



# MEETING NOTES – Merced GSP

SUBJECT: Merced GSP Coordination Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: February 22, 2021 at 1:15 – 3:15 PM

LOCATION: Online – Zoom Meeting

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## Coordination Committee Members In Attendance:

	Representative	GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hicham EITal	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Dietz	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Justin Vinson	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Chavez	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ken Elwin (alternate)	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eric Swenson	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mike Gallo	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nic Marchini	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Park (alternate)	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Larry Harris	Turner Island Water District GSA #1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scott Skinner (alternate)	Turner Island Water District GSA #1

## Meeting Notes

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

- a. Samantha Salvia (Woodard & Curran) called the meeting to order.

### 2. ROLL CALL

- a. Coordination Committee members in attendance are shown in table above. The Committee had a quorum.

### 3. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Meeting notes from previous meeting (December 1, 2020) were approved.

### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. No public comments.

### 5. REPORTS

- a. Coordination with neighboring basins

- i. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) provided updates:

1. There is an ongoing effort to schedule a coordination meeting between the Merced, Chowchilla, Delta-Mendota, and Madera Subbasins. This will be scheduled with GSA representatives soon.



2. Ongoing coordination is occurring with the Turlock Subbasin including about their water budget.
- b. GSA Reports - Updates were provided from each GSA on activities they are undertaking in their own jurisdiction:
- i. Merced Subbasin GSA – Lacey McBride shared that the MSGSA Board had a January meeting where proposed sustainability zones were discussed; more information is available on MSGSA website (<https://www.co.merced.ca.us/2799/Merced-Subbasin-GSA>). A Board workshop (2/24 at 2pm, open to the public) is upcoming to talk about goals and options for demand reductions.
    1. Question (Hicham EITal): What are the unique characteristics considered for identifying sustainability zones? Answer: Many factors, but they include hydrologic/hydrogeologic differences, land use, and jurisdictional boundaries.
  - ii. MIUGSA - Hicham EITal shared that MIUGSA is administering various pieces of grant work (e.g. SDAC grants for well installations), the Meadowbrook Water System Intertie Feasibility Study is nearly complete, and MID is considering installing dry wells in the Planada area (recharge effort). MIUGSA is also working on setting policies related to the management framework discussed in GSP.
    1. Request: Hicham EITal requested that a standing agenda item be added to future CC meetings on current groundwater conditions, similar to updates that used to be provided at Merced Area Groundwater Pool Interest (MAGPI) meetings.
  - iii. TIWD GSA #1 - Larry Harris shared that now that monitoring/metering programs are completed, TIWD GSA #1 will be focusing on telemetry for some metering systems. Another focus in the next few months will be developing additional reservoirs for surface water storage.

## 6. ACTIONS

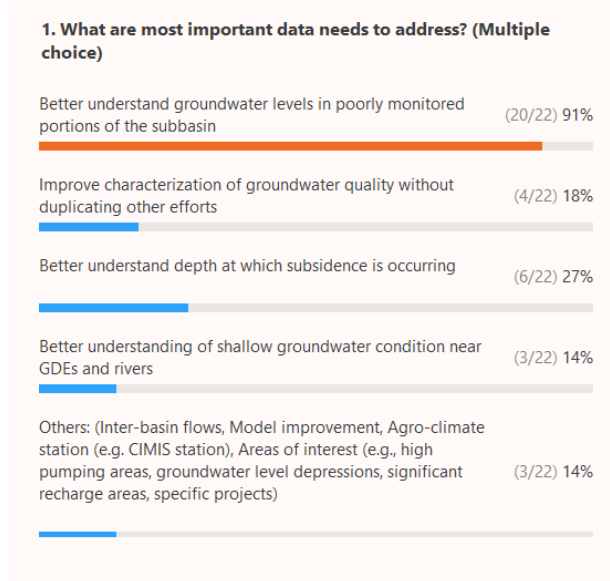
- a. Stakeholder Advisory Committee Recommendation
- i. Samantha Salvia (W&C) provided a brief background on the recent process for soliciting and reviewing applications for re-establishing the Stakeholder Advisory Committee during the GSP implementation process. 30 committee members were recommended by the GSA staff, with 5 alternates.
  - ii. Question: How long are the terms of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee? Answer: The application stated it should be considered a 2-year term.
  - iii. Question: If members were to drop from the Committee, is the list reviewed annually to fill vacant positions? Answer: In the past, when this happened, it was dealt with on an individual basis and often an alternate was filled in the position.
  - iv. Public Question: Is there an opportunity to still be a part of this committee? Answer: The application process has closed but Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public and have an option for public comment and input (as do Coordination Committee meetings).
  - v. Question: How many people on this list are representing disadvantaged communities and primarily drinking water interests? Answer: Multiple, some representatives include Planada, Livingston, and Winton.
  - vi. Question: What is the structure of the group? Answer: It is an advisory committee that will meet quarterly. There aren't any appointed positions or hierarchy – it provides input to the Coordination Committee.



