



## MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

FROM: Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director  
Joe McGahan, Regional Drainage/Westside Watershed Coalition Coordinator

DATE: November 5, 2020

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for October 2020

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This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for October 2020 regarding specified<sup>1</sup> 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)*

The Woodard & Curran grant administration team coordinated with DWR this month to update the Westside-San Joaquin IRWM Grant Agreement for the Region's projects funded through the Proposition 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation grant. This grant agreement and the associated grant administration combine projects in the Westside-San Joaquin IRWM Region from both the San Joaquin River Funding Area (SJRFA) and the Tulare Kern Funding Area (TKFA). The Woodard & Curran team coordinated with the SJRFA local project sponsors to incorporate additional project details into the grant agreement revisions.

SLDMWA staff have met with disadvantaged community (DAC) representatives to consider potential projects for funding currently available through the SJRFA disadvantaged community involvement program (DACIP). This funding is for Phase 2 of the DACIP, which focuses on projects for DAC technical assistance and capacity building. Once project eligibility is confirmed, SLDMWA staff will work with Contra Costa Water District, the grantee for the SJRFA DACIP efforts, to provide necessary information and coordinate next steps.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

*Tulare-Kern Funding Area (TKFA)*

The Woodard & Curran team coordinated with the City of Huron representatives to compile necessary information to share with DWR and incorporate into the updated Westside-San Joaquin IRWM Region Grant Agreement for the Proposition 1 Round 1 funding.

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

SLDMWA staff have started initial budget development for Fiscal Year 2022. A meeting will be scheduled in December to seek input and approval on the Fiscal Year 2022 budget from the IRWM Working Group members.

Terra Linda Mutual Water Company, an IRWM Memoranda of Agreement (IRWM-MOA) participant to the Westside-San Joaquin IRWM Activity Agreement, has initiated, but not yet completed outreach to the other IRWM Activity Agreement members and IRWM-MOA participants to indicate its intent to withdraw from the Activity Agreement. SLDMWA staff will coordinate next steps with the Activity Agreement members and participants as needed.

**2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary**

**Northern and Central Delta-Mendota Regions**

GSAs in the Northern and Central Delta-Mendota Regions completed water quality and seasonal low water level monitoring this month. The water quality sampling window was extended this year due to challenges with coordinating and collecting samples at several locations resulting from COVID-19 impacts. Seasonal low groundwater levels were collected in the September 1 – October 31 monitoring window.

The Northern and Central Delta-Mendota Regions' consultant teams and SLDMWA staff held meetings with GSA representatives this month to confirm monitoring and implementation efforts. These meetings also provided an opportunity for GSA representatives to consider revisions to the Northern and Central Regions' representative monitoring network, which will be described in the Water Year 2020 Annual Report. Recent and upcoming GSA Tracking Tools were also discussed during these meetings. This month the Woodard & Curran team developed the Second Quarter Progress Report, which provides an overview of the Northern and Central Regions' efforts completed July – September.

The Northern and Central Regions' well census and inventory project kicked off during the October Management Committees meeting. This project is led by a team from Provost & Pritchard and Kenneth D. Schmidt and Associates. A Northern and Central Technical Working Group meeting will be held in early November to seek data and well information from each GSA. These efforts are funded in part through the Subbasin's Proposition 68 Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) grant.

### **General SGMA Activities**

The Subbasin's GSP Groups collected seasonal low groundwater level data for representative monitoring sites during the September 1 – October 31 monitoring window. These data will be compiled and reviewed for inclusion in the Subbasin's data management system (DMS), DWR's Monitoring Network Module (MNM), and incorporated into the Subbasin's Water Year 2020 Annual Report. Challenges or inability to collect monitoring data will be described in the Annual Report along with any planned revisions to the representative monitoring network. The Water Year 2020 Annual Report will be submitted to DWR by April 1, 2021.

The Subbasin submitted an application to the Department of Conservation for the Watershed Coordinator Program (WCP) grant. SLDMWA staff coordinated with the EKI and Woodard & Curran consultant teams to develop this grant application. Subbasin GSA representatives provided partner letters expressing their support of the Subbasin's application. The Subbasin also submitted its application in conjunction with the San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint, Madera County and Westside GSA WCP applications. This cooperative approach will bolster the applications during the review process. If awarded, the Delta-Mendota Subbasin's grant will provide funding support for a Subbasin coordinator role that will support ongoing monitoring, implementation, and Subbasin-wide and inter-basin coordination efforts.

