

# Merced GSP Coordination Committee Meeting

October 19, 2022

Meeting will begin at 1 pm or a few minutes after – thank you  
for joining us!

**Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA**  
**Merced Subbasin GSA**  
**Turner Island Water District GSA-1**

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

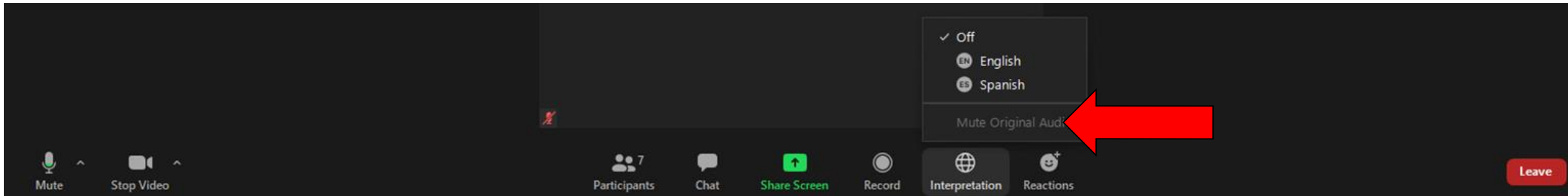
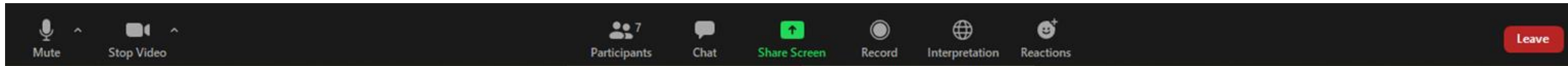


# Welcome, Instructions for Zoom

## Bienvenidos, Instrucciones para Zoom

We have two language audio channels available. English only speakers, please select English.

Si solamente habla español, debe seleccionar un canal de idioma



The meeting will have simultaneous interpreting, so you are welcome to comment in your native language.  
La junta será interpretada simultáneamente, así que le invitamos a que haga comentarios en su lenguaje nativo.

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# Agenda

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1. Call to Order and Welcome
2. Roll Call
3. State of Emergency Teleconference Findings
4. Approval of June 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes
5. Public Comment
6. Reports
7. Recap of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan July 2022 Update
8. 5-Year GSP Evaluation Lookahead
9. Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 2 (due Nov 30, 2022)
10. Contract Amendment with W&C for Preparation of WY 2022 Annual Report, Meeting Support, and an Optional Task for Preparation of the Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 2 Application
11. Ongoing and Upcoming Activities
12. Next steps and adjourn

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Roll Call

Representative	GSA
Hicham ElTal	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Stephanie Dietz	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Justin Vinson	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Daniel Chavez	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Ken Elwin ( <i>alternate</i> )	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Mike Gallo	Merced Subbasin GSA
Nic Marchini	Merced Subbasin GSA
Eric Swenson	Merced Subbasin GSA
George Park ( <i>alternate</i> )	Merced Subbasin GSA
Kel Mitchel	Turner Island Water District GSA #1
Tim Allan ( <i>alternate</i> )	Turner Island Water District GSA #1

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# State of Emergency Teleconference Findings

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# State of Emergency Teleconference Findings

- All meetings of the Coordination Committee's legislative bodies are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov. Code 54950 – 54963), so that any member of the public may attend, participate, and watch the Coordination Committee's legislative bodies conduct their business
- The Brown Act, Government Code section 54953(e), makes provisions for remote teleconferencing participation in meetings by members of a legislative body, without compliance with the requirements of Government Code section 54953(b)(3), subject to the existence of certain conditions
- Those conditions exist per the continuing State of Emergency due to the impacts of COVID-19.
- The Coordination Committee will consider the circumstances of the State of Emergency and determine whether to make the following findings that any of the circumstances exist per AB 361:
  - 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.

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Approval of Meeting Minutes

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# Approval of Meeting Minutes

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- June 27, 2022

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced





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## Questions/Comments from Public:

If you would like to make a comment, please type the comment in the chat or raise your hand to request to be taken off mute

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced





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# Reports

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# GSA Reports

- Updates from each GSA on activities they are undertaking in their own jurisdiction:
  - Merced Subbasin GSA
  - Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
  - Turner Island Water District GSA #1

