

# MEETING NOTES – Merced GSP

SUBJECT: Merced GSP Coordination Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: February 27, 2023, 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

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## 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 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 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

## Meeting Notes

### 1. Call to Order and Welcome

- a. Jim Blanke (Woodard & Curran [W&C]) called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

### 2. Roll Call

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

### 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 (ElTal), seconded (Swenson), and carried

### 4. Approval of October 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- a. Action: Motion made (Gallo), seconded (Elwin), and carried

### 5. Public Comment

- a. None received.

## 6. Reports

### a. GSA Reports

- i. Lacey McBride (MSGSA) shared that she has no updates outside of the "Demand Reduction Discussion" agenda item later in the meeting.
- ii. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) shared that he has no updates outside of the "Demand Reduction Discussion" agenda item later in the meeting.
- iii. Kel Mitchell (TIWD GSA-#1) shared that he has no updates outside of the "Demand Reduction Discussion" agenda item later in the meeting.
- iv. Hicham ElTal (MIUGSA) presented an update on Flood-Managed Aquifer Recharge (Flood-MAR), including a background on Flood-MAR, permitting, and a pilot project for temporary short-term permit of Flood-MAR at Mariposa & Owens Creek.
  1. Q (Eric Swenson): Are the dots on the "Overall Look" map in place currently? A: Intent is that they are existing or temporary diversions.
  2. Comment (Brad Samuelson): Dairy Order obstacles limited a lot of diversion options (most on the El Nido Canal). Have been working with Western United Dairymen and Regional Water Quality Control Board to develop process to demonstrate low nitrogen leaching to make this more flexible in the future.
  3. Q (Eric Swenson): To get credit for recharge from State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for January storms (e.g. improvements to fields) may require additional documentation to support the request. Is it right that there would be additional obstacles beyond SWRCB for the flood permit? A: MID would be allowed to use it for multiple options. Farmers can enhance lands included in permit for recharge purposes.
  4. Q (Eric Swenson): How much water was diverted? A: Don't have numbers today. In the 100s of AF.
  5. Q (Ken Elwin): Are you going to check monitoring wells to see how the aquifer responded to Flood-MAR? A: Yes.
  6. Q (George Park): For next year, are we still going to be battling a fish screen and temporary vs permanent pump issue? A: MID is working on proposed legislation to streamline the permitting process and requirements.
    - a. Comment (Brad Samuelson): Big obstacle between now and next winter is the streambed alteration permits and temporary pumps.
  7. Comment (Ken Elwin): Think we should take water when it reaches monitor stage. A: Agreed.
  8. Q (Brad Samuelson): Should we spend money now to engage in minor streams now to be ready for discussion in future years? Dutchman, Deadman, etc. A: Yes.

### b. Current Basin Conditions

- i. Jim Blanke (W&C) presented hydrographs of groundwater elevations measured over the last 11 years for each principal aquifer. He encouraged participants to look at high-level trends (e.g. decrease in 2012-2014 previous drought, flattening in 2015-2018, then some more downward trend during current drought), as well as increased frequency of monitoring in the last 1-2 years.

## **7. WY 2022 Annual Report Preview**

- a. Chris Hewes & Jim Blanke (W&C) presented a summary of initial results from the Water Year (WY) 2022 Annual Report that is being drafted, including sustainability management criteria status, an update on using Electrical Conductivity values to estimate Total Dissolved Solids concentrations, and change in storage calculations based on the updated groundwater model.
- b. Q (Eric Swenson): Will EC be measured annually? A: Yes. The GSP 5-year evaluation process might involve a change in procedure for water quality sampling.

## **8. Demand Reduction Discussion**

- a. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) provided a high-level update on demand reduction activities occurring within MIUGSA including:
  - i. Two major actions take in 2022 by MIUGSA Board:
    - 1. Adopted of groundwater allocation
    - 2. Developed well registration portal
  - ii. Additional rules, regulations, and enforceable policies being finalized.
  - iii. Participating as pilot partner in development of Groundwater Accounting Platform with Environmental Defense Fund and Water Data Consortium
  - iv. Pilot Flood-MAR project (as described earlier by Hicham)
- b. Lacey McBride (MSGSA) provided a high-level update on demand reduction activities occurring within MSGSA including:
  - i. Two phased GSP Implementation Approach
    - 1. Phase 1 – 2021-2025
      - a. Goal is 15,000 AFY
      - b. Land Repurposing program developed in 2022, with 16 applications selected in first round, with project lifetimes ranging 3-5 years, and cumulative 7,263 AFY water saved, with average savings \$198/AFY.
        - i. Applications for second year expected to open in June/July.
      - c. WY 2023 Recharge Framework and Registration Form approved, to record credits by growers for recharge in WY 2023. Looking forward to the future when the GSA will have an allocation program in place, while encouraging growers to recharge today.
      - d. Parcel-based water budgets via EDF/Water Data Consortium Water Accounting Platform Pilot Project.
    - 2. Phase 2 – 2026-2040: Groundwater allocation program

- a. Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee created to make recommendations to the MSGSA Board. Expecting another set of recommendations to be published in March.
- c. Kel Mitchel (TIWD GSA-1) provided a high-level update on demand reduction activities being considered by the GSA:
  - i. Shifting cropping patterns
  - ii. More efficient utilization of storage and pump infrastructure to minimize system losses of applied water
  - iii. Design of and planning for upgraded and new infrastructure to curtail applied water needs

## 9. Grant Updates

- a. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) provided updates on projects related to each of the following rounds of GSP-related grant programs:
  - i. Prop 68 Planning Grant (May 2020 – Mar 2023)
    - 1. New dual completion well scheduled for construction in March 2023
    - 2. Q (George Park): Is this well located in Clayton Water District? A: Yes.
  - ii. Prop 68 Implementation Grant (Aug 2021 – Apr 2024)
    - 1. El Nido Conveyance System Improvements Project – four siphons replaced in spring 2022.
    - 2. Le Grand-Athlone Water District Intertie and Recharge Project (Phase 1) currently in design and working through permitting processes.
  - iii. Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 1 (Jun 2022 – Jun 2025)
    - 1. Grant agreement executed in October 2022, so many projects are just starting up.
    - 2. Component 10 (Merquin County Water District Sustainable Yield Management Plan and Plan Implementation) has recently dropped out.
  - iv. Prop 68 Implementation Planning & Projects Grant Round 2
    - 1. Application pending review by DWR (submitted Dec 2022 for 7 projects for \$18.4M)
    - 2. Q (Kel Mitchel): Is there any indication DWR will pro-rate or instead prioritize subbasins not receiving funding to date? A: Unsure. We imagine that it'll be spread to broadest number of applicants.
      - a. Jim Blanke (W&C) added that he has verbally heard draft awards could be provided in spring 2023.

## 10. Next steps and adjourn

- a. The GSAs are considering a joint CC/SAC meeting for May 2023.
  - i. Kel Mitchell supported this because it was helpful to have separate meetings during the GSP update process, but at this point, but it's a little repetitious given a different meeting purpose.

b. Meeting adjourned at 2:42 pm.

**Next Regular Meeting**

**TBD – expected May 2023, likely a joint meeting with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee**

Meeting to be conducted as an in-person meeting (subject to change)

Information also available online at [mercedsgma.org](https://mercedsgma.org)