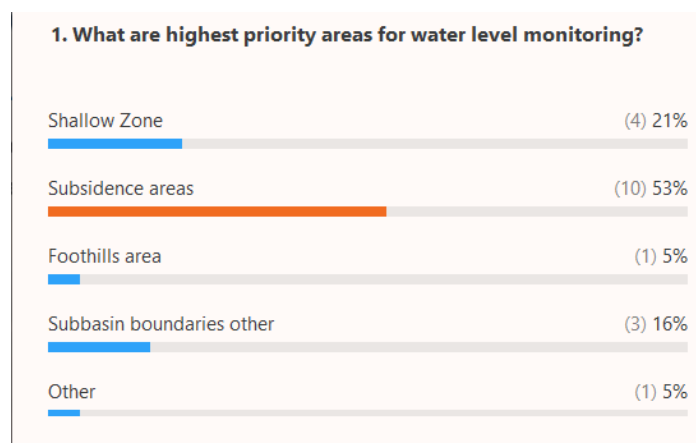
- vii. **ACTION approved by CC:** Recommend the GSA boards appoint the staff recommended applicants (shown on slide) to the Stakeholder Advisory Committee.
- b. GSP Well Monitoring RFQ
  - i. Lacey McBride (MSGSA) provided a brief background on the GSP Well Monitoring Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Two submissions were received by the deadline. The GSAs coordinated the review of submissions and provided a recommendation of QK. Input was requested from the Coordination Committee on the amount of the contract and who would administer.
  - ii. Question: What kind of contract is this? Answer: This is up for discussion; a rate was provided in the RFQ response but a scope would need to be developed for each project. One thought is to have a Not to Exceed amount for a period longer than one year.
  - iii. Public Comment (Eric Swenson): "I would recommend that the Merced Subbasin administer the groundwater monitoring contract due to much of work being needed will be in the Merced Subbasin."
  - iv. Hicham EITal noted that most monitoring currently is located in the MIUGSA portion of the Merced subbasin.
  - v. Mike Gallo (MSGSA) shared that during previous discussion he thought it made sense for contracting to go through MIUGSA so that one group pays and there's one bill, with a cost share separately on the backend (like with GSP development contracting).
  - vi. Lacey McBride (MSGSA) confirmed that all three GSAs will be involved from a technical standpoint of monitoring effort regardless of who is coordinating the administration of the contract.
  - vii. Garth Pecchenino (QK) agreed that a defined scope should be developed so a specific cost can be provided for purpose of contracting. Exact wells would need to be identified to develop read routing plan.
    - 1. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) clarified that additional scope/budget should be considered for additional projects, such as installation/siting of a CIMIS station.
  - viii. Question: Do the GSAs do WQ monitoring at CASGEM wells? Answer: As described in the GSP, the GSAs review monitoring data collected by other monitoring programs. It could be part of the monitoring contract if identified as a need in the future.
  - ix. **ACTION approved by CC:** Recommend GSAs select QK as consultant for monitoring work under SGMA for Merced Subbasin. Authorize MIUGSA to enter into an agreement with QK. Provide QK with initial budget of \$10,000 to conduct spring monitoring.

