



MEETING NOTES – Merced GSP

SUBJECT: Merced GSP Coordination Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: December 1, 2020 at 9:00 – 11:00 AM

LOCATION: Online - Microsoft Teams Meeting

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"/>	Bob Kelley	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mike Gallo	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nic Marchini	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input 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 (November 2, 2020) were approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Lou Myers (Merced Grasslands Coalition) provided public comment on the Stakeholder Committee reengagement agenda item. Lou represents a coalition of farmers and ranchers in the Merced Subbasin. Lou has reached out to members of the GSA and has submitted letters to DWR. The Merced Grasslands Coalition would like to be part of GSP discussions moving forward potentially through the stakeholder committee.

5. REPORTS

- a. Coordination with neighboring basins



- i. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) provided updates:
 1. More information will be coming from the Turlock Subbasin including about their water budget.
 2. There is a new proposed timeline for coordination between Delta-Mendota, Merced, and possibly Chowchilla Subbasins.
- b. GSA Reports - Updates were provided from each GSA on activities they are undertaking in their own jurisdiction:
 - i. TIWD GSA #1 - Larry Harris indicated no updates since the last CC meeting.
 - ii. MIUGSA - Hicham EITal expressed concern that this appears to be a dry year and it's uncertain how this may impact the GSP.
 - iii. Merced Subbasin GSA - Bob Kelly reported that MSGSA is working with Provost & Pritchard to determine potential sustainability zones in the GSA that may be used for management, monitoring, or projects in the future. The MSGSA's Technical Advisory Committee will be discussing these at ongoing meetings.

6. ACTIONS

- a. Water Year 2020 Annual Report
 - i. Samantha Salvia (W&C) provided a brief background on the first annual report submitted for Water Years 2016-2019 and the requirement to submit a Water Year 2020 report by 4/1/2021 to DWR.
 - ii. Hicham EITal and Bob Kelly indicated they'd like to start work on the annual report as soon as possible.
 - iii. Ken Elwin asked what is the total budget for this effort. Woodard & Curran confirmed it is about \$85,000.
 - iv. Nic Marchini asked: will recent monitoring data be reported and what locations will be included? Matt Beaman and Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) confirmed monitoring data was collected and submitted in March and MID is now finalizing data to submit to DWR from October for the whole monitoring network.
 - v. Bob Kelly (MSGSA) asked if agencies could be notified if there's data not received. Matt Beaman confirmed that data from all agencies were received for all of 2020 thus far.
 - vi. **ACTION approved by CC:** Recommend GSA Boards approve a contract amendment with Woodard & Curran to complete the Second Annual Report including data collection, analysis, report writeup, and submittal to DWR by April 1, 2021.
- b. Proposition 68 Planning Grant Work
 - i. Basin awarded a \$500,000 Prop 68 Planning Grant in early 2020
 - ii. MID has contracted with DWR for the grant and is ready to begin work
 - iii. At November meeting, CC requested Woodard & Curran prepare a scope and budget consistent with grant agreement for Data Gaps Plan and Remote-Sensing Tool part of grant scope.
 - iv. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) clarified that the work Woodard & Curran will be doing is the planning work for the data gaps plan and remote sensing and not the "field work" components which make up most of the grant amount.



1. Hicham indicated he'd like Woodard & Curran to determine DWR's direction for remote sensing data sources. The GSAs would like to be in alignment with the data source DWR is likely to consider standard.
- v. Q: Will there be additional coordination on the Remote Sensing Decision Support Tool and its development? A: Yes. The scope includes stakeholder engagement and GSA coordination and input.
- vi. Q: Will the Data Gaps Plan be used to update/refine the Subbasin's model? A: Modeling work is not directly part of the Data Gaps Plan, but down the road it's likely the model will be updated once additional monitoring locations are identified and data is collected.
- vii. Q: Will the Data Gaps Plan be complete by end of February? A: Woodard & Curran will confirm a more detailed schedule, but likely will require more than two months to prepare a detailed plan with outreach.
- viii. Hicham ElTal would like Woodard & Curran to connect with each GSA individually as the Data Gaps Plan is developed for locally-specific information.
- ix. **ACTION approved by CC:** Recommend GSA Boards approve a contract amendment with Woodard & Curran to conduct Prop 68 Planning Grant work associated with Data Gaps Plan and Remote Sensing components as described in scope provided by Woodard & Curran.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Prop 68 Implementation Grant Opportunity
 - i. Samantha Salvia (W&C) provided an overview of the Prop 68 Grant Implementation opportunity.
 - ii. Lacey McBride (MSGSA) reported that a group of GSA representatives have had several discussions about potential projects as well as posed some questions to DWR representatives about competitiveness of the grant. The small group has a shortlist of projects: recharge basins, El Nido improvement, and LeGrand Athlone intertie. Recommend that the CC direct the GSA representatives to select projects scoped to have a combined value within the \$2-\$5M grant requirements.
 1. Black Rascal Creek flood control project was also identified but probably more appropriate for round 2 of implementation funding and won't be included in the project list for this grant application.
 - iii. Brad Samuelson provided a description of the LeGrand Athlone intertie project: a canal that links MID through Le Grand-Athlone Water District on southeast side of Subbasin, then continues to connect to Chowchilla River. Phase 1 would be connecting MID's booster 3 lateral to several creeks and would be just under \$5M budget, but grant app could be adjusted to only include certain components. Overall the project is envisioned to bring floodwater into the Subbasin that otherwise would continue in Merced River or MID's service area. A feasibility study was completed in June 2020 and Summers Engineering is currently developing 30% drawings.
 1. Brad Samuelson confirmed he should be able to pull together required project information for the grant on the intertie project. He can provide starting information to W&C. He also has information about the recharge basins and KMZ maps.
 - iv. Brad Samuelson provided background on the potential La Paloma recharge basin project: a wetland area that can be flooded by local supplies. The area is already used for some recharge. There's a good environmental enhancement at this site as a mutual benefit. There



is an existing diversion point. The project budget is about \$750K but could be scaled back if needed.