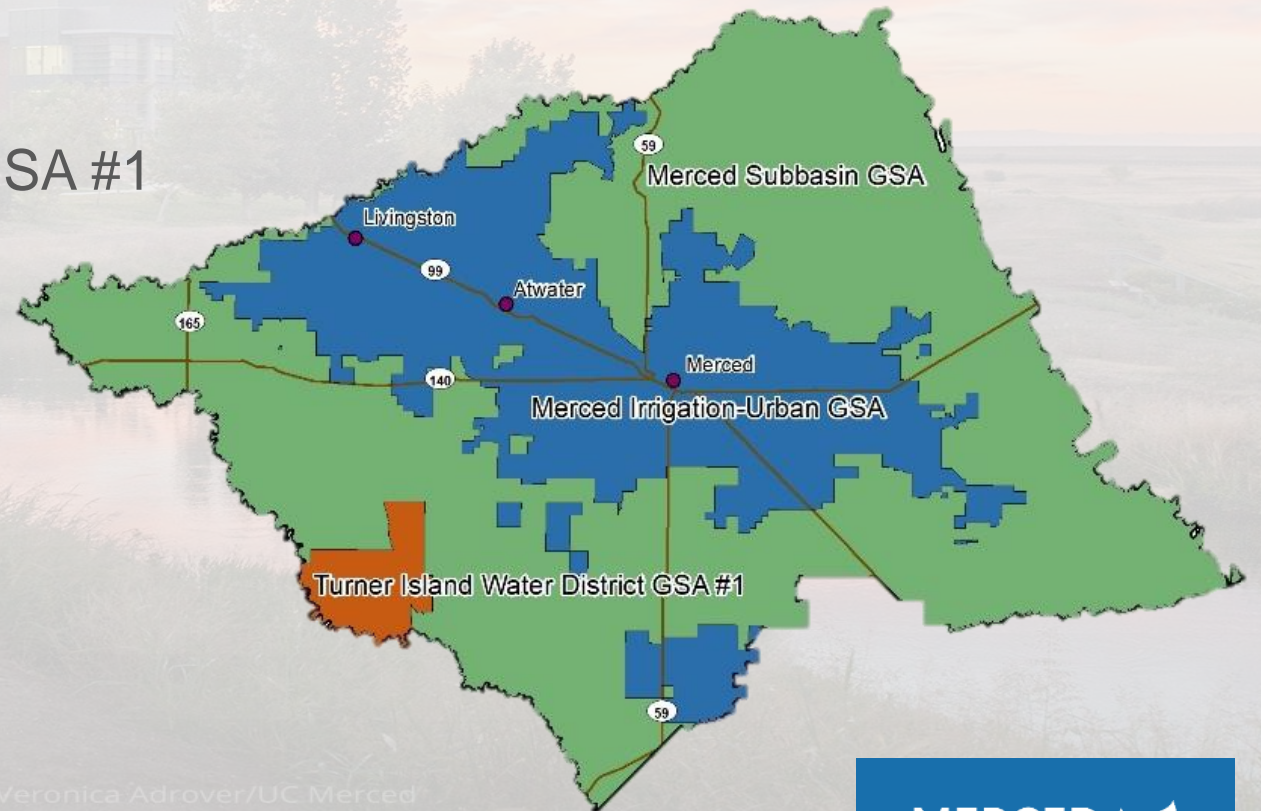
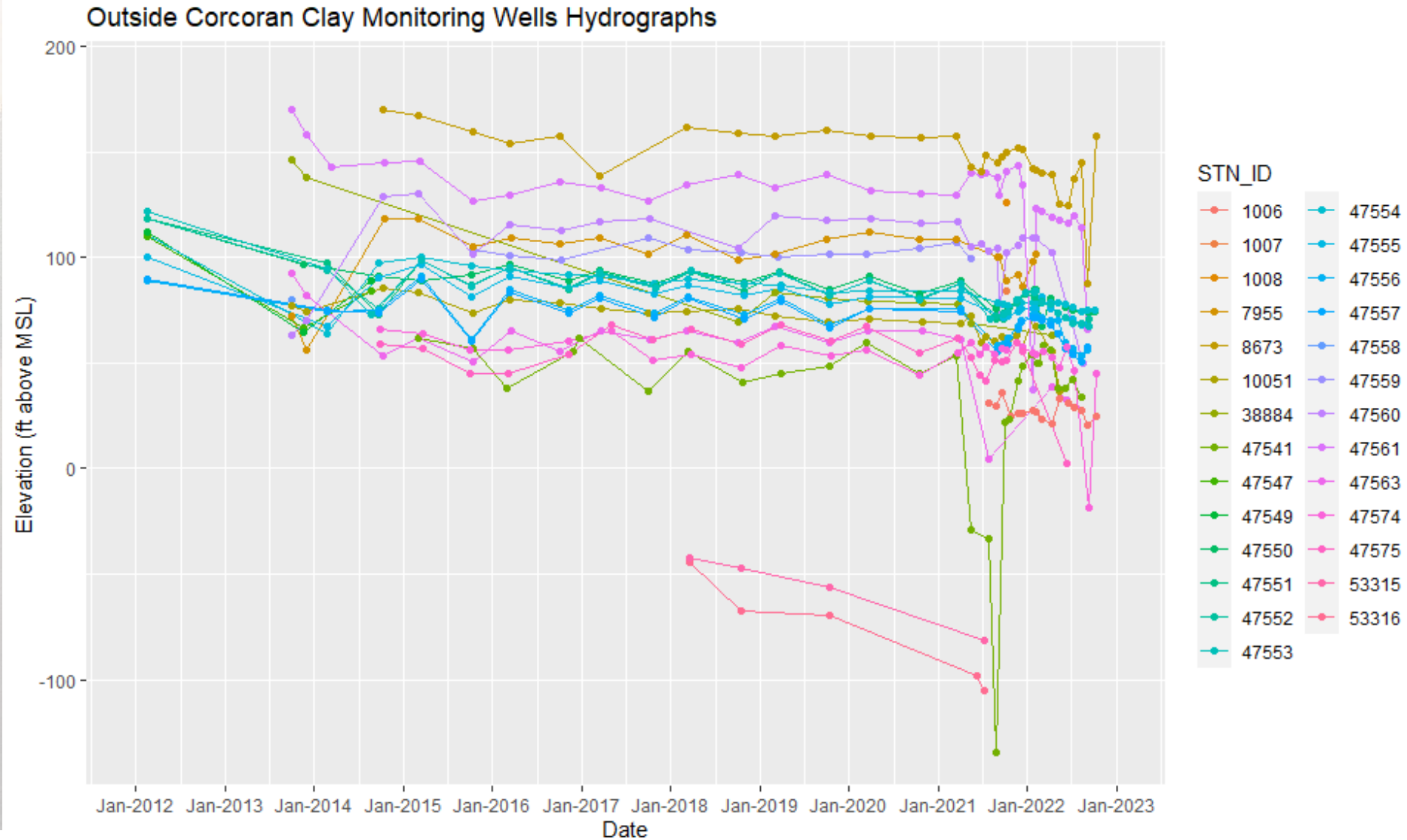


