



# 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: February 8, 2024

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for January 2024

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This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for January 2024 regarding specified<sup>1</sup> 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 (SHE) continues its work updating Community Water Needs Assessments for disadvantaged communities (DACs) in the Westside San Joaquin IRWM Region. The purpose of the updates is to help DACs identify and prioritize their most critical drinking water needs, including recommendations for navigating drought years.

The fourth of five projects funded by the California Department of Water Resources Proposition 1 Round 1 IRWM Implementation grant is nearing completion. The Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Project is constructing approximately 60 acres of recharge ponds and associated infrastructure and is sponsored by Central California Irrigation District. The Broadview Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project sponsored by Westlands Water District will benefit the aquifer below the Corcoran clay to address potential subsidence. As January came to a close, a grant extension was being pursued to allow for construction delays on the Broadview Aquifer project.

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

### **General SGMA Activities**

Data gathering and analysis is in its final stages for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin's Water Year 2023 Annual Report. The annual reports are required under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Fall groundwater level monitoring data must be submitted by December 31, 2023. The Annual Reports must be submitted via DWR's SGMA Data Portal by April

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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).

1, 2024. This year's annual report data is taking on added significance as it will be used to inform the single Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) now under development for the Subbasin.

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) groups must work quickly to complete projects and tasks funded by the SGMA Round 1 Implementation Grant. DWR will not be granting extensions for the grant agreement(s). All grant funded work must be completed by April 30, 2025 and no funds may be requested after June 30, 2025 per the grant agreement. A total of \$7.6 million dollars was awarded for a variety of projects across the Subbasin.

### **Coordinated Activities**

The D-M Subbasin Coordination Committee continues to work on development of a single GSP for the Subbasin. Staff members from both DWR and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) have expressed that a single GSP approach should help the Subbasin address inadequacies identified by DWR in coordinating the six GSPs originally submitted for SGMA compliance. DWR issued a formal determination of "inadequate" for the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSPs March 2, 2023, requiring the Subbasin to address identified deficiencies to the satisfaction of the SWRCB. The Subbasin faces a probationary hearing and direct SWRCB oversight without an approved plan(s). An Ad Hoc Subcommittee of Coordination Committee members, staff, and consultants meet with SWRCB staff to discuss particulars for responding to the deficiencies identified in DWR's Determination Letter and direction for developing the Subbasin's single GSP.

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

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

The Grassland Bypass Channel gates were opened on January 3 as a result of storm events. Periodic rainfall has been sufficient to keep the gates open and, with coming storms in the forecast, it is unknown when the gates will be closed. Available data indicates that GBP operations are meeting water quality objectives.

#### 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 15<sup>th</sup> during which CDFW committed to providing a revised MOU that would outline the specific tasks required to complete restoration of Mud Slough. A letter from CDFW regarding the MOU status was received the last week of January and we are in the process of reviewing that letter.
- 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. That culvert has been replaced and is currently operating.

### **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. Develop FY25 budget and present draft to SJVDA Board.
- 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.
- 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.

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- 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.