- v. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) provided a description of the El Nido improvements project (\$400-\$500K).
 - 1. El Nido is on the tail end of MID's service area and moving water there and beyond is particularly challenging. The improvements would be in areas of major flow restrictions (e.g. increasing capability of moving water down El Nido system on the order of 1,000 AF). This would help MID move water to lower end of El Nido area during the flood event using existing floodwater licensing.
 - 2. MID could provide details on project in 2 days if group were to move forward with this. Woodard & Curran confirmed it will be tight but doable in this case.
 - 3. Also a plus from a grant app perspective is that this is in the subsidence area and supports a Disadvantaged Community.
 - vi. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) clarified that CC should make a decision today on whether to pursue round 1 funding and generally what project(s) should be in the application (with a little room for edit in next few days).
 - vii. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) requested that the cost for application preparation can be taken on by the GSA for which the proposed project benefits.
 - viii. Bob Kelly (MSGSA) expressed concern that project details, budget, etc. aren't refined enough and won't be in time for round 1 application due date. Discussion ensued on schedule feasibility.
 - ix. MIUGSA and MSGSA to provide project info by end of Thursday 12/3 for El Nido Improvements and scaled back versions of La Paloma recharge basin and Le Grand-Athlone Intertie project.
 - x. **ACTION approved by CC:** Authorize W&C to start working on and complete an application for Prop 68 Implementation grant funding, providing that the GSAs forward project descriptions, costs, and project benefits to W&C by Thursday 12/3/2020 and also that the GSAs benefiting from awarded (funded) projects would be burdened proportionally for the cost of preparing the application and not the whole Subbasin's typical GSA split.
- b. Stakeholder Committee re-engagement (meeting frequency, review of member composition)
- i. Samantha Salvia (W&C) provided a description of the Stakeholder Committee function and original formation. The committee was formed for development of the GSP through a public application process. The CC reviewed applications and recommended a stakeholder committee list to the GSA boards. The GSA boards approved the stakeholder committee. The committee met monthly prior to coordination committee meetings for the duration of GSP development.
 - ii. Q: how long are these members asked to serve? A: Original expectation was through the development of the GSP (end of 2019).
 - 1. Mike Gallo suggested the potential for implementing a term limit with option to renew to be in alignment with other committees (e.g. avoid asking for indefinite membership length).
 - iii. Additional Public Comment – the committee took additional public comment on this item:



1. Angela (Self-Help Enterprises): Previous manager Maria Herrera has left but SHE continues to engage with the Merced Subbasin and would like to continue to do so through the Stakeholder Committee.
 2. Lou Myers: Suggested that future stakeholder participation should be explicitly for GSP implementation. Roughly 50% of the landmass is rangeland and roughly 3% of the interested parties represent that so the CC should consider this given the potential for recharge on rangeland.
- iv. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) suggested that if virtual meeting attendance continues to be an option, it may make it easier for stakeholders to be involved.
 - v. Bob Kelly (MSGSA) indicated the MSGSA Technical Advisory Committee is meeting 12/2 and will discuss this. He agreed with a quarterly meeting frequency.
 - vi. Samantha Salvia (W&C) suggested staggering SC meetings so they occur before the corresponding CC meeting to provide time to consolidate feedback and transmit to CC.
 - vii. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) suggested reaching out to existing SC list to solicit interest in continued participation and defining responsibilities and requirements. MID has done something similar in the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) process.
 - viii. W&C will start with the previous SC application description and update then pass to the CC for feedback.
- c. Update the MercedSGMA general contact inbox from mercedsgma@woodardcurran.com to contact@mercedsgma.org and route messages to the three GSAs.
 - i. CC agreed this is a good idea and the GSAs will each provide points of contact.
 - d. Approach for establishing thresholds and sustainability criteria in areas without historical monitoring data or not monitored in past or without domestic wells.
 - i. Hicham EITal (MIUGSA) is interested in identifying abandoned wells and thinks they might provide information on development of the aquifer over time. Also interested in shallow wells in Above Corcoran Clay that have been abandoned to be drilled deeper into the Below Corcoran Clay to give an idea of shallow aquifer health.
 - ii. Q: If individual person has been taking historical groundwater elevations, how should they go about voluntarily submitting that data? (e.g. in Le Grand area, fairly regular elevation data has been collected, might be useful to fill data gaps). A: We can circle back on where those wells might be and data available. Per Matt Beaman (MIUGSA), there is a form to submit level data on MercedSGMA website. Official representative wells are required to meet state guidelines for the wells (e.g. construction and commitment to monitoring frequency) and would be up to CC or GSAs to incorporate if they can be demonstrated to meet the requirements.
 - iii. Greg Young (MSGSA) noted that in model calibration there were wells in data gap areas and those can be valuable for understanding what might be representative wells and historical conditions in the area.
 - iv. Hicham requested that W&C send a list of the options/venues to use to try to estimate or develop a threshold/sustainability criteria for CC feedback and further investigation.
 1. Example, PG&E had historical wells with significant data that were used previously.

8. Next steps and adjourn

- a. Confirm next meeting date
 - i. Woodard & Curran will schedule a February 22 meeting from 1:15-3:15pm.

- ii. Request was made to add standing item near end of future agendas for committee member thoughts/suggestions, etc.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 10:57 AM



**Next Regular Meeting
February 22 at 1:15-3:15 PM**

Meeting to be conducted virtually (subject to change)
Information also available online at mercedsgma.org