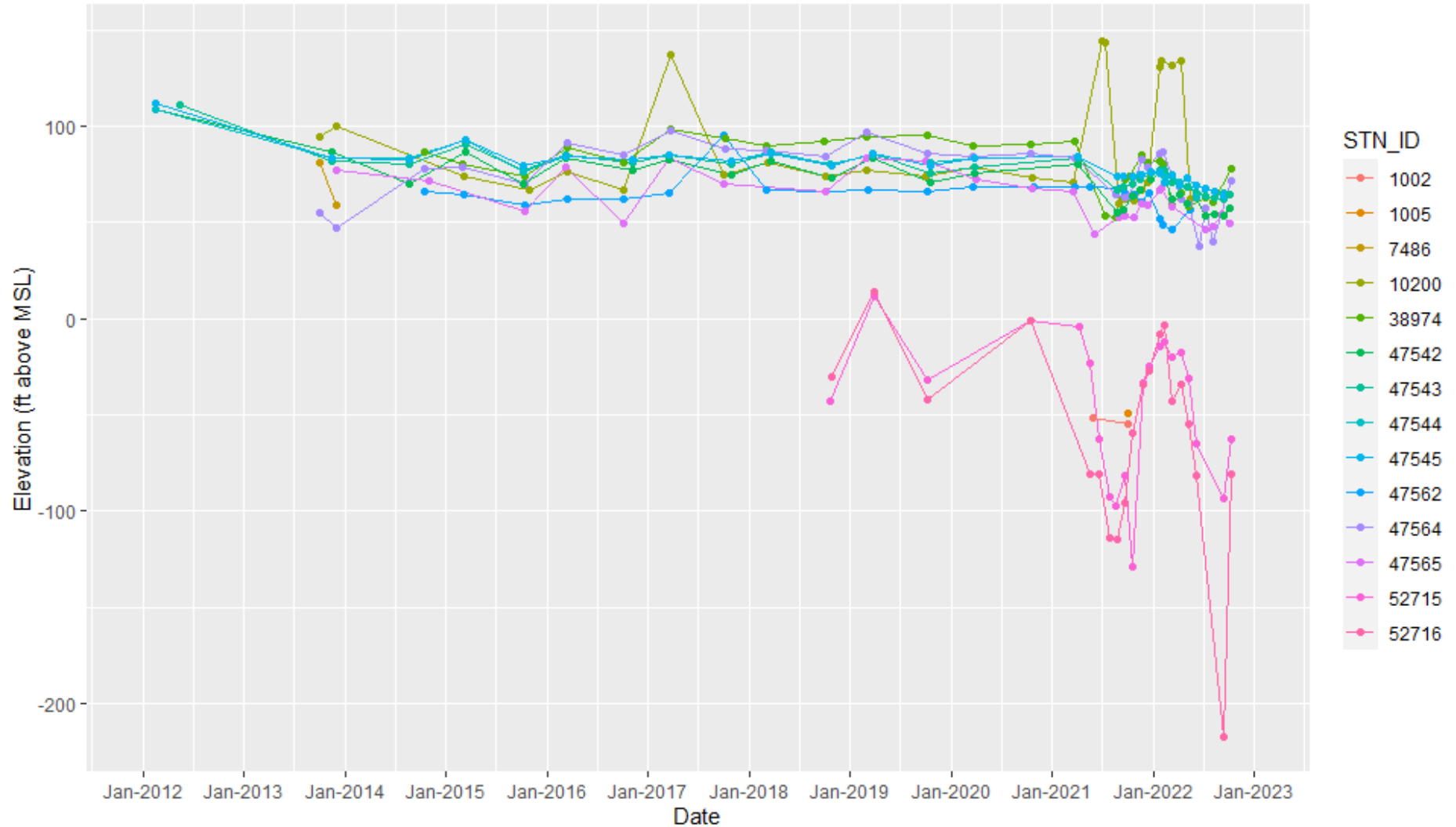
Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Current Basin Conditions



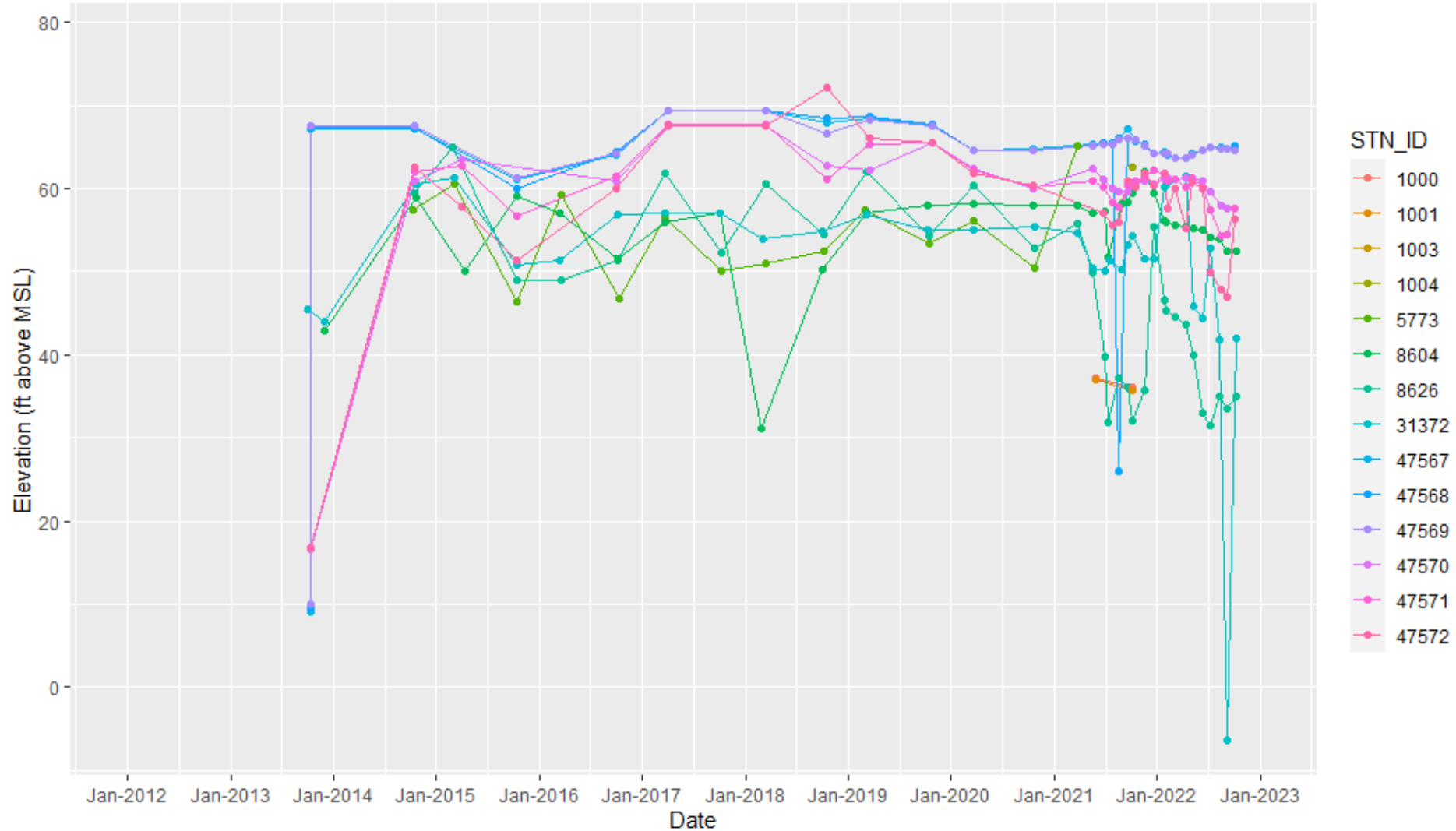
# Current Basin Conditions

Below Corcoran Clay Monitoring Wells Hydrographs



# Current Basin Conditions

Above Corcoran Clay Monitoring Wells Hydrographs





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# Recap of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan July 2022 Update

