

Merced Basin Groundwater Sustainability Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Prepared for

Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Turner Island Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency #1

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Catalyst

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List of Acronyms

DAC	Disadvantaged Community
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
IRWM	Integrated Regional Water Management
MID	Merced Irrigation District
MIUGSA	Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency
RCD	Resource Conservation District
SDAC	Severely Disadvantaged Community
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
TCP	Trichloropropane
USGS	United States Geological Survey

Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Overview

California's Groundwater Sustainability Management Act (SGMA) requires that Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) be adopted for the most critical groundwater basins in California. The Merced Groundwater Subbasin was identified by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) as one of 21 basins in California identified as "critically overdrafted" and one of 48 basins considered high priority.

In accordance with SGMA, water management and land management agencies in Merced Subbasin formed three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs):

- [Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency](#)
- [Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency](#)
- Turner Island Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency #1, Turner Island Water District, 1269 W. I Street, Los Banos, CA 93635. (209) 827-7700. [GSA Formation Documentation](#)

The GSAs have agreed to develop one GSP for the entire Merced Groundwater Subbasin to be submitted to DWR by January 31, 2020. To develop and implement the GSP, the governing boards of the three GSAs will work together to make decisions necessary to review existing groundwater conditions and develop a plan that supports the long-term sustainability of the Merced Groundwater Subbasin.

Merced Groundwater Subbasin

The Merced Groundwater Subbasin includes the cities of Merced, Atwater, and Livingston, and unincorporated portions of Merced County, including a number of smaller communities, some of which are considered disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities (DACs).¹

The City of Merced serves as the county seat for Merced County and has a population of nearly 80,000. The population is mostly white and Hispanic or Latino, with a mix of African American, Native American, Pacific Islander and an Asian community that includes Hmong, Chinese, Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Filipino, Thai, Korean, and Asian Indian. The City of Merced is considered a disadvantaged community². Other disadvantaged communities within the Merced Subbasin include Atwater, Bear Creek (Celeste), El Nido, Franklin, Le Grand, Planada, The Grove, Stevinson, Tuttle, and Winton. El Nido, Franklin, and Planada are considered severely disadvantaged.³

The Merced Irrigation District (MID) supplies water for agricultural irrigation systems that begin at Lake McClure and divert water to more than 2,000 growers that farm more than 100,000 acres across eastern

¹ DWR developed a DAC mapping tool, which is here: <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/dacs/>. The County of Merced has also identified disadvantaged communities in the unincorporated portions on the Merced Subbasin.

² Disadvantaged Communities are considered those whose median household income less than 80 percent of the Statewide average

³ Severely Disadvantaged Communities are considered those whose median household income less than 60 percent of the Statewide average.

