

SUMMERS ENGINEERING

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee – Grassland Basin Drainers

FROM: Chris Linneman, Drainage Coordinator

DATE: July 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Issues and Timeline related to Transition of Activities from the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority

The Grassland Basin Drainers (GBD) operate under the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (Authority) pursuant to an Activity Agreement under the Authority's Board of Directors (Board) for the implementation of the Grassland Bypass Project (GBP). The Authority Board has requested that the activities of certain Activity Agreements, including those of the GBD Activity Agreement, be transitioned to other organizations with termination of the Activity Agreement when the transition is complete. As a result, the GBD will transition operations of the GBP to the Grassland Basin Authority (GBA). To complete this transition there are several critical tasks that need to be completed:

1. Mud Slough Restoration MOU – As part of the GBP, the GBD Steering Committee (through the Authority) entered into a MOU with CDFW to restore the portion of Mud Slough (North) utilized by the project to pre-GBP conditions once selenium water quality objectives were met. After discussions with CDFW staff, CDFW decided that the restoration of the Slough as described in the MOU is no longer environmentally desirable and that only removal of defunct flow control structures that were installed as part of the GBP is required to satisfy the MOU. This work was completed in 2025, and we are waiting for CDFW management to acknowledge that this work is complete.
2. Order R5-2019-0077 (GBP Surface Water Order) – Request to transition the Water Authority's status as a "Discharger" under this order to GBA. This request must be submitted to the Regional Board and will require revisions to the Order that will need to be approved by the Regional Board at a Regional Board meeting.
3. Order R5-2015-0095-07 (GDAC Groundwater Order) – Request to transition the Committee's status as the "third-party representative" of growers in the Irrigated Land Regulatory Program to GBA.
4. Agreement for Use of the San Luis Drain (Use Agreement) – This agreement is between the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Authority. The Use Agreement includes a clause that anticipates the transition and requires Regional Board approval of the transition prior to any amendment to the Use Agreement.

5. Transition of contracts – The GBP utilizes several outside contractors for everything from sample analysis to biological monitoring. These contracts will need to be transitioned from the Authority to GBA. These agreements follow the GBD fiscal year (March to February) and can conveniently be transitioned at the start of the next fiscal year (March 2027) with the contract renewal.
6. Mud Slough Restoration Project Alternative – The planned Project entailed the hydraulic modification of Mud Slough to allow restoration of water deliveries directly from Mud Slough to Newman Lake and was CEQA mitigation for the GBP. CDFW has determined that it will not allow construction of the Project on state land. We are evaluating alternatives in conjunction with CDFW.

Estimated Timeline:

- July 17 – GBD Steering Committee Meeting: Adopt resolution recommending that the Authority Board authorize actions necessary for the transition of the Authority's
 - (1) status as a "Discharger" under the Surface Water Order to GBA;
 - (2) status as a "third-party representative" under the Groundwater Order to the GBA;
 - and
 - (3) rights and responsibility under its Use Agreement with Reclamation to GBA.
- August 6 – Authority Board Meeting: Approval of (1) through (3) above.
- August 17 – GBA Board Meeting: Approval of (1) through (3) above.
- After August 17th GBA Meeting – Send letter requesting changes for Surface Water Order and Groundwater Order to the Regional Board. Note that Surface Water Order will need to go before the Regional Board.
- January 2027 – Shift contracts to GBA.
- TBD – Address transition of Mud Slough Restoration Project Alternative.

Attachment:

- Draft Board Resolution

SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CERTAIN ACTIONS IN FURTHERANCE OF
TRANSITIONING GRASSLAND BASIN DRAINAGE STEERING COMMITTEE
ACTIVITIES TO THE GRASSLAND BASIN AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, the Grassland Basin Drainage Management Activity Agreement (“GBD Activity Agreement”) and its governing body, the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (“Water Authority”) Grassland Basin Drainage Steering Committee (“GBDSC”), was developed primarily so that certain Water Authority member agencies could coordinate on issues related to the control, management, distribution and discharge of agricultural drainage water within the Grassland Drainage Area and to contract with the United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (“Reclamation”) for the use of the San Luis Drain to convey the drainage water; and

WHEREAS, formation of the GBDSC was approved by the Water Authority Board on July 6, 1995 (Resolution No. 1995-97), and the currently operable activity agreement, the First Amended and Restated GBD Activity Agreement, went into effect in April 1996; and