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Revised GSP Submitted on Time (by July 27)

- In response to DWR's Incomplete determination, with revisions for:
  - Chronic lowering of groundwater levels / domestic well impacts
  - Land subsidence
- Collaborative, transparent process January through July 2022

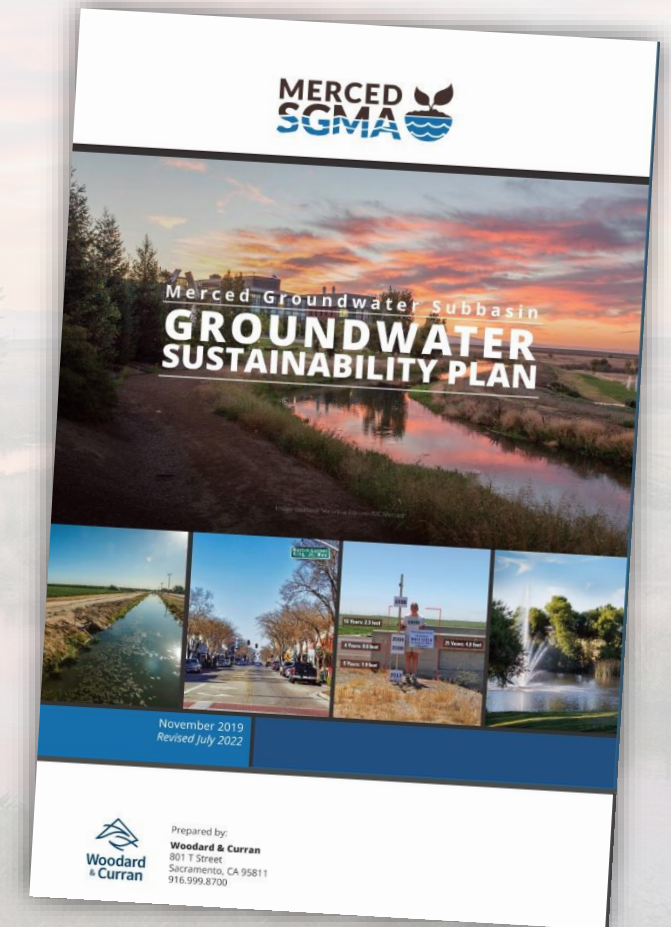








Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



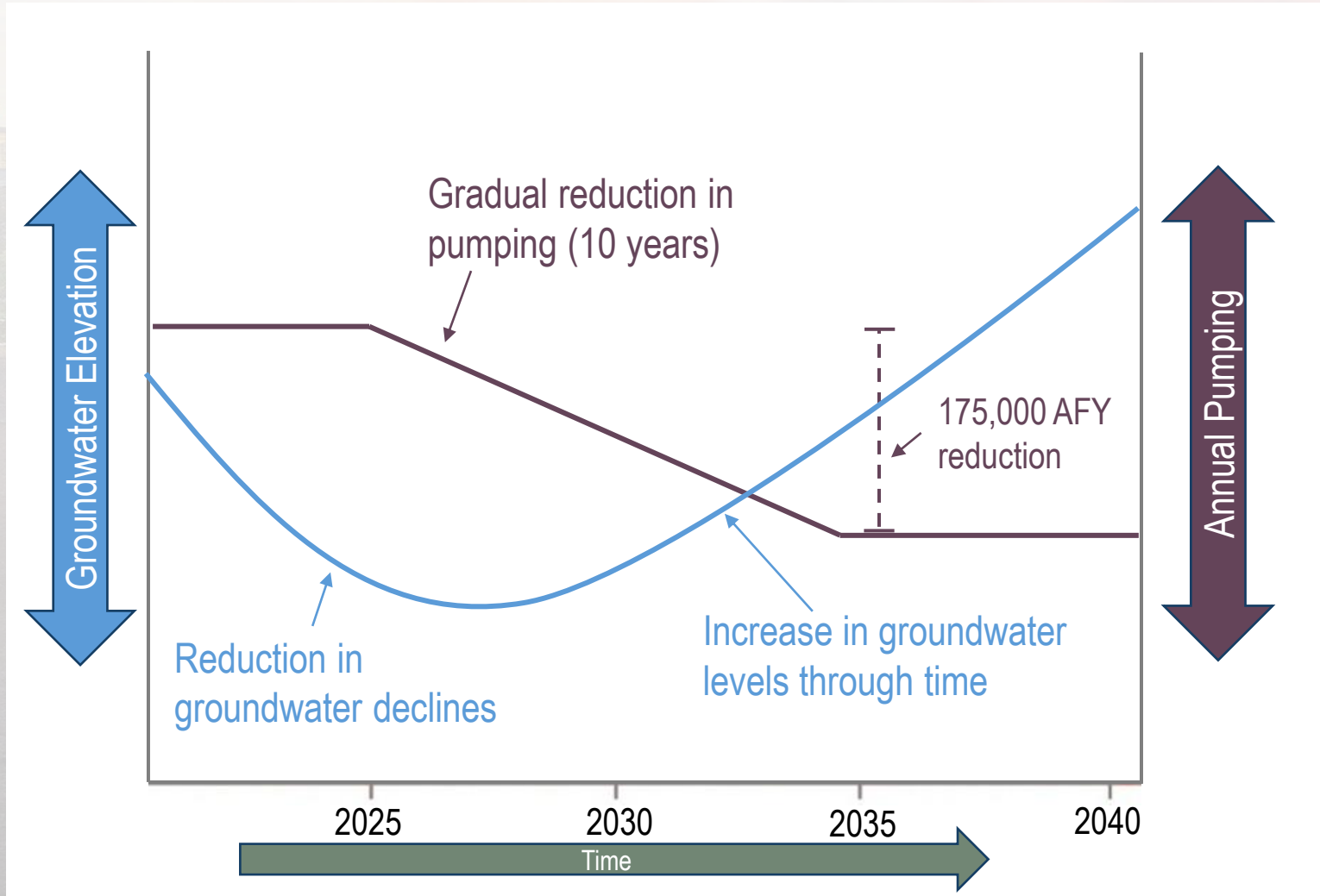
# Revised Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC)