Merced Groundwater Sustainability Plan

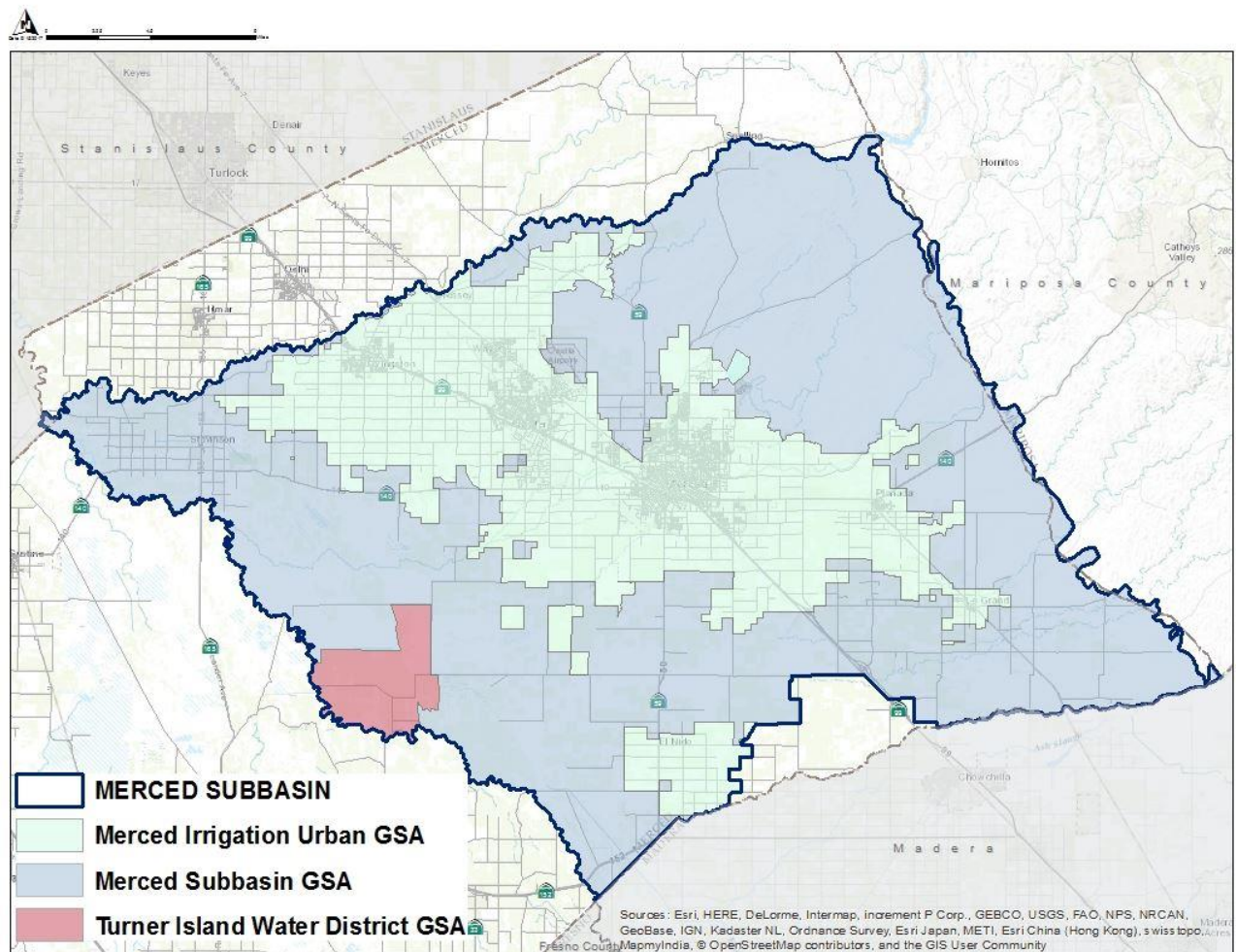
Merced County. The water originates from the Merced River, is stored behind the New Exchequer and McSwain Dams. More than 725 miles of canals and sections of several creeks and sloughs, bring the water to MID customers. MID owns and operates 185 active wells in years of surface water shortage.

The cities of Merced, Livingston, and Atwater pump groundwater and distribute it to residential and business customers in their service areas. Other water districts and companies operating in the Merced Subbasin include:

- Le Grand-Athlone Water District
- Merquin County Water District
- Plainsburg Irrigation District
- Stevenson Water District
- Lone Tree Mutual Water Company
- Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company
- Planada Community Services District
- Le Grande Community Services District

In 2010 in Merced County, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) data shows that 69% of the water used was surface water and 31% was groundwater. Most of the surface and groundwater was used for agriculture.

Figure 1 Merced Subbasin and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies



Engagement Strategy Goals

The Merced Subbasin Stakeholder Engagement Strategy has been developed to achieve the following goals:

- **Conduct an inclusive outreach and education** process that best supports the success of a well-prepared GSP and that meets SGMA requirements.
- **Offer a comprehensive, transparent outreach and education** process that builds understanding and trust among the various stakeholders.
- **Create a clear, concise, transparent, reliable information flow** with opportunities for public and stakeholder input.
- **Use a *Planning Roadmap*** to align the public engagement opportunities with the development of technical information at key points throughout the project.
- **Evaluate engagement methods** throughout the GSP development and modify as needed.
- **Facilitate effective engagement and communication** to build trust between the various stakeholders and the GSAs.

Key Elements of the Engagement Strategy

Given the importance of groundwater to the continuing economic vitality and public health of the areas served by the Merced Groundwater Subbasin, stakeholder education and input throughout the GSP planning process is essential. This Stakeholder Engagement Strategy has been developed to support the preparation and implementation of a well-informed GSP. The engagement strategy is designed to be flexible and will generally follow the *Planning Roadmap* (See Figure 2, page 8) that aligns public engagement opportunities with the development of technical information throughout the GSP development process.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Boards of the Three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

The governing boards of the three **Groundwater Sustainability Agencies**⁴ will work together to oversee the development of the GSP for the entire Merced Subbasin, including overall direction, funding and approval of the GSP. The GSP will be adopted by the governing bodies of the three GSAs. Information about the actions by the governing boards related to the GSP will be posted on the GSP website, at www.mercedsgma.org.

