



MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

FROM: John Brodie, Water Resources Programs Manager
Chris Linneman, Regional Drainage Coordinator
Orvil McKinnis, Westside Watershed Coalition Coordinator

DATE: January 11, 2024

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for December 2023

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for December 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)

Construction continues on the final two projects funded by the California Department of Water Resources Proposition 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation grant. The Broadview Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project sponsored by Westlands Water District is targeted to benefit the aquifer below the Corcoran clay to address potential subsidence. The Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Project is constructing approximately 60 acres of recharge ponds and associated infrastructure. It is sponsored by Central California Irrigation District. Work on both must be completed by June, 2024

Self Help Enterprises (SHE) is updating Community Water Needs Assessments for disadvantaged communities (DACs) in the Westside San Joaquin IRWM Region. The Assessments will help DACs identify and prioritize their most critical drinking water needs. The Assessments will include recommendations for navigating drought years. SHE is in the process of completing a summary and analysis of current efforts by members to assist DACs in their areas.

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

General SGMA Activities

Data compilation and analysis continues for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin's Water Year 2023 Annual Report. The annual reports are required under the Sustainable Groundwater

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).

Management Act (SGMA). Fall groundwater level monitoring data must be submitted by December 31, 2023.

The SGMA Round 1 Implementation Grant is helping the Subbasin meet SGMA requirements by filling data gaps. One data gap faced by GSPs throughout the San Joaquin Valley is Interconnected Surface Water (ISW). Design of an ISW monitoring network for the Subbasin is complete. Requests for proposals for construction management and installation of the monitoring network will be released in early 2024.

Coordinated Activities

The D-M Subbasin Coordination Committee is in the process of soliciting proposals for construction management for installation of monitoring wells for an Interconnected Surface Water (ISW) Monitoring Network. ISW is one of the sustainability indicators that must be addressed under SGMA. The work will be funded by the SGMA Round 1 Implementation Grant. Staff participated in an interbasin group meeting on interconnected surface water involving most of the subbasins in the San Joaquin Valley December 8, 2023.

State Water Resources Control Board staff in December issued an updated proposed schedule for the Board to conduct probationary hearings for critically overdrafted subbasins in the San Joaquin Valley with Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) deemed “inadequate” by DWR. The Delta-Mendota Subbasin is one of six such Subbasins. The original schedule, released in June, had a draft staff report being issued in July of 2024 with a Probationary Hearing scheduled for September 2024. The updated schedule released in December indicates a probationary hearing for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin in the first quarter of 2025, with a draft staff report released in the fourth quarter of 2024.

The Coordination Committee desires to maintain a schedule for completing a single GSP in time for adoption no later than July, 2024 by the Subbasins 23 Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs). The Committee believes submitting a completed GSP in July may avoid a potential probationary hearing and draft staff report on the six GSPs submitted in June, 2022. Limited Coordination Committee members, staff, and consultants have met five times with water board staff to discuss responses to DWR’s inadequate determination and development of a single GSP.

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. We had a rain event mid-December but were able to manage the storm runoff internally without a discharge.

GBP Activities

- General administration: Review and approve consultant billing. Field review of drainage conditions and correspondence with SJRIP manager.

- Mud Slough Restoration Project: The intent of this project is to restore Mud Slough in accordance with the 2010 MOU between the Authority and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The Water Authority adopted the CEQA for the project in December 2021, which was not challenged. GBP management staff had a meeting with CDFW on August 15th during which CDFW committed to providing a revised MOU that would outline the specific tasks required to complete restoration of Mud Slough. We are still waiting for the revised MOU.
- 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 are 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. Farm evaluation surveys will be sent out to farmers in 2024.
- 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.
- Due to a levee failure on the CCID Outside Canal, a critical drainage culvert was washed out. Work is underway to replace that culvert and expected to be completed before the first of the year.

San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority Activity Summary

- Participated in conference calls with the Regional Board to respond to 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. Analyze pyrethroid Focused Outreach data for follow up MPIRs. Work with consultants to develop new SOWs for FY25 to facilitate budget drafting process.
- Groundwater Protection Formula, Values and Targets: Coalitions have developed a methodology to establish nitrogen loading Values and Targets as required by the WDRs. Conduct meetings with other Coalitions to provide input for upcoming presentation to Regional Board.
- Management Practices Effectiveness Program: Attend conference call meetings of the MPEP group. Developing work schedules to implement nitrogen control measures for farmer member compliance. Work with other Coalitions to develop Acceptable Ranges methodology to be presented in report form to Regional Board by January 16, 2024.

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- 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.
- Management Zones: Work continued to develop plan for compliance within the Westside Coalition. Review and analyze Valley Water Collaborative budget numbers to inform SJVDA FY24 budget for Management Zone line item. Prepare the contracts and agreements that will be used going forward. Attend Central Valley Salinity Coalition meetings to inform SJVDA regarding Management Zone formation.
- Salt Control Program: Phase I of the Salt Control Program involves the development of a Prioritization and Optimization Study (P&O Study). Consultants are compiling data in order to characterize current salinity conditions of both surface and groundwater across the Central Valley. 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 October 2023, grant funds billed is \$669,944 with \$185,056 remaining. The project has been extended to December of 2024 and the remaining funds will be used for the purchase of spare monitoring equipment.