**Table ES-1-1: Summary of Sustainable Management Criteria**

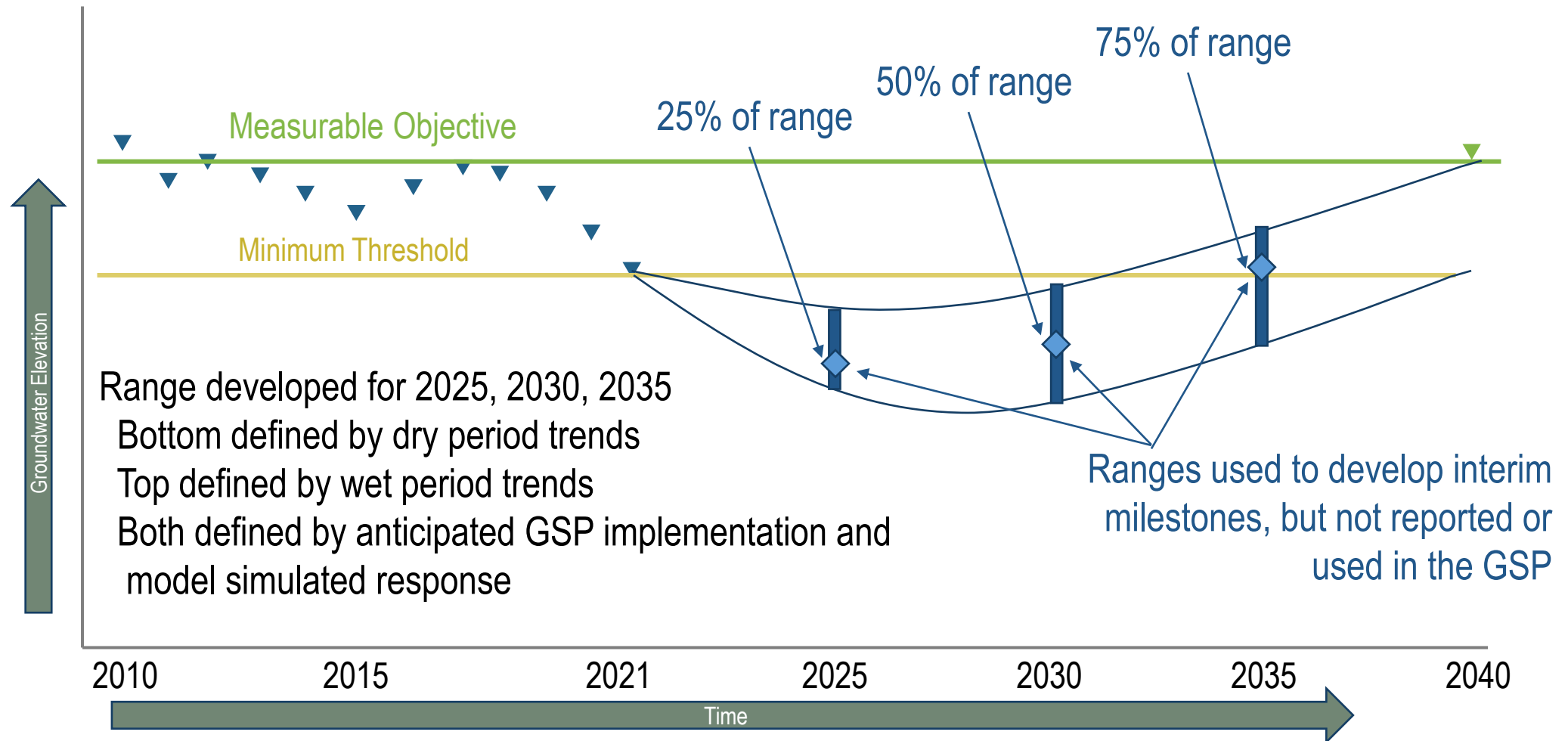
Sustainability Indicator	Minimum Threshold (MT)	Interim Milestone (IM)	Measurable Objective (MO)	Undesirable Result
 Groundwater Levels	Fall 2015 groundwater elevation	Based on range of projected values that account for hydrologic uncertainty, more details in Section 3.3.3.	November or October 2011 groundwater elevation (measured, or estimation if historical record not available)	Greater than 25% of representative wells fall below MT in 2 consecutive years <i>Removed specification of hydrologic year type</i>
 Groundwater Storage	Not applicable - not present and not likely to occur in the Subbasin due to the significant volumes of freshwater in storage			
 Seawater Intrusion	Not applicable - not present and not likely to occur due to the distance between the Subbasin and the Pacific Ocean (and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta)			
 Degraded Water Quality	1,000 mg/L TDS	1,000 mg/L TDS	500 mg/L TDS	At least 25% representative wells exceed MT for 2 consecutive years
 Land Subsidence	0 ft/year, subject to uncertainty of +/-0.16 ft/year	2025: -0.75 ft/year 2030: -0.5 ft/year 2035: -0.25 ft/year	0 ft/year	Exceedance of MT at 3 or more representative sites for 2 consecutive years
 Depletions of Interconnected Surface Waters	Groundwater levels used as a proxy for this sustainability indicator			

