



## MEETING MINUTES – Merced GSP Stakeholder Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: May 22, 2024, 10 am – 12pm

LOCATION: Hybrid meeting with physical location at UC Cooperative Ext Merced Classroom, 2145 Wardrobe Ave, Merced, CA 95341 and online via Zoom

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### Stakeholder Committee Members in Attendance:

	Representative	Community Aspect Representation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alvaro Arias	UC Merced
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arlan Thomas	MIDAC member
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill Eisenstein	River Partners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bob Kelley	Stevinson Representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Breanne Vandenberg	MCFB
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caitie Diemel	ESJWQC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Craig Arnold	Arnold Farms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Melendrez	City of Merced
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Danielle Serrano	Serrano Farms - Le Grand
<input type="checkbox"/>	David Belt	Foster Farms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eddie Rojas	E&J Gallo Winery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emma Reyes	Martin Reyes Farm/Land Leveling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jean Okuye	E Merced RCD
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joe Sansoni	Sansoni Farms/MCFB
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joe Scoto	Scoto Brothers/McSwain School Dist.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Baker	Clayton Water District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Kayser-Grant	Sierra Club
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maxwell Norton	Unincorporated area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nav Athwal	TriNut Farms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Simon Vander Woude	Sandy Mush MWC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susan Walsh	City of Merced
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Dinwoodie	Master Gardener/McSwain
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trevor Hutton	Valley Land Alliance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wes Myers	Merced Grassland Coalition
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Zachary Hamman	Cal Am Water
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Phillip Woods (alternate)	UC Merced
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ben Migliazzo (alternate)	Live Oak Farms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blake Nervino (alternate)	Stevinson/Merquin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scott Menefee (alternate)	Clayton Water District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill Spriggs (alternate)	Resident City of Merced
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lou Myers (alternate)	Benjamin Land LP

### Meeting Minutes

#### 1. Call to Order and Welcome

- a. Charles Gardiner (Catalyst) welcomed the group.

## 2. Introductions and Roll Call

- a. Charles Gardiner (Catalyst) reviewed the agenda, conducted roll call, and reminded attendees that past meeting materials are available online at [mercedsgma.org](http://mercedsgma.org).

## 3. Questions/Comments from the Public

- a. Mike Temic – grower in Atwater. Commented that groundwater recharge is a primary key to achieve sustainability and shared information about a potential project for subsurface reverse tile drain.
- b. Ngodoo Atume – SGMA technical assistant for local basins. Q: Are small farmers being considered in the Periodic Evaluation and Revised GSP during the implementation of PMAs in the Subbasin?
  - i. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) – We have not reached out to small farmers directly, but the average farm is ~40 acres.
  - ii. Ashelee Chan-Gonzalez (MSGSA) – no program specifically for farmers, but the GSA is working on allocations. Grants are being developed for small farmers to apply and receive funds with incentives related to water use.

## 4. Reports

- a. GSA Reports
  - i. Ashlee Chan-Gonzalez (MSGSA) shared the following updates:
    1. Expecting to finish allocation framework program by July for public comment.
    2. Growers to register in platform, allocations won't be registered in accounting platform until 2026.
    3. Discussions with both entities (GSAs and growers) have taken place internally.
    4. Land repurposing update: third year applications open from June 15 through July 31. Applicants will receive a PIN. MSGSA will be sending out postcard reminders when the application is available.
    5. Q (Maxwell N.): What is a PIN?
      - a. Unique PIN for each of the growers.
    6. Q (Joe S.): What is the allocation, 13 over X?
      - a. Yes, the sustainable yield of native groundwater is 13 inches per acre. Once we hit the five-year mark allocations could be changed depending on groundwater levels.
      - b. Comment (Joe S.): Could require additional restrictions.
  - ii. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) shared the following updates:
    1. Matt described how the GSA is homing in on urban allocations and refining numbers.
    2. Allocation is at sustainable yield, using evapotranspiration (ET) was difficult during wet year as a result of increased ET.
    3. The GSA is still evaluating and determining a location for the CIMIS station.
    4. Grant admin.:
      - a. SGPG grant, completed in April 2024.
      - b. SGM Grant – ongoing, SG Implementation Grant (Rounds 1 & 2)
      - c. Funding secured for filling data gaps, measured groundwater levels at newly installed wells.
  - iii. Kel Mitchell (TIWD GSA-#1) was not available to present.
- b. CIMIS Station Report

