



# Official Memorandum

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To: SLDMWA Board of Directors and Alternates

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

Date: March 5, 2026

RE: Staff Report on Activity Agreements – February 2026

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## Background

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for February 2026 regarding specified<sup>1</sup> Water Authority activities not separately addressed on the Board meeting agenda.

## Integrated Regional Water Management Activity (IRWM) Summary

The Roundtable of Regions met to determine potential paths forward for the IRWM Program in the future, given the limited amount of funding provided in Proposition 4 for IRWM Activities (\$100M), and has released a transition plan that may be of interest to member agencies<sup>2</sup>.

### Westside San Joaquin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRMWP)

Self-Help Enterprises has prepared 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 by the end of the fiscal year.

At present, all tasks for the Proposition 1 IRWM grant are on schedule. An amendment request letter for Amendment 7 was submitted to DWR 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.

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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).

<sup>2</sup> Request from Authority staff.



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 for calls for projects throughout the region to be aggregated into a master list to seek funding support.

Staff intends to produce a master list of member agency projects, with the intention of using this list to identify funding opportunities, as well as programs that need additional funding support, to assist in guiding educational efforts related to infrastructure funding to advance member agency and Water Authority priority projects.

## Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

### Delta-Mendota Subbasin SGMA Program Transition

In January, the final Groundwater Sustainability Agencies in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin took Board action to join the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSA JPA, which is the entity that will take up implementation of the Delta-Mendota Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan and allow the Water Authority to transition out of its role supporting GSA's in the subbasin as a fiscal and administrative agent.

The Subbasin JPA held its first meeting, adopting a budget, authorizing contracts for consultant staffing support for relevant JPA management, Program management, technical support and legal services, as well as authorizing staff to issue invoices for collections for cash flow purposes. Additionally, the Central DM Region GSA's JPA sent a letter to the Water Authority requesting termination of the Central Delta-Mendota Region SGMA Activity Agreement. Staff is waiting for a similar letter from the Northern Region Management Committee.

### General SGMA Activities

Consultants are preparing the 2025 Subbasin Annual Report, which is due April 1.

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.

### 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 seems to be general agreement between Board staff and subbasin representatives on a path forward that could move the subbasin off the probation pathway.

Finally, work continues to advance the construction of interconnected surface water monitoring well installations and additional survey monuments to improve the Subbasin's monitoring subsidence and



interconnected surface water 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.

## Drainage Activity Summary

### Grassland Basin Drainage Management Steering Committee Activity

Despite the recent storm activity, the Grassland Bypass Channel gates have remained closed since February of 2024 despite substantial rain events in February and March of this year. Storm events at the end of December caused the Grassland Basin Authority to pump water into the Short-Term Storage Basins to prevent discharge through the Grassland Bypass Project, which continued until January 13. Selenium concentrations in Mud Slough and the San Joaquin River remain below the water quality objective.

### Grassland Basin Program 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. The FY26/27 budget was adopted at the December meeting.

The Annual Stakeholder Meeting was held on January 16, as required by the Waste Discharge Order. The meeting had low attendance and lasted only 40 minutes.

- 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. These structures were removed in August and this work is now complete. 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.