*(yellow highlighting indicates revised SMC)*

# Conceptual Scenario - Pumping vs Groundwater Levels Diagram



# Interim Milestone Approach



# Management Action for Subsidence Area

- Goal: Target pumping reduction (or recharge activities) within Subsidence Focus Area to achieve positive annual storage change
- Focus area defined by region with 2015-2021 average  $< -0.15$  ft/yr
- Details to be developed as part of the management action
- Coordinate with Chowchilla and Delta-Mendota

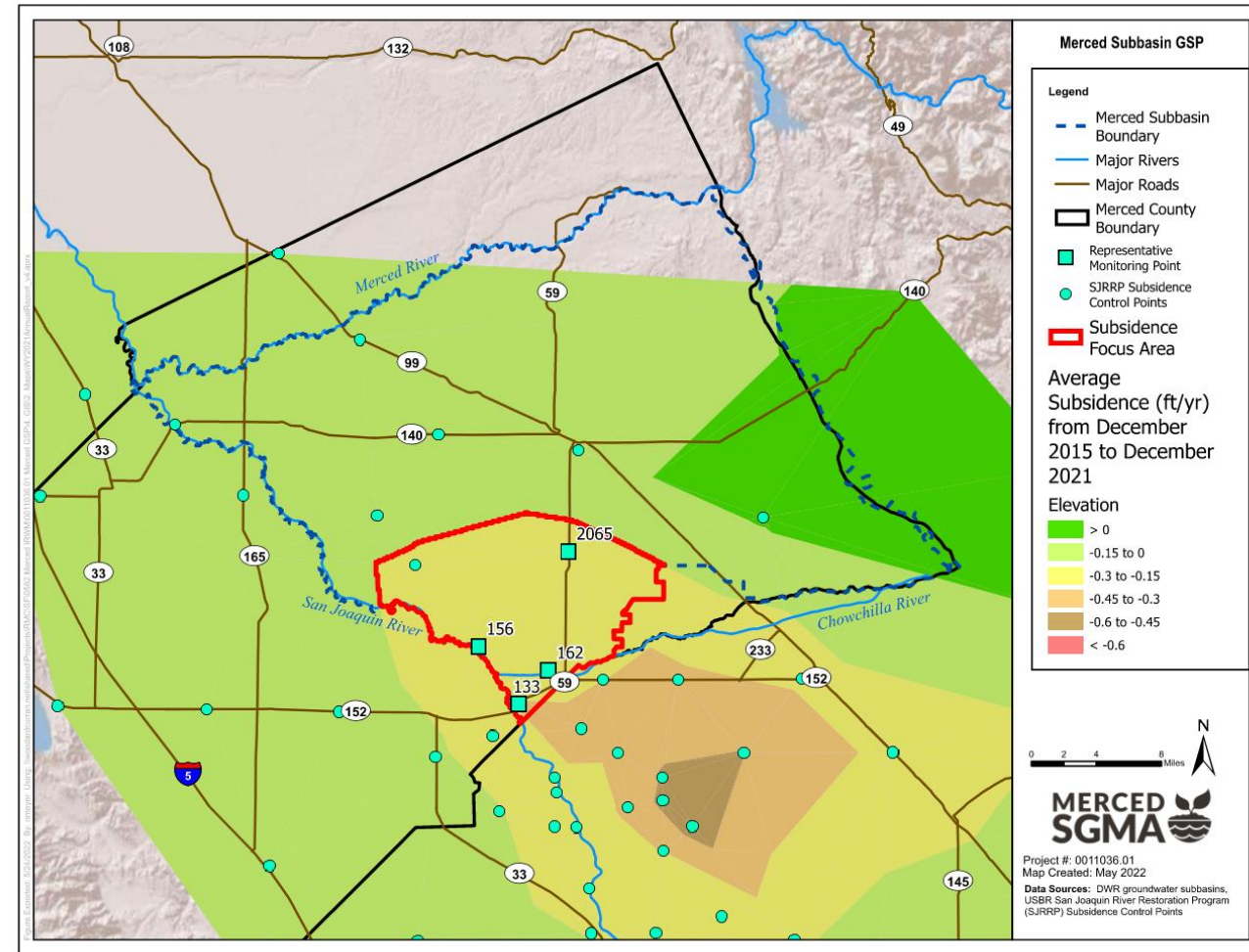


Image courtesy: Ve

# Management Action for Domestic Well Mitigation Program

- Need for the program to be identified during GSP implementation to provide additional protection for domestic well users
- Envisions a board or committee reviewing claims
- Claims would need to be tied to regional groundwater conditions
- Substantial discussion by GSAs related to funding – consideration of
  - Overdraft conditions by GSAs since 1/1/2015
  - Spatial relationships of pumping to impacts
  - Ability to define specifics at this time
- Full details to be developed

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Management Action for Above Corcoran Sustainable Management Criteria

- Intended to address unique conditions
  - Aquifer has not been substantially used
  - Subsidence may be mitigated by moving pumping shallower in the aquifer system
- Revisions to GSP may limit the ability to use this aquifer
  - Previous criteria allowed for some level of groundwater level decline, based on domestic well depths
  - New criteria keeps groundwater levels at or above 2015 levels
- Intent would be to allow use without significant and unreasonable impacts
- Details to be developed

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Public Comment Letters

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Letter 1 of 3: USBR San Joaquin River Restoration Program

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- Desire to engage SJRRP as a stakeholder, identify as a beneficial use & user
- Interconnected surface waters uses groundwater levels as a proxy, but needs modification to be shallower
- More detailed plan needed for addressing undesirable results for lowered groundwater levels significantly below minimum thresholds
- More explanation needed around inflow assumptions for San Joaquin River and Eastside Bypass in water budget; include Restoration Flows as Developed Supply

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Letter 2 of 3: National Marine Fisheries Services

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- Have not explained how proposed Minimum Threshold (MT) for interconnected surface waters (i.e., proxy via groundwater levels) avoids undesirable result (analysis of impacts on fish migration, spawning, and rearing)
- Concerned that groundwater level MT is not adequate to avoid impacts to Endangered Species Act listed salmonids and sturgeon, and their habitat
- Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) analysis focuses on riparian habitat and does not include aquatic GDEs within rivers and streams
- Does not contain adequate analysis and consideration of public trust resources

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# Letter 3 of 3: Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability

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- Missing drinking water impacts analysis for groundwater level SMC
- Fails to adequately address degradation of groundwater quality
- Does not account for dairy expansion demands on groundwater use
- Mitigation program lacks sufficient details to ensure success
- General comment that Revised GSPs (including Merced) do not comply with or conflict with:
  - Water Code Section 106.3 (right to safe & affordable drinking water)
  - Water rights of domestic users
  - Beneficial Use Doctrine
  - Public Trust Doctrine

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# 5-Year GSP Evaluation Lookahead

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# GSP Regulations

- § 356.4 Periodic Evaluation by Agency
  - “Each Agency shall evaluate its Plan at least every five years...and describe whether the Plan implementation, including implementation of projects and management actions, are meeting the sustainability goal in the basin...”
  - Groundwater conditions
  - Implementation of projects/management actions & effect on groundwater conditions
  - Evaluation of basin setting in light of significant new information or changes in water use
  - Update on data gaps
  - (and more)
- § 355.6 Periodic Review of Plan by Department
  - Periodic review to ensure remains consistent with SGMA and is being implemented in a manner that will likely achieve the sustainability goal for the basin.

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Timing of 5-year Evaluation

- “Each Agency shall evaluate its Plan at least every five years...” (§ 356.4)
- Evaluation is substantially an expanded annual report
- GSP was initially adopted in January 2020
- Five years from adoption would be January 2025
- Regulations are not clear on the timing of evaluations vs. submittal date of the documentation
- Will coordinate with DWR to assess the acceptability of delivery by April 1, 2025 – easing a 1 or 2 document solution to:
  - Meet requirements of the 5-year evaluation
  - Meet requirements of the annual report
  - 18-month timeline appropriate to allow resolution of more complex items. (October 2023 start)

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Potential outcomes of 5-year evaluation

- Evaluation is similar to an expanded Annual Report
  - Report on conditions
  - Report on status of conditions relative to sustainable management criteria
  - Report on status of projects and management actions
- Outcome dependent on the GSAs and stakeholders
  - Respond to forthcoming comments on the updated GSP from DWR
  - Engage stakeholders, including commentors
- Update GSP if necessary
  - Consider incorporation of new wells into groundwater level representative monitoring network
  - Consider modifications to groundwater quality monitoring network
  - Consider updating allocation information
  - Other modifications, as appropriate

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 2 (due Nov 30, 2022)

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# Background

- Round 2 adds medium & high priority basins, in addition to critically overdrafted
- \$200M funding available; \$1M-\$20M per basin
- One application per basin
- Schedule:
  - Application due November 30, 2022
  - Draft awards announced May 2023
  - Final awards Aug 2023
  - Agreements executed Sep-Nov 2023

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# Potential Projects for Application

- Projects not funded as part of Round 1 (beyond the \$7.6M cap) which could be considered

Original Rank	Updated Rank	Project Name	Submitting Agency	Project Cost	Score	Initial Grant Request	Updated Grant Request	Cumulative Grant Request
14	16	MIUGSA Groundwater Extraction Measurement Program	MIUGSA	\$4,000,000	16	\$2,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$9,099,885
15	17	Deadman Creek Canal Off Stream Storage and Recharge	Lone Tree MWC	\$3,410,000	15	\$3,410,000	\$1,000,000	\$10,099,885
18	18	Tri City's Water Recharge/Underground Storage Feasibility	MSGSA, MIUGSA	\$3,500,000	8.6	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$13,599,885

\$7.6M

\$10M

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced





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**Contract Amendment with W&C for Preparation of WY 2022 Annual Report, Meeting Support, and an Optional Task for Preparation of the Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 2 Application**

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# W&C Proposal

Task	Budget	Schedule	Notes
Preparation of Water Year 2022 Annual Report	\$77,605	December 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023	Annual Report + sustainable management criteria for “new” groundwater level monitoring wells + upgrade MercedIRWM Opti project tracker to include GSP projects
GSA Meeting Support 2022-2023	\$57,910	October 2022 – July 2023	Materials, facilitation, and translation services for eight meetings (CC + SAC)
Optional: Prop 68 Implementation Grant Round 2 Application	\$32,935	October – November 2022	Assumes up to 6 projects as part of application
<b>Total with Optional</b>	<b>\$167,935</b>		
<b>Total without Optional</b>	<b>\$135,515</b>		



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# Ongoing and Upcoming Activities

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# Grant Updates

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- Prop 68 Implementation Grant (May 2020 – Mar 2023)
- Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 1 (Jun 2022 – Jun 2025)
- SDAC Grant