WHEREAS, the GBDSC, acting on behalf of the Water Authority, and Reclamation are regulated by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (“Regional Board”) as “Dischargers” for surface water discharges from the Grassland Bypass Project under the following order: “Order R5-2019-0077: Waste Discharge Requirements for the Water Authority and Reclamation, Surface Water Discharges from the Grassland Bypass Project;” and

WHEREAS, the GBDSC is also the “third-party representative” of the owners and operators that are regulated by the Regional Board under the following general order applicable to groundwater: “Order R5-2015-0095-07: Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Growers in the Grassland Drainage Area;” and

WHEREAS, the Water Authority and Reclamation have entered into a series of Use Agreements (in 1995, 2001, 2010, 2019, and 2020) pursuant to which the Water Authority is authorized to use the portion of the San Luis Drain needed to carry out the Grassland Bypass Project; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Strategic Plan for the Water Authority includes Objective 1.7: “Activity Agreements are periodically revisited, and the Water Authority’s role relative to specific Activity Agreements is modified or ended as appropriate,” and for Fiscal Year 2026, Water Authority staff identified implementation measure 1.7.1 as a high priority: “Evaluate future management of Grassland Basin Drainage Management Activity Agreement;” and

WHEREAS, Implementation Measure 1.7.1 was completed in Fiscal Year 2026, and for Fiscal Year 2027, staff identified Implementation Measure 1.7.2 as a high priority: “If appropriate, develop and initiate transition plan for 1.7.1 [future management of Grassland Basin Drainage Management Activity Agreement];” and

WHEREAS, the Grassland Basin Authority (“GBA”) is a joint powers authority formed in 2019 to manage drainage and other related activities in the Grassland Drainage Area, including the operation and maintenance of the San Joaquin River Water Quality Improvement Project (“SJRIIP”)—a drainage and water reuse and management area within the Grassland Drainage Area; and

WHEREAS, the GBA is a separate entity from the Water Authority; however, the GBA was created, in part, with the intent to eventually take over the activities of the GBDSC, and all members of the GBDSC are also members of GBA;

WHEREAS, the Water Authority and GBA have developed a plan for transitioning all GBDSC activities to the GBA, with the goal of ultimately dissolving the GBDSC and terminating the GBD Activity Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the transition of GBDSC activities to GBA will occur in phases, and adoption of this Resolution only authorizes certain actions required for the transition and does not dissolve the GBDSC or terminate the GBD Activity Agreement; and

WHEREAS, at its July 17, 2026 meeting, the GBDSC considered and recommended the adoption of this Resolution to the Water Authority Board; and

WHEREAS, the Water Authority Board, by adoption of this Resolution, authorizes the Water Authority to take the actions necessary to transition (1) its status as a “Discharger” under Order R5-2015-0095-07 to the GBA, (2) its status as a “third-party representative” under Order R5-2015-0095-07 to the GBA, and (3) its rights and responsibilities under its Use Agreement with Reclamation to the GBA; and

WHEREAS, the transition actions authorized by this Resolution are administrative actions that do not constitute a project under CEQA Guidelines section 15378.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS FOLLOWS, THAT:

Section 1. The facts stated in the recitals above are true and correct, and the Board so finds and determines.

Section 2. The Board hereby authorizes the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, and any Water Authority employees, consultants, or agents directed by the Executive Director to take to take the actions that are required or reasonably necessary or convenient to transition the Water Authority’s (1) status as a “Discharger” under Order R5-2015-0095-07 to the GBA, (2) status as a “third-party representative” under Order R5-2015-0095-07 to the GBA, and (3) rights and responsibilities under its Use Agreement with Reclamation to the GBA.

Section 3. The authorizations conferred by this Resolution shall be contingent upon the occurrence of the following actions: (1) the GBDSC’s recommendation to the Water Authority Board to authorize the actions listed in Section 2 above, and (2) the GBA’s approval of the actions listed in Section 2 above.

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Section 4. In the event the contingencies described in Section 3 fail to occur, the authorization conferred by this Resolution is revoked *ab initio*.

Section 5. The Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, or such Water Authority employee or consultant, as either of such officers designate, are further authorized and directed to take such additional steps, and to execute such additional documents, as may be required or reasonably necessary to the completion of the activities authorized by this Resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 6th day of August, 2026, by the Board of Directors of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority.

Cannon Michael, Chair
San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority

Attest:

Federico Barajas, Secretary

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I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 2026- was duly and regularly adopted by the Board of Directors of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority at the meeting thereof held on the 6th day of August, 2026.

Federico Barajas, Secretary