



MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

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

DATE: August 10, 2023

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for July 2023

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for July 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)

Representatives of the San Joaquin River Funding Area (SJRSA) IRWM Plan Managers approved the addition of nearly \$68,000 for the Westley wellhead treatment project. The funds are an unused/unallocated amount from the Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Grant. The Stanislaus County Housing Authority will use the funds for the design and planning of a new well or wellhead treatment to bring it into compliance with 1-2-3 TCP drinking water standards.

Projects funded by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Proposition 1, Round 1 IRWM Implementation Grant continue to move forward in the Westside San Joaquin IRWM Region. The Broadview Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Project (Westlands Water District), Pumping Plant Modernization Project (West Stanislaus Irrigation District) and Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Project (Central California Irrigation District) are all moving forward. Three other projects that received funding from that grant have been completed.

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

Coordinated Activities

Facing an anticipated September 2024 Probationary Hearing before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) continue to meet on an accelerated schedule in an effort to correct DWR identified “deficiencies” in the Subbasin’s six

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).

Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). The approach will be to consolidate the six existing GSPs into one for the entire Delta-Mendota Subbasin.

SWRCB members and staff reacted favorably to the proposal from the Subbasin's Coordination Committee. Committee members, staff, and consultants met with SWRCB staff in July to begin technical discussions and discuss the preliminary approach to Sustainable Management Criteria that will be applied to various sustainability indicators under a single GSP. Another meeting is anticipated in August.

General SGMA Activities

Water Quality data must be collected by GSAs in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin by the end of this month. Data from the representative monitoring network must be uploaded to DWR's SGMA portal by the end of September. Some GSAs, anticipating data needs for a new water quality constituent of concern, this year added nitrate to sampling tests. It is anticipated SWRCB will require nitrate be included in the Subbasin's Water Quality monitoring, in addition to Total Dissolved Solids (TDS-already being monitored).

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.

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- 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.
 - 13267 Order Report Part 2: The Authority received a 13267 Order from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) in February 2020. This order required the Authority to submit two reports on water quality and fish tissue data, the first of which was submitted in July of 2021. The second, and final report, is in progress and will be submitted this fall.

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 and Surfacewater Focused Outreach were recently conducted in Los Banos and Westley and was targeted at Nitrogen outliers and pyrethroid exceedances.
- 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. Work will begin soon on the outreach to growers to inform them of the targets and their needed cooperation to meet the targets.
- Management Practices Effectiveness Program: Attend conference call meetings of the MPEP group. Developing work schedules to implement nitrogen control measures for farmer member compliance.

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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. 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. Initial contact with non-ag Permittees is being implemented to inform them of the program.
 - 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.