The three GSA governing boards, member agencies, and staff contacts for each of three GSAs are provided in **Appendix A**.

GSP Coordinating Committee

The three GSAs have formed a **Coordinating Committee** comprised of senior staff and governing board members to coordinate GSP planning activities and public outreach. The Coordinating Committee meets the 4th Monday of every month starting at 1:30 pm. Meetings will be noticed at least 48 hours prior to

⁴ Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency, Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and Turner Island Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency #1.

Merced Groundwater Sustainability Plan

each meeting at www.mercedsgma.org. Meetings are open to the public and include public comment period. Minutes will also be available online.

The Coordinating Committee members are listed in **Appendix A**.

GSP Stakeholder Committee

The **Stakeholder Committee** will be the primary body for providing community input to each of the three GSA Governing Boards and the Coordinating Committee regarding the development of the GSP. The Committee will serve as community representatives to review groundwater conditions, management issues and needs, and projects and management actions to improve groundwater sustainability in the Merced Subbasin. Members also serve as a conduit for engaging stakeholders in the Merced Subbasin and will be invited to participate in GSP outreach activities. The Stakeholder Committee is advisory to the GSA governing boards and is not a decision-making body.

Stakeholder Committee meets the 4th Monday of every month starting at 9:30 am. Meetings will be noticed at www.mercedsgma.org, are open to the public, and include time for public input. Meeting minutes will also be available online.

The Stakeholder Committee members were solicited through a public application process and were approved by the GSA governing boards. The members are listed in **Appendix A**.

Data and Evaluation

The Groundwater Sustainability Plan will be based on data, modeling, and evaluation regarding surface water and groundwater conditions, water uses, and water management options. Public outreach and engagement will be an important element of efforts to collect, review, validate, and refine the data and evaluation that will form the basis of the GSP and future management actions. Throughout the GSP development process, technical information and data will be summarized, simplified, and presented at workshops, online, via email, and in newsletters.

Public Outreach, Education, and Engagement

The GSP planning process includes activities to reach out to organizations and individuals involved in and affected by water management in the Subbasin; to inform and educate them about SGMA, groundwater management, and the GSP planning process; and to solicit and address issues and opportunities to improve groundwater management for the Subbasin.

The three GSA governing bodies will consider stakeholder and public input throughout the GSP development and implementation. The Coordinating Committee will plan and implement the following activities:

- **Develop and maintain notification lists** for the diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the Merced Subbasin population (see Target Audiences, below). Notification about the GSP process and for public meetings and workshops will be provided through notices (in English and Spanish) available online and emailed to Merced GSP email list, as well as through newspaper display ads and press releases. The notification process will be supported by partner organizations sharing meeting notices with their constituent lists. (see Appendix D).
- **Develop and provide information** regarding SGMA and GSP planning, groundwater management, and Subbasin conditions, and make it available at www.mercedsgma.org
- **Solicit stakeholder and public input** on groundwater analysis and modeling, sustainability goals, project and management actions, and implementation plans.

- **Provide and summarize stakeholder and public input** for the Stakeholder Committee and the three GSA governing bodies throughout the GSP development and implementation.

Project Schedule

The final GSP must be submitted to the California Department of Water Resources in January 31, 2020. The project schedule is designed to solicit, consider, and address public and stakeholder input regarding the important planning elements, including basin conditions, groundwater modeling, sustainability goals, management actions, implementation plan, and draft and final GSP.

Figure 2, page 8, the **GSP Planning Roadmap**, shows a generalized depiction of the schedule for these planning elements and public and stakeholder engagement.

Initial Topics for Stakeholder Input

To support a fair and balanced outreach process and provide inclusive, open pathways for public education and input, it is helpful to identify the key issues of interest to stakeholders as the planning process commences.

