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MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

FROM: John Brodie, Water Resource Programs Manager
Joe McGahan, Regional Drainage/Westside Watershed Coalition Coordinator

DATE: December 9, 2021

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for November 2021

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for November 2021 regarding specified¹ Water Authority activities not separately addressed on the Board meeting agenda.

1. Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Activity Summary

San Joaquin River Funding Area (SJRFA)

An amended Special Project Agreement (SPA) and corresponding Task Order (TO) for administration of the Proposition 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation grant were executed for both the SJRFA and Tulare-Kern Funding Area (TKFA) projects in the Westside-San Joaquin (WSJ) IRWM Region. The amendments were needed to cover the costs of un-scoped activities requested by SPA participants, plus the unanticipated completion this fiscal year for one project. Administered through SLDMWA, the grant includes funding for four projects within the SJRFA and one project within the TKFA.

Tulare-Kern Funding Area (TKFA)

The City of Huron Groundwater Supply Well and Recharge Project, supported by funding through the Proposition 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation grant, will be completed before the end of this fiscal year. The supply well will reduce the need for Huron, a designated disadvantaged community (DAC), to purchase water. It will help meet more than 50% of the community's drinking water demands.

General Westside-San Joaquin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP)

The WSJ IRWM Region's Technical Advisory Committee is ranking projects for inclusion in the Proposition 1 Round 2 IRWM Grant Funding. DWR anticipates a March 2022 deadline for submission of applications. A full IRWM Activity Agreement member meeting will be held later this month to review and approve the TAC rankings and discuss upcoming IRWM activities.

¹ For the sake of completeness, this includes those Activity Agreements that have been approved by the Board of Directors, but not yet signed by all interested members and/or participants (i.e., the Los Vaqueros Expansion Project Activity Agreement, the Exchange Contractors 2019-2023 Transfer Program Activity Agreement, and the Westside-San Joaquin Integrated Regional Water Management Activity Agreement).

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Staff has begun work on an annual report for the WSJ IRWM Region. The report will highlight activities during the 2021 water year.

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

Northern and Central Delta-Mendota Regions

The Northern and Central Management Committees held their regular joint meeting in mid-November. The Committees are in the process of prioritizing activities and projects for an anticipated \$7.6 million of SGMA Round 1 Implementation funding targeted for critically overdrafted subbasins, including the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.

The Central Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) met in mid-November to adopt a Conflict of Interest code.

General SGMA Activities

The Subbasin's GSP Group representatives are considering projects and activities to submit for the upcoming SGMA Round 1 Implementation funding opportunity. The funds are from SB 170 and will be administered by DWR. Allowable grant funded activities include projects and preparing responses to DWR comments on the Subbasin's GSPs. DWR has tentatively said it will release comments on all critically overdrafted subbasins by mid-December, and anticipates a January 31, 2022 deadline for applications for the SGMA Round 1 Implementation funding. The Subbasin will submit a single application for this opportunity.

The Subbasin received approval for an extension of Facilitation Support Services (FSS) through DWR for Interbasin Coordination with the Chowchilla, Madera, and Merced subbasins. Once completed, the latest amendment will extend the agreement to June 30, 2022. As new GSPs are submitted, the potential exists for Interbasin Coordination with other neighboring subbasins including Tracy, Turlock, and East Stanislaus.

Work is in the final stages for the Subbasin's Proposition 68 Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) grant. Both a well census and inventory project and a Subbasin-wide subsidence characterization and project feasibility study will be completed by the end of the fiscal year. The consultant conducting the Delta-Mendota Subbasin Subsidence Characterization and Project Feasibility Study will hold the second of a possible three presentations to a special Technical Working Group meeting in January. Committee members provided input on determinations from the preliminary data analysis.

The Coordination Committee has scheduled a half-day workshop on January 6, 2022 to discuss pending items including comments from DWR on the Subbasin's GSPs. DWR has said it plans to release initial assessments of all critically overdrafted subbasins by mid-December. These assessments will allow subbasins to work with DWR prior to administrative determinations that will be issued January 31, 2022 and trigger a six-month response deadline from any GSPs deemed "inadequate."

All GSAs and member agencies are working with staff to upload Fall water level monitoring results to DWR's SGMA Portal before the January 1, 2022 deadline. Staff is also working with GSAs to

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complete volumetric reporting information as part of the Subbasin's Annual Report information. The SGMA Annual Report is due April 1, 2022.

Staff participated in virtual conferences and webinars including: California-European Union-Australia workshop on SGMA Implementation; the IRWM Summit on Climate Science and Resilience; the Department of Conservation's Land Repurposing Program overview; and, the fourth in a series of Webinars by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Social Justice in Flood Risk Management.

