

MEETING NOTES – Merced GSP

SUBJECT: Merced GSP Joint Coordination Committee & Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: June 27, 2022, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

LOCATION: Hybrid meeting with physical location at Merced Irrigation District, Franklin Yard Facility, 3321 North Franklin Road, Merced, CA 95348 and online via Zoom

Coordination Committee Members in Attendance:

	Representative	GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hicham ElTal	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Dietz	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Justin Vinson	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Chavez	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input 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"/>	Kel Mitchel	Turner Island Water District GSA #1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tim Allan (alternate)	Turner Island Water District GSA #1

Stakeholder Committee Members in Attendance:

	Representative	Community Aspect Representation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arlan Thomas	MIDAC member
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ben Migliazzo (alternate)	MIDAC member
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Kelley	Stevinson Representative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blake Nervino	Stevinson/Merquin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Breanne Vandenberg	MCFB
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Craig Arnold	Arnold Farms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Darren Olguin	Resident of Merced County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dave Serrano	Serrano Farms - Le Grand
<input type="checkbox"/>	David Belt	Foster Farms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Emma Reyes	Martin Reyes Farm/Land Leveling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Greg Olzack	Atwater Resident
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jean Okuye	E Merced RCD
<input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Sansoni	Sansoni Farms/MCFB
<input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Scoto	Scoto Brothers/McSwain School Dist.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jose Moran	Livingston City Council
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lacy Carothers	Cal Am Water
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Baker	Clayton Water District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Kayser-Grant	Sierra Club

<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark Maxwell	UC Merced
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maxwell Norton	Unincorporated area
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nav Athwal	TriNut Farms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Olivia Gomez	Community of Planada
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nataly Escobedo Garcia (alternate)	Leadership Counsel
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parry Klassen	ESJWQC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Darcy Brown	River Partners
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rick Drayer	Merced/Mariposa Cattlemen
<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Weimer	Weimer Farms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Simon Vander Woude	Sandy Mush MWC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susan Walsh	City of Merced
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill Spriggs (alternate)	Merced resident
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Dinwoodie	Master Gardener/McSwain
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trevor Hutton	Valley Land Alliance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wes Myers	Merced Grassland Coalition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lou Myers (alternate)	Benjamin Land LP

Meeting Notes

1. Call to Order and Welcome

- a. Jim Blanke (Woodard & Curran [W&C]) called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

2. Introductions and Roll Call

- a. Coordination Committee members in attendance are shown in the first table above.
- b. Stakeholder Advisory Committee members in attendance are shown in the second table above.
- c. Tom Dinwoodie requested list of members who haven't attended or attended only one meeting and no others. Charles Gardiner shared that it would be possible to summarize the attendance of the past meetings.

3. State of Emergency Teleconference Findings

- a. The Coordination Committee considered the circumstances of the State of Emergency and determine whether to make the findings that any of the circumstances exist per AB 361: that the State of Emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and/or State or Local Officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.
- b. Action: Motion made (Nic Marchini), seconded (Eric Swenson), and carried.

4. Approval of June 1, 2022 Coordination Committee Meeting Minutes

- a. Comments from Eric Swenson:
 - i. Q: Item 6) a) ii) Was is the MID Board of MIUGSA that approved 3.3 AF/ac value?
A: MIUGSA
 - ii. In Item 7) a) i), Eric requested to add "Meeting discussion included" before the end of the last sentence, so it reads: "Meeting discussion included incorporating a domestic well mitigation program, with primary financial responsibility with

MSGSA, and a management action to explore different levels above Corcoran in the subsidence area for more flexibility in responding to subsidence issues.”

- b. Action: Motion made to accept minutes with the proposed change (Hicham ElTal), seconded (Eric Swenson), and carried

5. Public Comment

- a. None received.