Key topics of interest identified to-date include the following:

Planning Process

- With the various involved agencies, including the State, how will surface and groundwater use be accurately depicted for modeling as there are data gaps?
- Identify and plan for the important decision and guidance points in the planning process so that technical analysis, public review comments, and Coordinating Committee recommendations can be provided in timely manner to each of the GSA governing bodies.
- Clarify and plan for how management areas will be defined within the Merced Subbasin, to what degree each management area can define goals and criteria, and how the management areas will be coordinated.
- Establish a common base of understanding about SGMA and the purpose of the GSP.
- Consider how the GSP will relate to, or establish a need to change, the existing county groundwater ordinance.
- How will the GSP address community water supply reliability and quality?
- Consider potential statewide solutions, including improved water trading markets.

Analysis and Evaluation

- There are data gaps regarding groundwater use. Data collection and transparency will be a concern to many landowners. Consider mechanisms for managing private well data.
- Consider and agree on a modeling approach and tool for the Subbasin. There is a lot of variability in groundwater conditions across the Subbasin. The model needs to work for all three GSAs and coordinate with adjacent basins.
- What will the costs (water and financial) for implementation be for communities and farmers?
- How will allocation and management options be developed to reflect differences in surface and ground water access across the Subbasin?

- The monitoring well plan will be important for understanding current conditions and measuring future changes. How will monitoring well locations be identified to be effective for gathering the needed data? How will they be managed?

Education and Outreach

- Contacting and including the interested and affected landowners, groundwater pumpers, and communities in the unincorporated areas outside the boundaries of the Merced Irrigation District will be challenging. The outreach effort should begin immediately to reach out in western, southern, and eastern portions of the Subbasin.
- Use existing forums to inform and engage Municipal Advisory Councils, agriculture and business associations.
- Encourage participation by any persons whose rights may be affected by the GSP development and implementation including but not limited to property rights, surface water and overlying groundwater rights, and the human right to drinking water.
- Translate materials (into languages including but not limited to Spanish) to ensure meaningful participation by stakeholders whose dominant language is not English. Coordinate with Self Help Enterprises to have interpretation services at public meetings.
- Consider informational/educational topics for outreach including:
 - What is SGMA and a GSP?
 - What is a water budget and how does the water modeling work?
 - What is the decision-making process for the GSP?
 - What is the difference between SGMA and IRWM?
 - What is surface water, what is groundwater, how does the subbasin hydrology work?

Outreach Methods

Communication strategies are generally most effective when they are tailored to specific audience-type(s). Targeted materials will be translated into Spanish. Education and outreach will occur throughout the development of the GSP, refer to the **GSP Planning Roadmap** section below.

Here are the general outreach methods and tools envisioned for this project:

1. **Meetings of each of the GSA governing boards** provide an opportunity for formal public comment at decision milestones throughout the GSP planning process.
2. **Coordinating Committee** meetings are also open to the public for questions and input throughout the GSP planning process. Visit <http://www.mercedsgma.org> for meeting times, agenda, materials, and minutes.
3. Meetings of the **Stakeholder Committee** provide community representatives and other members of the public an opportunity to review and provide input on the elements of the GSP. Meetings are open to the public. Visit <http://www.mercedsgma.org> for meeting times, agenda, materials, and minutes.
4. **Community Workshops** will provide opportunities for community members and interest groups to learn about, discuss, and comment on the GSP planning process before major decision milestones. Interpretation/translation services at in-person meetings (into languages including but not limited to Spanish) will be provided in communities with substantial non-English speaking populations. Hold workshops in different geographic locations within the Subbasin.

5. The **GSA Website** (www.mercedsgma.org) will house information about SGMA, the GSP process, GSA Governing Boards, Coordinating Committee, Stakeholder Committee, and public meetings, project reports and studies, and groundwater data and information. **Presentation materials** will be posted online. Select Spanish-language information will be included.
6. **Short Articles** will be distributed to local and regional organizations and partners to inform stakeholders about GSP planning, technical issues, and opportunities for participation and review in a simple, clear manner. Organizations may include Merced County Farm Bureau, Merced Chamber of Commerce, and East Merced Resource Conservation District.
7. To share timely information with affected and interested parties, the Coordinating Committee will **engage local and regional organizations and partners** to assist in noticing public meetings and sharing project information. Entities could include Merced County, City of Merced, participating water and irrigation districts, Merced Farm Bureau, Merced Chamber of Commerce, Merced-Mariposa Cattlemen's Association, and others.
8. **Translation of written materials** and interpretation services at in-person meetings (into languages including but not limited to Spanish).
9. Use existing **social media channels** such as Facebook Pages: e.g., Merced County, City of Merced, City of Livingston, and Merced Irrigation District.
10. Engage **news media** representatives at milestones in the GSP process to inform the public and announce opportunities for participation and review.
11. **Key messages** will be developed for use in outreach and education, using compelling, simple, clear **visuals and graphics** to best explain complex technical data.