The Subbasin's awarded Proposition 68 Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) grant provides funding for supplemental GSP development costs, Subbasin-wide well census and inventory, and subsidence characterization study projects. Each GSP group is completing a well census and inventory independently. The Subbasin is coordinating on the subsidence characterization study. SLDMWA and consultant staff met with state and federal agency representatives in late October to seek input on the Subbasin's approach for the subsidence characterization study. These representatives provided guidance for available or upcoming datasets that can be incorporated into the Subbasin's study. SLDMWA staff will coordinate future meetings with agency representatives and Subbasin Technical Working Group members to develop the study scope.

Another upcoming funding opportunity the Subbasin intends to pursue is the Proposition 68 Implementation grant. This will support up to \$5 million for implementation projects identified in the Subbasin's GSPs. Coordination Committee and Technical Working Group members reviewed potential projects for inclusion in the Subbasin's application. The Subbasin will continue to discuss these projects and the Subbasin's application development during November's Technical Working Group and Coordination Committee meetings.

The Subbasin's Facilitation Support Services (FSS) program provides support for inter-basin coordination efforts. The FSS program is led by a team from Stantec and is funded through a DWR grant. Coordination Committee representatives and SLDMWA staff have recently worked with the Stantec team to discuss past inter-basin coordination efforts and identify the Subbasin's

goals moving forward. FSS-supported inter-basin coordination will focus on neighboring Chowchilla, Merced, and Madera Subbasins. Meetings will begin in early 2021.

The latest edition of the quarterly Subbasin newsletter was shared this month with Coordination Committee members, GSA representatives, and interested parties. This edition provided a Subbasin-wide overview and GSP-specific updates on activities completed this summer (July, August, and September).

### **3. Drainage Activity Summary**

#### **Grassland Basin Drainage Management Steering Committee Activity Summary:**

Continued work on Drainage Management Plan due in December 2020.

Staff reviewed and prepared invoice letters to administrative staff and continued development of the new member MOU.

Organized meeting of local wetland managers regarding supplemental mitigation fund developed for the 2009 Use Agreement.

Coordinated work related to the agreement with Newman Land Company and State Fish and Wildlife for restoration of Mud Slough to conditions prior to the Grassland Bypass Project. Made edits to water rights memo and submit draft to Newman Land Company. Wetland impacts were calculated, maps prepared and mitigation requirements were determined. The hydrology report was modified with new operation description to offset mitigation requirements. Reviewed permit application status with permit consultant. Reviewed CEQA documents for cultural portion of Mud Slough Restoration Project.

Followed up on completion of the biological opinion for the 2009 Use Agreement and reviewed USBR documents.

Ongoing monitoring for discharges from the Grassland Bypass Project and data entry continued. Work to administer the Prop 84 grant for the Long-Term Storm Water Plan and reuse area upgrades continued. Monitoring management plan continued.

Activities also included management of the Third Party Group for the Grassland Drainage Area Coalition to implement the Irrigated Lands Program. Support was provided to farmers to complete their paperwork requirements. Reviewed draft revisions to groundwater management plan.

#### **San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority Activity Summary:**

Staff answered calls and emails to assist farmers in completing their paperwork requirements, and worked with the Regional Board to identify those who have not yet completed compliance

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paperwork. Data entry and field monitoring program continued. Review invoices from consultants and prepare letters to admin staff. Continue to update membership database. Prepare for and participate in October 6 SJVDA meeting. Review nitrogen balance power point and research paper. Participate in commodity group call on acceptable nitrogen application ranges. Review draft revisions to surface water quality and groundwater quality management plans. Review draft letters regarding drinking water wells that the Regional Board is sending out. Participate in northerly group management practices effectiveness program conference call. Respond to Regional Board questions on trend monitoring program.

Management continued for the Prop 84 Real Time Management Program Grant for compliance with the San Joaquin River Salt and Boron TMDL.