3. Drainage Activity Summary

Grassland Basin Drainage Management Steering Committee Activity Summary

Mud Slough Restoration Project: The project is to restore Mud Slough (north) flows to the Newman Lake north of Highway 140 and to remove structures within the state's China Island Refuge. The CEQA Initial Study was circulated for public comment on June, 30, 2021 and comments were due on July 30, 2021. Comments were received from the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and a group of 18 parties comprised of the Planning and Conservation League and others. Consultants have reviewed the comments. The Grassland Basin Drainers Steering Committee reviewed the comments and responses on November 19, 2021 and, recommended adoption of the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration and Project Approval by the Authority at the December 9, 2021 meeting.

Threat to Fish Report: The GBD were required to submit a report on July 31, 2021 under Section 13267 of the California Water Code that would include all data available on fish tissue sampling since the beginning of the Grassland Bypass Project since 1996. Comments were received by the Regional Board and responses are being prepared.

Other ongoing activities: Continue to review GBD invoices, prepare annual monitoring reports, support for ongoing litigation and data management and management of the Third Party Group for the Grassland Drainage Area Coalition to implement the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Work includes participation in activities for groundwater protection values. Additionally, the program updated the Regional Board on the status of the GBP at the December 9, 2021 Board workshop and is working with the subcommittee overseeing expenditure of the supplemental mitigation fund.

San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority Activity Summary

Continue management of the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition to comply with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Follow up calls and emails were answered to assist farmers in completing their paperwork requirements. Manage field monitoring program and provide update of the management plan to the Regional Board. Review invoices from consultants and prepare letters to admin staff. Continue to update membership database. Organize and make presentation to outreach meetings for surface and groundwater management plan. Assist grower members in completing the required reporting forms and self-certification requirements. Enter farmer evaluation and nitrogen summary reports into coalition database.

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Participate in group conference calls regarding surface and groundwater management plans, groundwater protection formulas and the CVSalts prioritization and optimization studies. Participate in Central Valley Groundwater Monitoring Collaborative conference calls. Participate in Regional Board quarterly conference calls.

Begin planning for development of Management Zone implementation. Manage ongoing monitoring. Revise the QAPP for the monitoring program.

Management continued for the Prop 84 Real Time Management Program Grant for compliance with the San Joaquin River Salt and Boron TMDL. Follow up and direct field work in northerly stations. Organize and lead September SJVDA Board meeting.

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Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition
Paperwork Status Update for Del Puerto WD & Oak Flat WD as of 12/11/2021

<u>Survey Type</u>	<u>recvd</u>	<u>total</u>	<u>pct recvd</u>
Farm Evaluation	120	128	94%
INMPSR	120	127	94%
Overall compliance	124	133	93%

IDNo	Member Name	SurveyType	2020 FE/MWE	2020 INMPSR	paperwork
25017A	Oliveira, Sadie 2006 Revocable Trust	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	not recvd	both forms missing
25028B	Thoming Farms, LLC	Farm Evaluation	recvd	not recvd	INMPSR Missing
25035A	Jag Farm Management, Inc.	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	recvd	FE Missing
25058A	Apna Farms	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	not recvd	both forms missing
25073A	JKB Development, Inc.	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	not recvd	both forms missing
25105A	E & C Farms, LLC c/o Justin Reeves	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	recvd	FE Missing
25119A	Amaravati Farms, LLC	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	recvd	FE Missing
25145A	NISRA Farms, LLC	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	not recvd	both forms missing
25156A	La Fortaleza LLC	Farm Evaluation	not recvd	not recvd	both forms missing
25159A	Escobar Properties LLC et al	Farm Evaluation	recvd	not recvd	INMPSR Missing

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT OFFICE

715 P Street | Sacramento, CA 95814 | P.O. Box 942836 | Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

December 9, 2021

John Brodie, Point of Contact
Delta-Mendota Subbasin
842 6th Street
Los Banos, CA 93635

RE: Delta-Mendota Subbasin - 2020 Groundwater Sustainability Plans

Dear John Brodie,

As the Point of Contact responsible for communication among the various Plan Managers within the Delta-Mendota Subbasin (Subbasin), the Department of Water Resources (Department) is contacting you to thank you for submitting your groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) for evaluation and assessment as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Throughout the Subbasin, six separate GSPs were prepared by 23 groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) pursuant to a required coordination agreement. Collectively, the six GSPs and the coordination agreement will, for discussion and evaluation purposes, be treated and referred to as the Plan for the Subbasin. This letter provides a preliminary update of the Department's evaluation and assessment of the Plan.