GSP Planning Roadmap

Using established GSP planning activities, the planning roadmap for stakeholder engagement depicts the relationship of technical studies, decision milestones, and outreach and engagement activities. Figure 2, page 8, the GSP Planning Roadmap shows:

1. Suggested timeline of stakeholder education regarding SGMA and groundwater management issues.
2. Sequencing of education topics and key issues for discussion with GSA Stakeholder Committee, Coordinating Committee, and the three GSA governing boards.

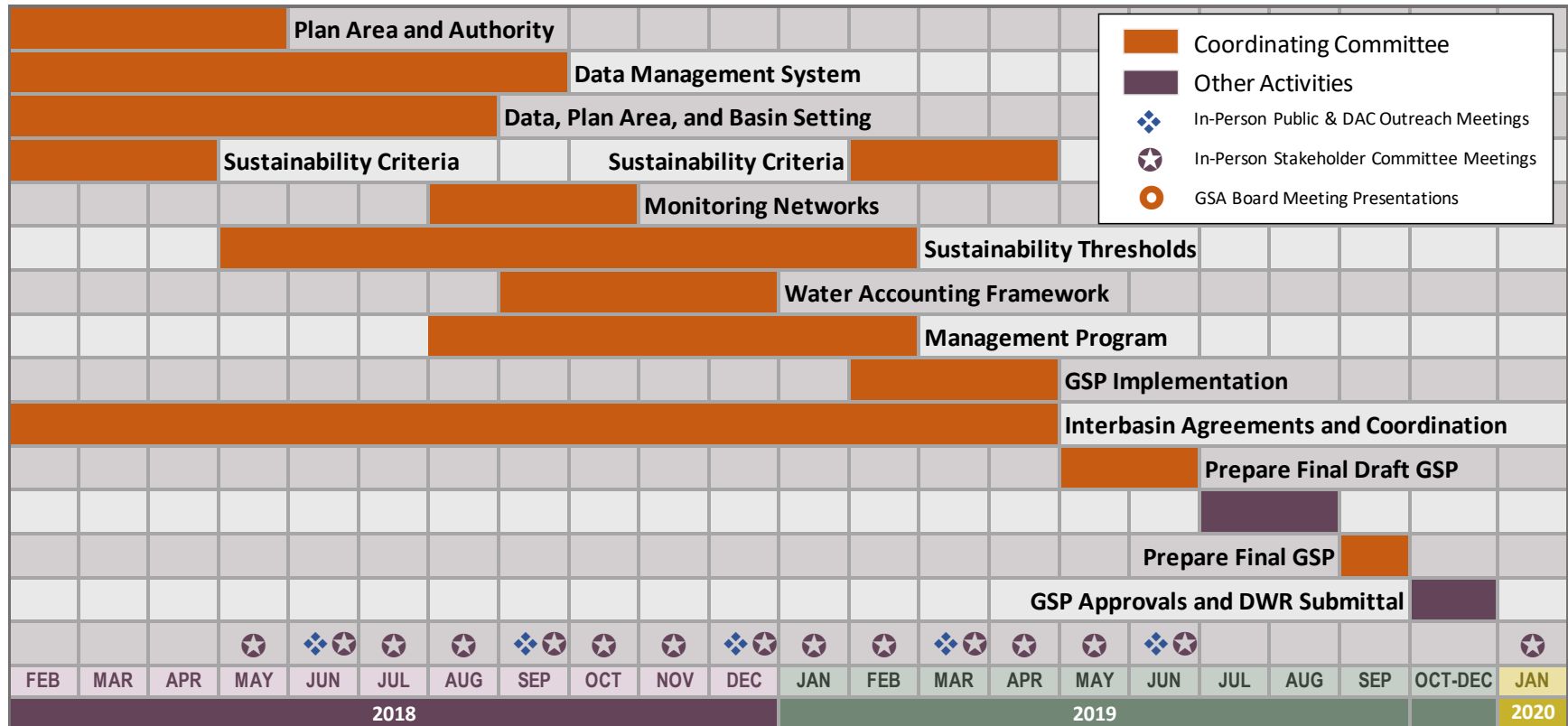
Key Audiences

Knowing the various interested audiences is key to setting a solid course for stakeholder engagement throughout the GSP process. The various interested parties and stakeholders identified to date are listed in **Appendix B**.