- i. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) provided an update:
  1. Discussion with landowner, but no significant movement.
  2. Reaching out to other landowners in other areas and seeing how the station impacts them.
  3. Can provide information to landowners, have a list of people to talk to.
- c. Current Groundwater Conditions
  - i. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA) provided an update on groundwater conditions.
    1. Discussed certain trends in monitoring wells and areas of concern that he intends to focus on in the future.
    2. Wells are hand tagged for validation twice a year.
    3. Current conditions report has been posted to MercedSGMA.org.
- d. SAC questions and discussion
  - i. Q (Susan Walsh): Are we feeling hopeful about finding site for the CIMIS station? This is a critical piece of reporting tech.
    1. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA): We should be able to find a site and come up with an agreement to host a site. Main concern is not having ET data to track without station.
  - ii. Q (from public, Ngodoo Atume): Asked some questions on wells about those above and below Corcoran Clay. Did we hit any undesirable results?
    1. Jim Blanke (Woodard & Curran): We did have a certain percentage of wells reach the undesirable result definition. However, as part of the process we established interim milestones (IMs) below the minimum threshold (MT) for the near term to get projects and management actions (PMAs) implemented.

## **5. Updates on Basin Conditions and Sustainable Management Criteria for GSP Update**

- a. Jim Blanke (Woodard & Curran) provided updates on several items, including:
  - i. Airborne electromagnetic (AEM) surveying being incorporated into the GSP
    1. Some GSAs use AEM data for identifying paleo river channels
    2. Q: How accurate was the AEM data compared to boring logs?
      - a. It was pretty good and aligned well.
      - b. Having the flight lines helps correlate boring log data fairly well.
  - ii. An analysis was performed to assess trends between various groundwater quality constituents and groundwater levels.
    1. Comment (Maxwell Norton): It makes you wonder if there is a localized source of pollution.
    2. General comment: Detection limit changes have caused potential issues.
  - iii. Recap of previously discussed approach for sustainable management criteria for subsidence and change in storage.
    1. Q (Joe B.): What are we doing for subsidence impacts from our neighbors?
      - a. We have to coordinate with the neighboring basins to make sure.
    2. Matt Beaman (MIUGSA): The four Subbasins have meet with DWR to have interbasin coordination.
    3. Q (Joe B.): What is the rationale for evaluating critical infrastructure impacts from subsidence? Are the GSAs liable for repairs?
      - a. It is challenging to understand, but this requires coordination with the responsible agencies.
    4. Comment (Bob K.): We have to pay attention to subsidence because basins are going into probation because of it. Cites such as Kaweah and Tule Lake.
    5. Q (Thomas D.) : Are all the people impacted by the Corcoran meeting?
      - a. There has been interbasin coordination.

6. Q (Susan W.): Follow-up on Joe's question. What is the implication for being liable for repair? Would GSAs be responsible for repairs? How is subsidence our issue given that it's been a widespread for 50+ years.
  - a. Not likely for GSAs to be liable.

## 6. MercedWRM Modeling Scenarios Overview and Initial Draft Outputs

- a. Jim Blanke (Woodard & Curran) presented the Merced Water Resources Model (MercedWRM) framework and how it assesses groundwater conditions in the Subbasin. He discussed modeling scenarios, calibration methods, and outputs.
- b. Q: What do you think about boundary conditions with adjacent basins?
  - i. Andres: We used a specified flux for the model update. Other basins use MTs, but it is dependent on what the GSAs assumptions would like to be.
- c. Q: Is recent data from other GSAs available?
  - i. Jim: Not the most recent data, so it is a challenge to get all information available.
- d. Andres Diaz (Woodard & Curran) presented a more detailed overview of the recent update and enhancements to the MercedWRM.
- e. Comment (Maxwell N.): 2022 land use trends have drastically changed in recent years. Hardened water demands have led to drops in crop yield.
- f. Q: Why was there no urban use data?
  - i. Andres: The urban data was good, but we updated the land use.
- g. Q: Will well meters be used to incorporate into model?
  - i. Andres: Definitely, if we have more specialized data we will use it.
- h. Q: Will subsidence be added to model?
  - i. Andres: Yes.

## 7. Next steps

- a. Charles Gardiner (Catalyst) discussed upcoming SAC activities and the public workshop on the evening of 5/22.
- b. Location for July meeting, TBD.

## 8. Adjourn

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 11:59 am.

### **Next Regular Meeting Proposed for July 17, 2024 at 10am**

Meeting to be conducted as an in-person meeting with opportunity to participate virtually (subject to change)  
Information also available online at [mercedsgma.org](https://mercedsgma.org)