Department staff have substantially completed a review of the six GSPs covering the Subbasin and the materials considered to be part of the coordination agreement. While this letter is not a final determination, Department staff have identified several deficiencies which will preclude the Department's approval of your Plan. The final determination and assessment will be provided to you and posted to the SGMA Portal no later than January 23, 2022. The assessment will describe the deficiencies precluding approval and determine that the Plan is incomplete. The deficiencies described in the forthcoming official written assessment will have accompanying corrective actions that the GSAs must address within 180 days from issuance.

Ahead of receiving the final determination and assessment for your Subbasin, we encourage your GSAs to review the deficiencies associated with the plans prepared for other subbasins in the San Joaquin Valley, which are documented in previously issued letters; the letters are posted to the SGMA Portal.¹ Deficiencies for your Subbasin will include similar themes, and may include other items, such as deficiencies related to coordination among the GSPs. The Department recommends that you begin to coordinate with your Subbasin's GSAs, their governing boards, applicable technical advisory committees, and interested parties to discuss tentative approaches to addressing deficiencies.

Once the Department issues the official written assessment, your Subbasin will have the opportunity to resubmit materials to address the deficiencies within 180 days. After the Department reviews those materials, the Plan could be subsequently approved if the GSAs have taken corrective actions to sufficiently address the deficiencies identified. Alternatively, after consultation with the State Water Resources Control Board, the Department could determine the Plan to be inadequate if the GSAs have not taken sufficient actions to correct the deficiencies. The inadequate determination would provide an opportunity to develop a Plan that satisfies the requirements of SGMA while under the oversight of the State Water Resource

¹ <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsp/status>

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Control Board until Plan implementation can return to local control.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Sustainable Groundwater Management Office staff by emailing sgmps@water.ca.gov. We look forward to scheduling a meeting with you once the final determination and assessment are posted in late January.

Thank you,

Paul Gosselin

Paul Gosselin
Deputy Director of Sustainable Groundwater Management

10 December 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: John Brodie, San Luis Delta-Mendota Water Authority (SLDWMA)
Claire Howard, SLDWMA

From: Anona Dutton, EKI Environment & Water, Inc. (EKI)

Subject: Planning for Anticipated Comments from Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Northern & Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)
(EKI C00041.01)

On 9 December 2021, DWR issued a collective assessment letter to the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSP Groups regarding the six submitted GSPs. The DWR letter stated that the submitted GSPs for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin were incomplete and contained deficiencies precluding their approval by DWR. The DWR letter did not identify specific deficiencies, but noted that its previously issued comment letters for other subbasins in the San Joaquin Valley had identified deficiencies in the GSPs which may be informative and relevant for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSP groups.

Over the past several months, as DWR has issued comment letters regarding the GSPs submitted for subbasins across California, EKI has provided SLDWMA with summaries of DWR's findings and comments. EKI's objective was to keep SLDWMA apprised of potential forthcoming comments and assessments on the Northern & Central Region GSP. Our previously provided summaries are compiled and attached as listed below.

- Tabular Summary prepared by EKI Regarding Comments from DWR and the State Water Resources Control Board dated December 2021. Note that an earlier version of this table was prepared and provided by EKI prior to issuance of DWR letters on 9 December 2021. The attached table incorporates the most recent DWR letters. Also attached is a figure prepared by EKI which illustrates the subbasins in California for which DWR has issued assessments of the submitted GSPs.
- Email Summary from EKI dated 7 December 2021 providing additional summary of the key issues and potential concerns for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.
- Email Summary from EKI dated 19 November 2021 EKI summarizing DWR comments based upon DWR letters issued on 18 November 2021 for eight additional GSPs.
- EKI memo titled "Key Excerpts from SWRCB August 2021 Comment Letters Key Excerpts from SWRCB's August 2021 GSP Comment Letters in comparison to DWR's 3 June 2021 GSP Determination and Notification Letters, and Suggested Clarifications for the Northern & Central Delta-Mendota Region GSP". A copy of this memo was included in the Meeting Materials for the Northern & Central Management Committee Meeting on 23 September 2021.