According to Water Code section 10723.3, the GSP development process will consider the interests of holders of overlying groundwater rights (including agricultural users and domestic well owners), municipal well operators, public water systems, local land use planning agencies, environmental users of groundwater, surface water users (if there is a connection between surface and groundwater), the federal government, Native American tribes, disadvantaged communities, and other local agencies that were monitoring and managing groundwater usage in the GSP area. Additional relevant stakeholders have also been included.

The Engagement Strategy relies on GSA governing boards, stakeholder committee, and the public to expand the list of interested and affected audiences as the GSP process unfolds.

Figure 2, GSP Planning Roadmap



Attachment A

Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA)

Member Agencies

- City of Atwater (Municipal)
- City of Livingston (Municipal)
- City of Merced (Municipal)
- Merced Irrigation District (Agriculture and Municipal)
- LeGrand Community Services District (Municipal)
- Planada Community Services District (Municipal)
- Winton Water and Sanitary District (Municipal)

Governing Board

Chair - Hicham Eltal, Merced Irrigation District

Vice Chair – Stephanie Dietz, City of Merced

Staff Contact

Hicham ElTal, heltal@mercedid.org, www.mercedid.org

Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Member Agencies

- County of Merced
- County of Mariposa
- Le Grand-Athlone Water District
- Merquin County Water District
- Plainsburg Irrigation District
- Stevinson Water District
- Lone Tree Mutual Water Company
- Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company

Governing Board

- Bob Kelley, Stevinson Water District - Chair
- Nic Marchini, Western White Area Representative - Vice Chair
- Michael Gallo, Eastern White Area Representative
- George Park, Lone Tree Mutual Water Company
- Kole Upton, Le Grand Athlone Water District
- Lloyd Pareira, County of Merced

Staff Contact

Lacey Kiriakou, Merced County, Water Resources Coordinator, lkiriakou@countyofmerced.com.
www.countyofmerced.com/MercedSubbasinGSA

Turner Island Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency #1

Governing Board

Donald C. Skinner, Chair

Staff Contact

Larry Harris, LHarris@murdoc.com

GSP Coordinating Committee Members

1. Stephanie Dietz, Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
2. Justin Vinson, Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
3. Daniel Chavez, Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
4. Ken Elwin (alternate), Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
5. Bob Kelley, Merced Subbasin GSA
6. Nic Marchini, Merced Subbasin GSA
7. Mike Gallo, Merced Subbasin GSA
8. George Park (alternate), Merced Subbasin GSA
9. Larry Harris, Turner Island Water District GSA #1
10. Scott Skinner (alternate), Turner Island Water District GSA #1

GSP Stakeholder Committee Members

1. Arlan Thomas, MIDAC
2. Ben Migliazzo, Live Oak Farms
3. Bill Spriggs, City of Merced resident
4. Bob Salles, Leap Carpenter Kemps Insurance
5. Brad Robson, Buchanan Hollow Nut Co. Le Grand-Athlone Water District
6. Breanne Ramos, Executive Director, Merced County Farm Bureau
7. Brian Carter, D&S Farms
8. Carol Bonin, Winton M.A.C.
9. Daniel Machado, Machado Backhoe Inc.
10. Darren Olgin, McSwain MAC
11. Frenchie Meissonnier, Rice Farmer
12. Galen Miyamoto, Miyamoto Farms
13. Gino Pedretti III, Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company
14. Joe Scoto, Scoto Bros Farms / McSwain Union School District
15. Jean Okuye, East Merced Resource Conservation District
16. Maria Herrera, Self-Help Enterprises
17. Mark Maxwell, University of California, Merced
18. Maxwell Norton, Retired agricultural researcher
19. Parry Klassen, East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition
20. Rick Drayer, Drayer Ranch
21. Simon Vander Woude, Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company
22. Vacant, City of Livingston resident
23. Vacant, City of Atwater resident