## 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Data Gaps Plan (Prop 68 Planning Grant funded work)
  - i. Jim Blanke (W&C) shared the approach and schedule for Data Gaps Plan development along with the results of the initial assessment and facilitated a discussion with the CC on priorities, including polls (results shared in screenshots below).



- ii.
- iii. Question from Amanda Monaco: A big data gap is where domestic wells are and how deep they are. Are the GSAs going to fill in this data gap? Answer: Work funded by IRWM is evaluating locations and depths of domestic wells in key areas of the Subbasin.
- iv. Public Comment (Eric Swenson): “I believe that existing production wells should be used when possible to provide additional SWL (static water level) monitoring in zones with data gaps. Short screened monitor wells may not provide the data desired.”
- v. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) shared that other basins are looking at what Merced Subbasin is doing. If Merced were to install monitoring wells along the Merced River, the Turlock Subbasin would be interested and likely reciprocate with additional well installations. He also brought up that there’s an issue about the location of the groundwater ridgeline (e.g. where it slopes to southwest San Joaquin River vs sloping to the Merced River).



- vi.
- vii. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) asked when a recommendation (e.g. the Data Gaps Plan) will be ready. Answer: A draft plan is expected to be presented at a public meeting in the April/May time period.
- viii. Ken Elwin (MIUGSA) saw some empty locations in the map of monitoring well density in the Outside Corcoran Clay Principal Aquifer (UC Merced and another site) and suggested that some known wells could be available or useful to add to the monitoring network.



- ix. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) shared that MID has a well near Fahrens Creek that may be able to be incorporated into the network.
- x. George Park (MSGSA) said it would be useful to know what completion information and characteristics of wells would be ideal for identifying production wells that could be useful for filling data gaps, so well owners know what to look for in inventory.
  - 1. Jim Blanke (W&C) responded that a key requirement is that wells need to be screened only in one aquifer.
- b. Remote-sensing tool development (Prop 68 Planning Grant funded work)
  - i. Dominick Amador (W&C) described the approach and schedule for developing the tool, including a background on how crop evapotranspiration is estimated from remote sensing data, the various data products available, and the next analysis steps.
  - ii. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) shared that both METRIC and SEABAL depend on CIMIS data. The existing CIMIS station surrounding land use has changed and the station is no longer reliable.
  - iii. Public comment (Geoff Vanden Heuvel): “The GSA's that have adopted Land iQ like Semitropic, Lower Tule GSA, Pixley GSA all put in multiple weather stations to assure accuracy of the ETC data. It doesn't require all that much investment”
- c. Sustainability Criteria Approaches for Additional Representative Monitoring Wells
  - i. At the December CC meeting, the CC requested that W&C return to the group with some information about potential approaches to use for setting sustainability criteria for wells that lack historical data. Chris Hewes (W&C) described two potential approaches.
  - ii. Question (Hicham EITal): Will Sustainable Management Criteria methodology be part of the data gaps plan? Answer: No, but the Data Gaps plan can help inform the methodology and provide an opportunity to test the different methods in real world situations given the actual location of new wells.
  - iii. Public Comment (Eric Swenson): “Older domestic wells are typically those at highest risk of running out of water. New domestic wells not so much. Criteria in the Merced Subbasin should likely be by Sustainability Zone.”
- d. Prop 68 Implementation Grant
  - i. Samantha Salvia (W&C) provided a brief background on the grant application which was submitted on January 8, 2021 and seeks \$5,000,000 in funding for two groundwater recharge related projects in the southern portion of the basin. Release of the draft funding list for Round 1 expected mid-March 2021, with final grant awards in May 2021.

## 8. Next steps and adjourn

- a. Confirm next meeting date
  - i. Woodard & Curran will schedule an April 26 meeting from 1:15-3:15pm, shifting meetings to quarterly 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of January, April, July, and October.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 3:26 PM

### Next Regular Meeting April 26 at 1:15-3:15 PM

Meeting to be conducted virtually (subject to change)  
Information also available online at [mercedsgma.org](http://mercedsgma.org)