



MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

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

DATE: July 13, 2023

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for June 2023

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for June 2023 regarding specified¹ Water Authority activities not separately addressed on the Board meeting agenda.

1. Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Activity Summary

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

Projects funded by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Proposition 1, Round 1 IRWM Implementation Grant continue to move forward. Both the West Stanislaus Irrigation District Pumping Plant Modernization Project and the Central California Irrigation District's Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Project are progressing on schedule. The Westlands Water District's Broadview Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Project is also moving forward.

Staff is finalizing a Scope of Work for Self-Help Enterprises to update Community Needs Assessments previously conducted for the Westside San Joaquin IRWM Region. Separate assessments focused on severely disadvantaged communities in both the San Joaquin River and Tulare Lake Funding Areas were completed in 2020. Self-Help's update will seek to identify priority communities where drinking water conditions (accessibility, affordability, quality, and quantity) in the region can be improved.

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

Coordinated Activities

Local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies GSAs are meeting on an accelerated schedule to address what DWR called "deficiencies" in the Subbasin's six Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). DWR's "inadequate" determination for the Subbasin's Plans means the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will judge future efforts by the Subbasin to achieve "approved" Plans.

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).

A request for proposals was issued to select a consultant, firm, or team to consolidate the six GSPs into a single Plan for the Subbasin. A single consulting firm was selected to complete the GSP consolidation. The Subbasin Coordination Committee will work with the consultant to select a timetable for completion of the work. Staff is preparing an amended task order for rapid execution so momentum on addressing items identified by DWR can be maintained.

SWRCB staff at the June 21, 2023 State Water Board meeting released a draft timeline for conducting probationary hearings for Subbasins deemed inadequate by DWR. As of that meeting, there were six such Subbasins. State Water Board members will consider whether to accept its staff's recommendations. According to the draft schedule, the Delta-Mendota Subbasin will have a probationary hearing in September 2024 unless a consolidated GSP that sufficiently identifies deficiencies is adopted and submitted prior to that date. The first probationary hearing for a subbasin could be held as soon as December of this year if SWRCB members accepts the draft recommendations.

General SGMA Activities

Groundwater level data for the Delta-Mendota subbasin was submitted to DWR by the July 1, 2023 deadline. GSAs are now in the window for collecting water quality data.

3. Drainage Activity Summary

Grassland Basin Drainage Management Steering Committee Activity Summary

The Grassland Bypass Channel gates were closed on March 24th, ending the discharge of storm-induced drainage from the Grassland Drainage Area. Remaining drainage flows have been managed internally by the San Joaquin River Improvement Project since that time. No significant storms are forecasted and it is not anticipated the gates will be opened again in the near future.

GBP Activities

- Grassland Bypass Project Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): The 2019 Order requires an AMR be developed and submitted by April 30th. This report covers the 2022 calendar year and requires a detailed analysis and summary of all of the data collected at each of the monitoring sites. Regional Board staff responded with some technical questions which we are in the process of addressing. A revised AMR was prepared to address questions from the Regional Board, and submitted on June 14.
- General administration: Review and approve consultant billing. Field review of drainage conditions and correspondence with SJRIP manager.
- Mud Slough Restoration Project: The Water Authority adopted the CEQA for the project in December 2021. GBP management staff met with CDFW on May 30th to review their concerns and are working with stakeholders to resolve remaining issues. A second meeting with CDFW is planned for August 15.
- Grassland Water District Monitoring Wells: A total of 10 observation wells are planned to be installed to monitor groundwater levels and quality within the San Joaquin River Improvement Project and in a portion of Grassland Water District to the north. All 10 observation wells have been installed, with the last well completed in June. The GBD are working on developing a monitoring plan to measure groundwater levels and quality.

- Compliance Monitoring: Monitoring in compliance with the 2019 revised WDRs and 2019 Use Agreement is a continuous and daily effort. Regular flow, water quality and toxicity monitoring is required at eight locations at a frequency that varies from monthly to daily. Special monitoring for fish and invertebrate selenium levels has occurred annually, along with efforts to collect particulate samples for selenium analysis.
- Grassland Drainage Area Coalition: Work continues to provide coverage for farmers within the Grassland Drainage Area for the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Reporting forms were sent to farmer members in late 2022 for reporting 2022 nitrogen application.
- Proposition 84 Grant: Work is ongoing to support the Prop 84 Grant administered by Panoche Drainage District for improvements to the San Joaquin River Improvement Project. The Short Term Storage Basins construction is in progress but will take some time to complete. Other projects are in design phase.

San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority Activity Summary

- Participated in conference calls with the Regional Board to respond to their questions on surface water quality management plans and required follow up. Working with the Regional Board to formulate a more efficient focused outreach program to address sediment and surface water quality impacts to receiving waters.
- Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition: Work continues to provide coverage under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program for farmers within the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition. The work includes managing the monitoring program, assisting farmers with the necessary reporting to comply with the program and preparing reports for the Regional Board; the Annual Monitoring Report was submitted to the Regional Board on June 30, 2023. Coalition staff are updating the membership roll in preparation for a July 31, 2023 submittal to the Regional Board.
- Groundwater Protection Formula, Values and Targets: Coalitions have developed a methodology to establish nitrogen loading Values and Targets as required by the WDRs. Coalition staff and consultants were part of a panel that presented the Targets to the Regional Board in April 2023; approval of the targets was granted June 30, 2023 with two conditions that must be met by April 2024 and July 2024 respectively.
- Management Practices Effectiveness Program: Attend conference call meetings of the MPEP group. Developing work schedules to implement nitrogen control measures for farmer member compliance.
- Central Valley Groundwater Monitoring Collaborative: Attend conference call meetings to give direction to program. Work with other coalitions and staff to develop an updated groundwater monitoring CQAP. Submitted 2022 Annual Groundwater Monitoring report to the Regional Board.
- Management Zones: Work continued to develop plan for compliance within the Westside Coalition. SJVDA Board of Directors directed staff to begin the initial organization of the Management Zone by joining the Valley Water Collaborative. Staff is currently working to prepare the contracts and agreements that will be used going forward.
- Salt Control Program: Phase I of the Salt Control Program involves the development of a Prioritization and Optimization Study (P&O Study). Currently, consultants are compiling data in order to characterize current salinity conditions of both surface and groundwater

across the Central Valley. Phase I of the Salt Control Program is expected to last years. This work is being supported through the SJVDA budget.

- Prop 84 Real Time Program Grant: Work continues on maintaining the stations, gathering monitoring data, and computer modeling to determine and manage salt discharges to the San Joaquin River. As of March 2023, grant funds billed is \$595,942 with \$259,058 remaining. The project has been extended to December of this year.