Summary of DWR and SWRCB Review Letters on GSPs								
Basin	DWR Basin ID (#)	GSAs (#)	GSPs (#)	Date	SWRCB (a) Identified Deficiencies	Date	Status	DWR (b) Basis for Consultation
Cuyama Valley	3-013	1	1	N/A	N/A	6/3/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SMC •Use of groundwater levels as proxy for ICSW •Water quality •Mitigation of overdraft conditions
Paso Robles Area	3-004.06	4	1	N/A	N/A	6/3/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Groundwater levels SMC •ICSW SMC
180/400 Foot Aquifer	3-004.01	4	1	N/A	N/A	6/3/2021	Approved	N/A
Santa Cruz Mid-County	3-001	1	1	N/A	N/A	6/3/2021	Approved	N/A
Tulare Lake	5-022.12	5	1	8/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Groundwater Levels SMC •Water budget •Water quality •Land subsidence •ICSW •Descriptions and identification of water rights needed for PMAs •Stakeholder involvement and impacts to beneficial users 	12/9/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Deficiencies similar to those of other San Joaquin Valley subbasins.
Westside	5-022.09	2	1	N/A	N/A	11/18/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Land subsidence SMC •Groundwater levels SMC •Water Quality SMC
Chowchilla	5-022.05	4	1	8/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Groundwater Levels SMC •Water quality •Identification of water rights needed for PMAs •Stakeholder involvement and impacts to beneficial users 	11/18/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Land subsidence SMC •Groundwater levels SMC •Identification of ICSW
Merced	5-022.04	3	1	8/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Groundwater Levels SMC •Water quality •Identification of ICSW and SMCs •Identification of water rights needed for PMAs •Water budget •Stakeholder involvement 	11/18/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Definition of URs (requirement of two consecutive dry years) •Groundwater levels SMC •Land subsidence SMC

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Summary of DWR and SWRCB Review Letters on GSPs								
Basin	DWR Basin ID (#)	GSAs (#)	GSPs (#)	Date	SWRCB (a) Identified Deficiencies	Date	Status	DWR (b) Basis for Consultation
Eastern San Joaquin	5-022.01	16	1	8/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Groundwater Levels SMC •ICSW •Water budget •Identification of water rights needed for PMAs •Stakeholder involvement and impacts to beneficial users 	11/18/2021	Initiated Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Definition of URs (requirement of two consecutive dry years) •Use of groundwater levels as proxy for ICSW
South Yuba	5-021.61	1	1 (c)	8/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identification of GDEs •Use of groundwater levels as proxy for ICSW 	11/18/2021	Approved	N/A
North Yuba	5-021.60	3	1 (c)	8/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identification of GDEs •Use of groundwater levels as proxy for ICSW 	11/18/2021	Approved	N/A
Pleasant Valley	4-006	3	1	N/A	N/A	11/18/2021	Approved	N/A
Oxnard	4-004.02	3	1	N/A	N/A	11/18/2021	Approved	N/A
Kaweah	5-022.11	4	3	11/19/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Coordination between GSPs for the Basin •Groundwater Levels SMC •Water quality •Identification of ICSW •Identification of water rights needed for PMAs •Stakeholder involvement and impacts to beneficial users 	12/9/2021	Initiated Consultation	•Deficiencies similar to those of other San Joaquin Valley subbasins.
Kings	5-022.08	8	7	11/19/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Coordination between GSPs for the Basin •Groundwater Levels SMC •Water quality •ICSW SMC •Identification of GSPs •Identification of water rights needed for PMAs •Stakeholder involvement and impacts to beneficial users 	12/9/2021	Initiated Consultation	•Deficiencies similar to those of other San Joaquin Valley subbasins.
Delta-Mendota	5-022.07	23	6	N/A	N/A	12/9/2021	Initiated Consultation	•Deficiencies similar to those of other San Joaquin Valley subbasins.

Agenda Item 8 - DWR Comments Reference Material for NCDM GSP from EKI

Summary of DWR and SWRCB Review Letters on GSPs								
Basin	DWR Basin ID (#)	GSAs (#)	GSPs (#)	SWRCB (a)			DWR (b)	
				Date	Identified Deficiencies	Date	Status	Basis for Consultation
Tule	5-022.13	7	6	N/A	N/A	12/9/2021	Initiated Consultation	•Deficiencies similar to those of other San Joaquin Valley subbasins.
Kern County	5-022.14	14	5	N/A	N/A	12/9/2021	Initiated Consultation	•Deficiencies similar to those of other San Joaquin Valley subbasins.

Notes:

- (a) SWRCB sent comment letters to DWR identifying potential deficiencies in GSPs for which DWR had not yet provided a determination.
- (b) DWR issued either a determination letter that approved the GSP or a notification letter identifying deficiencies and initiating consultation with the GSAs.
- (c) The North Yuba and South Yuba Subbasins were included together in one GSP as the "Yuba Subbasins".

Abbreviations:

DWR = California Department of Water Resources
 GDE = Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem
 GSA = Groundwater Sustainability Agency
 GSP = Groundwater Sustainability Plan
 ICSW = Interconnected Surface Water
 N/A = Not Applicable

PMA = Projects and Management Actions
 SMC = Sustainable Management Criteria
 SWRCB = State Water Resources Control Board
 UR = Undesirable Results

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