Attachment B - Key Audiences

California Water Code Section 10723.3 Stakeholders

Agricultural Users and Domestic Well Owners

- Groundwater users
- De minimus groundwater users
- Others

Municipal Well Operators and Public Water System Operators

- Le Grand-Athlone Water District
- Merquin County Water District
- Plainsburg Irrigation District
- Stevinson Water District
- Lone Tree Mutual Water Company
- Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company
- California American Water, Meadowbrook District
- Merced Area Groundwater Pool Interests (monitors and reports groundwater elevations in the Merced Subbasin)
- Le Grand Community Services District
- Planada Community Services District

Local Land Use Planning Agencies

- Merced County staff
- Mariposa County staff
- Merced, Atwater, and Livingston town staff
- Neighboring GSA staff

Environmental Groundwater Users

- Merced National Wildlife Refuge, within the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex
- Great Valley Grasslands State Park

Surface Water Users

- Merced Irrigation District (largest agency in the Subbasin with surface water rights)
- Stevinson Water District
- Merquin County Water District

Federal Government Agencies

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Merced National Wildlife Refuge
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Fresno
- USDA, Farm Service Agency
- U.S. Geological Survey, California Water Science Center, Sacramento

Native American Tribes

- None

Merced Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Disadvantaged and Severely Disadvantaged Communities

- Atwater
- Bear Creek
- Delhi
- El Nido (severely disadvantaged)
- Franklin (severely disadvantaged)
- Hilmar
- Le Grand
- McSwain
- Planada (severely disadvantaged)
- South Merced
- Stevinson
- The Grove
- Tuttle
- Winton

Other State and Local Agencies that Monitor and Manage Groundwater Usage

- Department of Water Resources
- State Water Resources Control Board
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Additional Stakeholders

Elected Officials

- Merced County Board of Supervisors
- City Councils: Merced, Atwater, Livingston
- Jim Costa, U.S. Representative, California's Congressional District 16
- Anthony Cannella, California Senate District 12
- Adam Gray, California Assembly District 21

Agricultural Organizations

- Merced County Farm Bureau
- Merced-Mariposa Cattlemen's Association

Municipal Advisory Councils

- McSwain Municipal Advisory Council
- Le Grand Municipal Advisory Council
- Planada Municipal Advisory Council
- Winton Municipal Advisory Council
- Franklin Beachwood Municipal Advisory Council

Colleges and Universities

- University of California Merced

Disadvantaged Community Organizations

- Community Water Center, Laurel Firestone and Debbie Ores
- Clean Water Action, Jennifer Clary
- Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability, Amanda Monaco
- Self Help Enterprises, Maria Herrera and Ilse Lopez-Narvaez
- Neighbors United for a Better South Merced

Business and Community Interests

- Merced Chamber of Commerce
- Merced County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Merced Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Natural Resources Interests/Organizations

- East Merced Resource Conservation District
- Audubon
- River Partners

News Media

- Newspapers: Merced-Sun Star, Atwater Signal,
- Radio: Radio Merced
- TV: Channel 30, Univision based in Fresno

Attachment C

Links to SGMA and Groundwater Information

Department of Water Resources, SGMA: <http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/>

Department of Water Resources Critically Overdrafted Basins:
<http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/cod.cfm>

Department of Water Resources, Draft Guidance for GSP Stakeholder Communication and Engagement
http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/GD_C&E_Final_2017-06-29.pdf

Department of Water Resources, Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Digital Toolkit
http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/digital_toolkit.cfm

UC Davis Resources re: SGMA: <http://groundwater.ucdavis.edu/SGMA/>

Union of Concerned Scientists, A Guide to California's Groundwater Sustainability Plans, in English and Spanish: <https://www.ucsusa.org/global-warming/ca-and-western-states/groundwater-toolkit#.WnSt5KinFPY>

Union of Concerned Scientist, SMGA information: <https://www.ucsusa.org/global-warming/regional-information/california-and-western-states/sustainable-groundwater-management-act#.Wne0ga2ZPq0>

