways for community foundations to support these efforts.

INTENT

LGC seeks to identify strategies for community foundations and other local leaders to leverage the multiple benefits of an integrated, collaborative planning approach to natural resources management. We will identify existing barriers, best practices, and opportunities for improving equitable integration in the San Diego, Los Angeles, Central Valley, Silicon Valley and San Francisco regions, with special emphasis on projects that assist low income populations and other communities facing disadvantages.

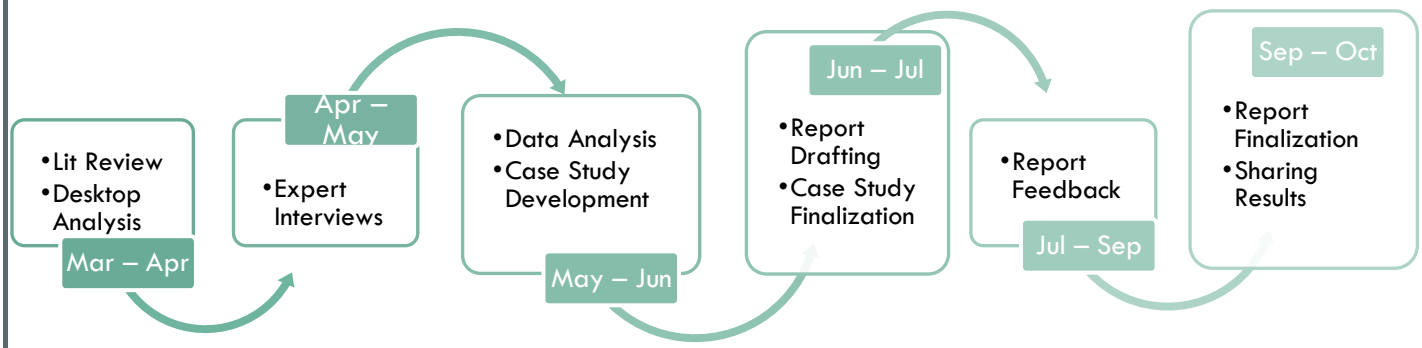
The two major components of this project are:

(a) a desktop review of relevant planning documents and case studies in each of the five regions; and

(b) collecting insights about water and land use integration directly from experts in both the water and land use sectors. The project will review the most important planning documents and relevant decision-making tools used in each sector to evaluate the barriers and opportunities for equitable and sustainable integration.

LGC's ultimate goal is to establishing integrated water and land use planning as the norm across California. This project provide an opportunity to make tangible progress toward that goal.

TIMELINE



Local Government Commission
Leaders for Livable Communities

APPROACH

The disconnect between water resources management and land use planning is well documented[1]. The past half-century of segregated planning and management efforts have led to innumerable negative impacts to our natural resources, community health, social equity, and overall resilience in the face of climate change.

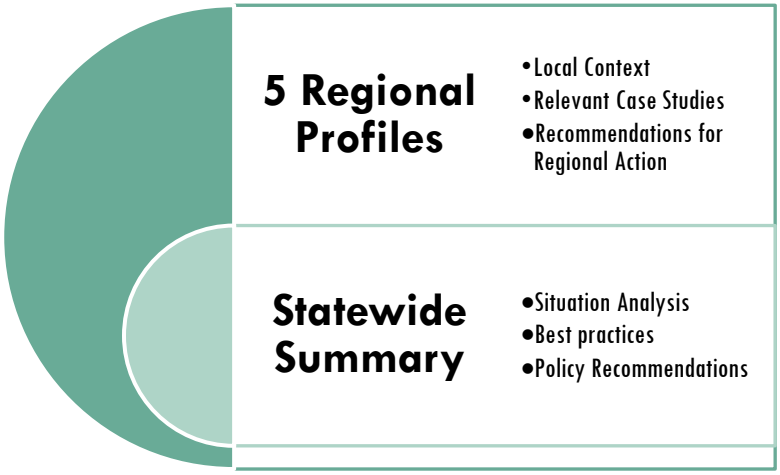
The unprecedented severity of California's recent drought underscores the importance of water to our state's viability. But California communities face many water management challenges: land use planning, groundwater recharge, flood mitigation, and supply and demand challenges must be addressed in unison for California to be resilient against future climate-related impacts. Bridging the disconnect between land use planning and water resource management presents a significant challenge for sustainable groundwater management.

LGC seeks to identify strategies for community foundations and other local leaders to leverage the multiple benefits of an integrated, collaborative planning approach. This situational analysis and strategy development will position local community foundations to ignite integration of watershed-scale land use planning and water management. By advocating for and investing in efforts to effectively integrate water management and land use planning, local community foundations will help make California's communities more equitable and resilient.[2]

OUTCOMES

The benefits of integration are as numerous as the negative impacts of the existing, fragmented approach. These include improved cost effectiveness and outcomes for planning and management of water quality and supply, and better distribution of water between ecosystem and consumptive uses.[3] Integration maximizes "economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems."[4]

Beyond conducting a situational analysis and providing recommendations to the CFWI, our ultimate goal is to establish integrated water and land use planning as the norm across California. This project will create a bridge between regional situation analyses, best practice case studies, and scaling up integration to statewide action. By identifying the most ambitious and achievable strategies for improving water and land use integration, we can help advance the status of both best practice and implementation.



[1] *(see, e.g., Choy 2014, Folke et. al. 2005)*
[2] *(LGC 1991, 2007)*
[3] *(Najjar & Collier, 2011)*
[4] *[UNEP-DHI Centre for Water and Environment, Integrated Water Resources Management in Action, 2009]*