6. Review of Redline Edits to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

- a. Jim Blanke (W&C) reminded attendees about the DWR comments and provided an overview of the primary edits to the GSP in response to the comments, including the various sustainability management criteria for groundwater levels and subsidence, as well as the two new management actions to support those revised criteria.
- b. Q (Eric Swenson): Is there a linear ramp between IMs between the 5-year increments for subsidence? E.g. linear, annual step, etc. A: This isn't defined by SGMA. Generally, we'll still want to measure ongoing conditions against thresholds for upcoming milestone years (thinking about it somewhat linearly between 5-year periods).
 - i. Hicham ElTal: Its better to avoid being more detailed than necessary – we have a long way to go on subsidence due to coordination with neighboring subbasins.
- c. Q (George Park): What are the most recent values for subsidence? What is the data source/back especially for the -0.75 ft/yr IM in 2025? A: Generally recent numbers aren't as high as -0.75 ft/yr, but the IMs are generally meant to cover a high level of ongoing and/or residual subsidence.
 - i. Q: Has DWR agreed that the IMs are reasonable? A: They have been pushing for 0 ft/yr in 2040 for MT/MO. The didn't push against non-zero IMs in the GSP.
 - ii. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA): last year's values in the Annual Report showed the highest magnitude of subsidence in the range of -0.3 to -0.45 ft/yr.
- d. Q (Hicham ElTal): Does USBR have subsidence measurement points east of Highway 59? A: Yes they are marked as turquoise points on the subsidence map, but there seems to be a lower density compared to the central region of greater magnitude subsidence in the Chowchilla subbasin.
 - i. Hicham ElTal raised concerns that the Above Corcoran Clay management action may not cover an area of the western Outside Corcoran Clay principal aquifer where shallow pumping could have an impact on the subsidence focus area. We might want to consider adjusting the area considered by the management action for pumping adjustments to be pushed west.
 - ii. Brad Samuelson comment: Chowchilla Subbasin GSP has some flexibility built into their Western Management Area that could be a model to address this. In DWR consultations over last several weeks, this flexibility has not been requested by DWR to be taken out.
- e. Comments (Eric Swenson):
 - i. Regarding the Section 6.2.4 narrative in the GSP, it mentions there are few domestic wells in the Above CC. This doesn't seem correct because there are many in El Nido and Stevinson.

- ii. Recently have noticed there have been challenges in designing wells for extraction in the Above Corcoran Clay principal aquifer. Will likely need to couple recharge actions with the increased Above Corcoran pumping action. Language should be added to the GSP to acknowledge that.
 - 1. Brad Samuelson: In the Prop 68 Round 1 funding, the Sandy Mush project (off MID Lateral) brings 20 cfs to this area for FloodMAR.
 - 2. Kel Mitchel: Agrees with Eric, but doesn't want to update the GSP to require all extraction to be paired with recharge – the intent is to provide flexibility for sustainable management.
 - a. Eric Swenson: Acknowledged that TIWD could probably increase Above CC pumping without recharge, but it would be necessary in other areas like El Nido.
- f. Eric Swenson (MSGSA) provided several comments on draft Section 6.2.3 (Domestic Well Mitigation Program management action):
 - i. In the first sentence, add "occurring after 2015" after "regional overdraft conditions".
 - ii. Second sentence, add language about types of additional issues not intended to be covered by the program.
 - 1. Hicham ElTal: Generally want to be less specific while still getting the point across.
 - 2. The group discussed and decided on "related to normal wear and tear"
 - iii. In several spots, replace "work with" with "coordinate with"
 - iv. In addition to allowing a Board or Committee to review claims, "or agency staff" should be added as well (as directed by a Board or Committee)
 - v. Change "well rehabilitation, deepening, replacement" to "Setting well pump at deeper depths, replacement of well pump, or well replacement".
 - vi. Change "In home treatment programs" to "Residence water treatment equipment".
 - vii. Remove "infrastructure rehabilitation" and change to "other relevant projects".
 - viii. In the paragraph for time table for initiation and completion, add "(by 2025)" to clarify the intended date.
 - ix. Last sentence in Section 6.2.3 – that statement doesn't need to be in the GSP and can be handled via an MOU.
 - 1. Hicham ElTal clarified that it is important to MIUGSA to keep this sentence in the GSP.
 - 2. Mike Gallo (MSGSA) shared that he'd like to take this sentence to the MSGSA Board for review.
- g. Adriel shared that MSGSA is moving their adoption meeting to July 19 special session to adopt and would likely discuss it at a special meeting sometime next week, otherwise July 14.
- h. Jim Blanke (W&C): An updated redline version of the GSP should be available to the GSAs by end of day July 1.