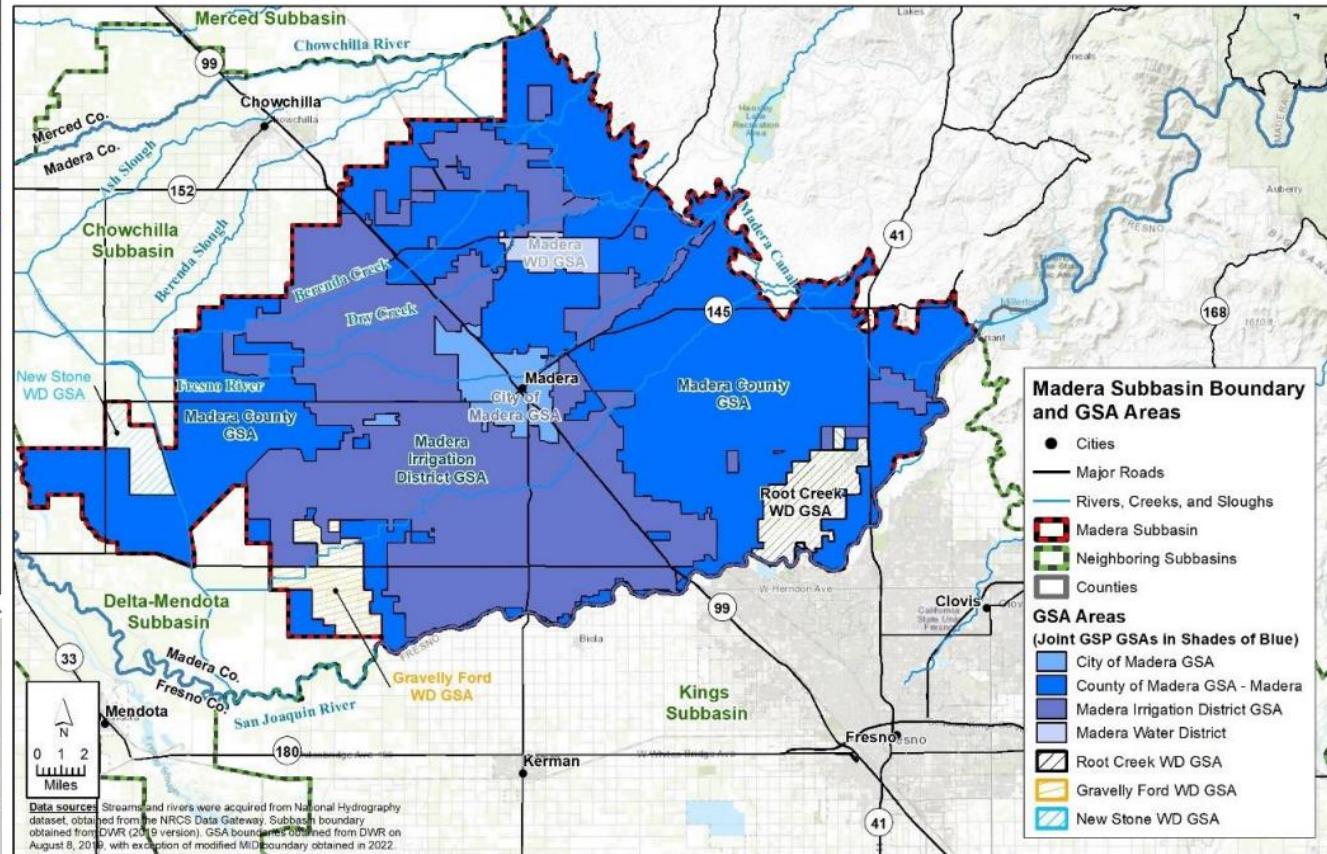
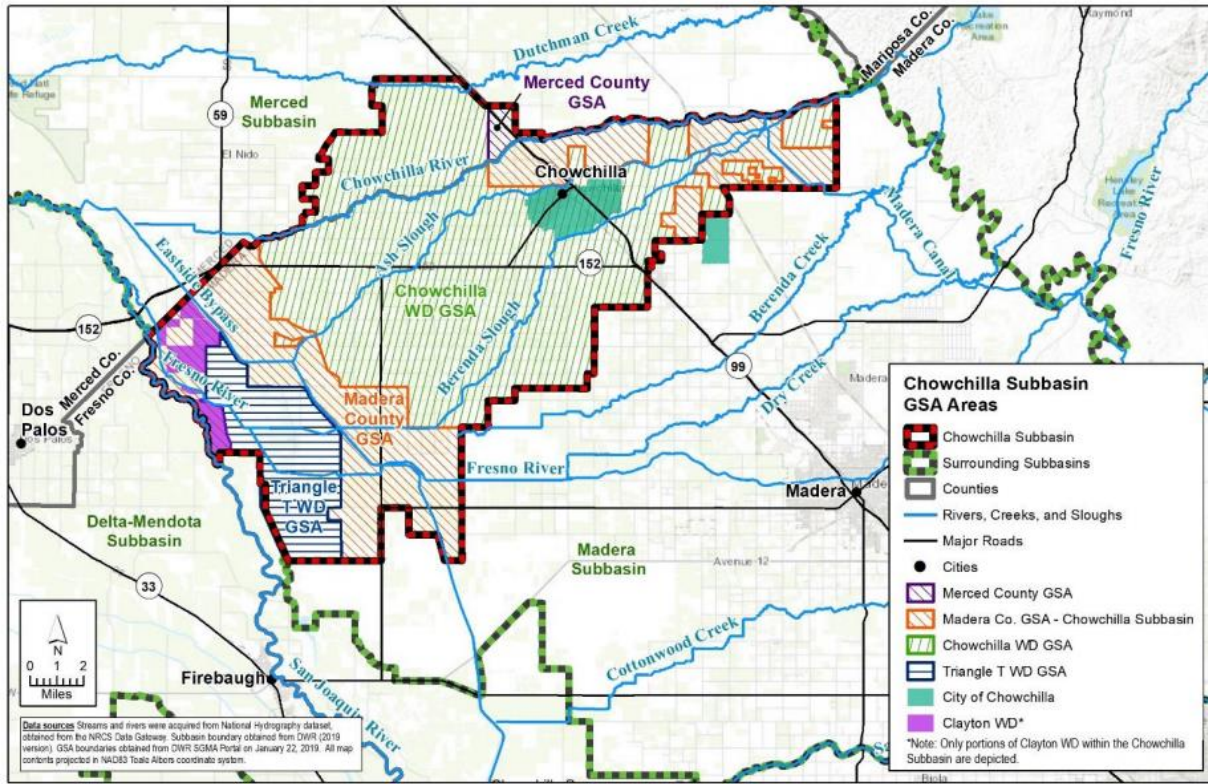
Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Evapotranspiration tools & methodologies update

- GSAs are coordinating to identify tools/methods that are
  - Of suitable accuracy for intended purposes
  - Consistent, to simplify compliance across the subbasin and reduce overall costs
  - Allow for a variety of uses for the data
- Information being developed in the Madera Subbasin and elsewhere being monitored to help identify best practices.

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Lessons learned from Madera and Chowchilla Subbasins



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# Water quality data sampling coordination

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- Annual water quality sampling program – “primary” wells used as representative monitoring wells for Merced GSP groundwater quality SMC for TDS
- TDS measured every 5 years
- Electrical Conductivity (EC) measured every year; can be used to estimate TDS
- TDS was sampled at most wells in 2022; will be compared against 2022 EC measurements at the same sites to assess the correlation between TDS and EC

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# DWR Flood-MAR Project

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- *MID to provide*

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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## Next Steps

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# What's coming up next?

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- Adjourn to next meeting: expected January 2023

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# Merced GSP Joint Meeting of Coordination Committee & Stakeholder Advisory Committee

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October 19, 2022

**Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA**  
**Merced Subbasin GSA**  
**Turner Island Water District GSA-1**

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

