



MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

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

DATE: May 4, 2023

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for April 2023

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for April 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)

Work continues on the Proposition 1, Round 1 IRWM Implementation Grant. Both the West Stanislaus Irrigation District Pumping Plant Modernization Project and the Central California Irrigation District's Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Project are nearly halfway complete. The combined water supply reliability benefit of these two projects is estimated to be about 100,000 acre feet annually, once completed.

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

Coordinated Activities

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin are waiting for the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to determine its process for addressing Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) deemed "inadequate" by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Six such Subbasins, including the Delta-Mendota Subbasin, received that classification from DWR in early March. The Delta-Mendota Subbasin was the only one to send a representative to comment at an April 4, 2023 SWRCB meeting on the topic. Local GSAs are meeting on an accelerated schedule to address DWR's determination.

The Subbasin's Water Year 2022 Consolidated Annual Report was submitted on time to DWR. Data from the report and those previously filed with the state must be used to inform the required five-year GSP updates. SWRCB staff also said they will be looking at the Annual Reports looking for specific items including any pumping allocation plans and amounts reported, any

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).

mitigation plans or actions taken, and how Subbasins with multiple GSPs (like Delta-Mendota) are coordinating their work and data analysis.

The spring seasonal high groundwater level monitoring window closed at the end of April. GSAs have until the end of May to submitted the collected data to DWR. The window to begin water quality monitoring began May 1, 2023, with a deadline of August 31, 2023 to complete that monitoring.

General SGMA Activities

Work continues on the \$7.6-million-dollar SGMA Implementation grant awarded to the Subbasin. Most of the work completed so far is focused on GSP revisions, annual reporting, and public outreach related to both. Del Puerto Water District is serving as the grant manager for the Subbasin. Among the grant-funded activities underway is additional monitoring and data collection to track groundwater sustainability Subbasin-wide. A consultant was recently selected to design an Interconnected Surface Water Monitoring Network.

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.
- **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 are attempting to meet with CDFW to review their concerns and are working with stakeholders to resolve remaining issues.
- **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. Five of the wells have been installed. The well drilling contractor is planning to install the remaining wells in May of 2023.
- **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.
- Mitigation subcommittee: Prepare information for meeting on April 5, 2023.

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. Applied Nitrogen Summary Reports were sent to growers that compare their crop specific nitrogen use to other growers use. Crop-year 2022 INMPSR forms are being received and the data entered into the compliance database.
- Groundwater Protection Formula, Values and Targets: Coalitions have developed a methodology to establish nitrogen loading Values and Targets as required by the WDRs. Ongoing work includes meeting with other coalitions and staff to formally present the Values and Targets to the Regional Board in a public forum.
- Management Practices Effectiveness Program: Attend conference call meetings of the MPEP group. Developing work schedules to implement nitrogen control measures for farmer member compliance.
- 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. Met with ad hoc subcommittee and presented cost estimate alternatives for compliance to inform their direction on 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). 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.