- i. Jim Blanke (W&C) shared the potential impacts of not adopting the GSP and what State intervention might look like, stressing the importance of finding agreeable language to all three GSAs.
- j. Eric Swenson (MSGSA) shared additional comments on the GSP:
 - i. Executive Summary page 8 with shortlist of projects: wants project #4 to be removed as it was done so in an Annual Report a few years ago.
 - ii. Statement added in redlined Executive Summary: "Management actions will also include rewarding GSAs based on their extracted volumetric groundwater extraction, since 2015, proportioned to other GSAs in the basin." -> what does this mean?
 - 1. Hicham ElTal: It's meant to be a "fuzzy" sentence that encourages agencies to move faster to taking actions. Rewards are undefined and would be determined by the GSAs in the future.
- k. Jim Blanke (W&C) walked the group through a brief description of future work as part of GSP implementation after the July 2022 revised GSP adoption.
- l. Q (Tom Dinwoodie): When are we going to start public outreach to get people on board? e.g. someone going out and convincing people on what the program is and how they have to comply. Are there neighborhood meetings set up?
 - i. Hicham ElTal: MIUGSA will be showing its stakeholder committee a detailed outreach program schedule soon.
 - ii. Greg Young: The MSGSA is working on scheduling outreach with a focus on allocations.
- m. Q (Parry Klassen): Are the GSAs tracking wells that are going or beginning to go dry as part of County responsibility? Reason for ask: in the Modesto/Turlock basin with the Valley Water management zone, people are starting to call about dry wells. They are sending them to Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) as part of a state grant program. A: Same program exists in Merced County.
- n. Q (Simon Vander Woude): When do we find out if DWR approves the GSP? A: DWR has 6 months to review and make a determination.
- o. Q (Tom Dinwoodie): What's the sequence for additional rounds of edits? A: There is no additional response or back and forth – this is the last chance for edits.

7. Reports

- a. GSA Reports
 - i. *Merced Subbasin GSA*. Adriel Ramirez shared that MSGSA likely will have its next Board meeting to adopt the GSP on July 19. The Prop 218 hearing will also be held on July 19 and all information is on their website: <https://mercedsubbasingsa.org/proposition-218-landowner-fee-ii/>
 - ii. *MIUGSA*. Matt Beaman shared that MIUGSA doesn't have significant policy updates to share. Two ongoing projects with updates include:
 - 1. Received input from project proponents and submitted draft grant agreement edits to DWR (for the most recent grant agreement for Round 1 Planning-Implementation).

2. Regarding the pilot recharge project in Planada where it turned out that site soils were not good for traditional recharge – it was previously determined that it would be possible to pilot a dry well project. The water quality requirements and permitting are stringent, but MID has made good headway on this. Haven't gotten an official approval, but think it's very close. Merced County permits will be submitted soon. MID thinks the project will be installed in the next few months.
 - a. Hicham Eltal shared that he hopes that this will be a good example project for individual farms.
 - b. Q (Brad Samuelson): Are you filtering the recharge water? A: No, but it's screened. It is not pressurized (gravity fed). Recharging at approximately 50 ft and 100 ft.
 - c. Q (Parry Klassen): Has RWQCB weighed in? A: Yes, working with the Fresno office. If this is not runoff from a farm, then it's easier to permit. Since it's coming from Merced River, it's more straightforward. Will also have to work with Division of Drinking Water.
 - d. Comment (Brad Samuelson): Might be able to utilize the Governor's Executive Order to facilitate easier permitting. Response from MIUGSA: have submitted several NOAs for the project.
 - e. Q (Simon Vander Woude): Is this flood water? A: It's in-district.
- iii. *TIWD GSA #1*. No major updates to provide; discussions have been ongoing around the GSP edits. After July 2022, plan to get running on several projects that have been discussed for a while.

8. Next steps and adjourn

- a. Comment (Parry Klassen): In the middle of September 2022, Parry will be resigning from ESJWQC to go work on nitrate control program management zones and a nonprofit. This is last meeting for Parry, but expects another ESJWQC member to take his place.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.

Next Regular Meeting TBD, likely October 2022

Information also available online at mercedsgma.org