



MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

FROM: Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director
Chris Linneman, Regional Drainage Coordinator
Orvil McKinnis, Westside Watershed Coalition Coordinator

DATE: September 11, 2025

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for August 2025

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for August 2025 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)

Self-Help Enterprises is revising a draft Community Water Needs Assessment for disadvantaged communities (DACs) in the Westside San Joaquin IRWM Region, incorporating revisions from staff. The Assessment is being updated to identify and prioritize the most critical drinking water needs for DACs in the region, especially during drought years. The revised draft will be distributed to an IRWM Activity Agreement Member subcommittee for review and input prior to completion, which is anticipated in August.

At present, all tasks for the Proposition 1 IRWM grant are on schedule. An amendment request letter for Amendment 7 was submitted to DWR on May 9th to accommodate construction delays for both CCID and Westlands. The requested amendment would extend the agreement end date to June 30, 2026 with no funds to be requested after September 30, 2026. DWR has granted the amendment request and the term of the grant has been extended to June 30, 2026.

Finally, staff has executed a contract with The Ferguson Group for grant support to support implementation of IRWM projects in the region. Staff will be rolling out the introduction to the program for member agencies in September for calls for projects throughout the region to be aggregated into a master list to seek funding support.

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).

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

General SGMA Activities

The Annual Report was submitted for 2024 and water level and quality measurements were taken and are being uploaded by the GSAs into the subbasin database for evaluation by technical consultants for the 2025 report and associated monitoring for GSP implementation.

The various Committees authorized approval of a Subbasin Well Mitigation Plan, and continued discussions around transitioning to a new fiscal and administrative agent in the FY27 year, consistent with Authority engagement in implementing the Strategic Plan.

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin have finalized and adopted Pumping Reduction Plans (PRPs) for their respective Zones. The PRPs are part of the adopted GSP for the Subbasin. They are specific to identified “zones” and are a key component to effective local SGMA implementation. The PRPs will guide GSAs as they seek to avoid “undesirable results” as defined in the law for six sustainability indicators. These indicators include groundwater levels, subsidence, water quality, loss of storage, and interconnected surface water. PRPs began implementation in January 2025.

Finally, the Delta-Mendota and Tracy Groundwater Subbasins, as well as the Chowchilla and Madera Subbasins, held joint meetings to discuss coordination of groundwater management at the boundaries of each basin, with the intention of ensuring each basin is able to implement their Groundwater Sustainability Plans without impact to each other, and other subbasin meetings are currently being scheduled.

Coordinated Activities

A subgroup of Coordination Committee members and technical consultants are meeting with State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) staff as the Subbasin seeks to avoid a possible “Probation” designation. SWRCB Staff continues to request additional details on the GSP’s proposed actions on the water quality sustainability indicators, but positive momentum is occurring and there is hope for a successful resolution to the remaining issue.

Finally, work was completed on one and work continues to advance the construction of two other interconnected surface water monitoring well installations and three continuous GPS monitoring stations to improve the Subbasin’s monitoring network. Authority staff are coordinating with needs for the Delta-Mendota Canal, in addition to the general monitoring network, in discussions about subsidence monitoring stations.

Finally, staff is coordinating with consultants about potential improvements to the Data Management System to enable the development of a dashboard to track implementation of groundwater requirements in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for GSAs in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.

3. Drainage Activity Summary

Grassland Basin Drainage Management Steering Committee Activity Summary

The Grassland Bypass Channel gates have remained closed since February of 2024 despite substantial rain events in February and March. Selenium concentrations in Mud Slough and the San Joaquin River remain below the water quality objective.

GBP Activities

- General administration: Review and approve consultant billing. Field review of drainage conditions and correspondence with SJRIP manager. Correspondence with Regional Board staff occurred as required.
- Grower outreach: A Grower Outreach meeting was held on June 11 to cover the requirements of the surface water and groundwater waste discharge orders. Approximately 20 growers attended the meeting.
- 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. CDFW provided a letter in January 2024 that accepted the Water Authority's proposed actions to restore Mud Slough as it relates to the MOU, focused on the removal of old flow control structures. GDA is coordinating with CDFW to remove those structures. There is an issue separate from the MOU concerning restoring Mud Slough flows into Newman Lake. Alternatives to address that are still in discussion.
- 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.
- Grassland Drainage Area Coalition: Work continues to provide coverage for farmers within the Grassland Drainage Area for the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.
- 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 completion. Two additional projects are in progress.