



MEMORANDUM

TO: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

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

DATE: June 8, 2023

RE: Activity Agreements – Staff Report for May 2023

This memorandum serves as the Staff Report for May 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)

Staff is preparing a Scope of Work for Self-Help Enterprises to update Community Needs Assessments previously conducted for the Westside San Joaquin IRWM Region. The project will seek to improve drinking water conditions (accessibility, affordability, quality, and quantity) for communities in the region. IRWM Activity Agreement Members reviewed a draft scope and staff is moving forward to finalize a contract and task order.

2. Sustainable Groundwater Management Activity (SGMA) Activity Summary

Coordinated Activities

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) are moving forward with efforts to address DWR's determination of the Subbasin's six Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) as "inadequate." The determination transfers oversight of the subbasin from DWR to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) under the sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Delta-Mendota Subbasin staff and the consultant working on responding to the DWR determination met with SWRCB and DWR staff to discuss the process for achieving "approved" plans.

Local GSAs are meeting on an accelerated schedule to address what DWR called "deficiencies" in the Subbasin's GSPs. The scope of work for one of the Subbasin's consultants was expanded to include work on two areas specified by DWR in its determination: a subbasin-wide water budget and sustainable management criteria (SMCs). A request for proposals was issued to select a consultant, firm, or team to address the rest of items specified by DWR as well as any other items

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).

that may be identified by the SWRCB when it releases the findings of its own evaluation of the Plans. Responses to the RFP are due Friday, June 23.

As yet there is no timetable for release of SWRCB staff evaluation of the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSPs nor when the state water Board may begin to hold probationary hearings for the six subbasins in the San Joaquin Valley where plans were deemed inadequate.

General SGMA Activities

Though the GSPs have been deemed inadequate, implementation activities are required to continue. GSAs are at the beginning of a three-month long window to begin water quality monitoring. Groundwater level data has been collected and analyzed before it will be uploaded to DWR's SGMA data portal by July 1.

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.
- **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 has schedule the installation of three of the five remaining wells for the 1st week of June.
- **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.

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. Coalition staff are updating the membership roll in preparation for a July 31, 2023 submittal to the Regional Board.
- 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. Coalition staff and consultants were part of a panel that planned the strategy used to present the Targets to the Regional Board in a public meeting.
- 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. Submitted 2022 Annual Groundwater Monitoring report to the Regional Board.
- Management Zones: Work continued to develop plan for compliance within the Westside Coalition. Presented the ad hoc committee's recommended path for Management Zone compliance to the SJVDA Board of Directors.
- 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.