Community Water Center, Union of Concerned Scientists, Clean Water Fund, Stakeholder Guide for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation:
https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/communitywatercenter/pages/52/attachments/original/1438102537/SGMA_Stakeholder_Engagement_White_Paper.pdf?1438102537

USGS, California Water Use: https://ca.water.usgs.gov/water_use/2010-california-water-use.html

Attachment D

Partner Opportunities for GSP Outreach

To assist in best leveraging engagement and educational opportunities for interested parties in the Merced Subbasin area, partnering with local organizations can be very effective. By developing a list of activities and opportunities for outreach occurring in the Merced, Livingston, Atwater areas, we can dovetail these with the Merced Subbasin *Planning Roadmap*. Here are some of the partnership opportunities identified to date.

Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.mercedchamber.com>

Share Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to members.

Merced County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.mercedhcc.com>

Share Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to members.

Merced Farm Bureau

<https://www.mercedfarmbureau.org>

- Share articles and Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to members.

Cattlemen's Association – California and Merced/Mariposa

- Share articles and Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to members.

East Merced Resource Conservation District (RCD)

<https://www.eastmercedrcd.org>

- Share articles and Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to members.

Merced Irrigation District (MID)

<http://www.mercedid.com>

- Share press releases and Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to news media and members.

County of Merced

<https://www.co.merced.ca.us>

- Share press releases and Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to news media and interested party list.

City of Merced

<https://www.cityofmerced.org>

- Share Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to interested party list.

City of Livingston

- Share Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to interested party list.

City of Atwater

- Share Public Workshop notices (English and Spanish) for distribution to interested party list.

Self Help Enterprises & Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability

DWR has contracts with these two organizations to assist GSAs with outreach and engagement with disadvantaged communities in the region. The Coordinating Committee will work with both organizations to expand the outreach to disadvantaged communities in the Merced Subbasin for the GSP.

Attachment E
Stakeholder Committee Application

Merced Groundwater Sustainability

Overview

The Merced Groundwater Subbasin is one of 21 basins in the State of California identified by the California Department of Water Resources as critically overdrafted and one of 48 basins considered high priority. Consistent with the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), water management and land management agencies in Merced Subbasin have formed three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs): the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency, the Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and the Turner Island Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency. The three GSAs are collaborating on developing one Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the entire Merced Groundwater Subbasin by January 2020. To develop the Plan, the GSAs will review groundwater conditions and identify means to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Merced Groundwater Subbasin.

Public Outreach and Engagement

As part of developing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, the Groundwater Sustainability Agencies will inform and involve interested and affected individuals and organizations (stakeholders) and the general public.

- **Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)** - Overall direction, funding, and approval for the groundwater sustainability planning process and work products is provided by the governing boards of the three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies. The final Groundwater Sustainability Plan will be adopted by the elected governing bodies of each these organizations. The GSAs have formed a Coordinating Committee of senior staff and board members to coordinate day-to-day project activities and public outreach.
- **Stakeholder Committee** - The GSAs are seeking community representatives to participate in a Stakeholder Committee to review groundwater conditions, management issues and needs, and projects and management actions to improve sustainability of the groundwater basin. The Stakeholder Committee will advise the GSAs and the governing bodies on these topics. Meetings of the Stakeholder Committee will be noticed and open to the public.



- **Members of the Public** - Public outreach and engagement will consist primarily of open Stakeholder Committee meetings, information and updates to the project website, and public workshops held at important stages of the groundwater sustainability planning process. The GSAs will also provide information briefings to elected officials (City Councils, County Board of Supervisors, and Merced Irrigation District Board of Directors), community organizations, neighborhoods, and others as needed to keep them informed and participating.

Appointing the Stakeholder Committee

The GSAs will appoint individuals representing the broad interests and perspectives in the region to participate on the Stakeholder Committee. Candidates who can work together to help the GSAs and staff develop the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) will be identified through an application process, which will be publicly announced at meetings of the GSA boards and the member agencies. Stakeholder Committee participants are expected to represent the broad interests and geography of the region. The GSP Coordinating Committee will select the members and alternates for the Stakeholder Committee. The intended makeup of the Stakeholder Committee is 10 to 15 members who represent one or more of the following interests:

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|---|
| • Groundwater Users |
| • Community / Neighborhood Interests |
| • Flood Management Interests |
| • Agricultural Interests |
| • Other Business Interests (non-agriculture) |
| • Environmental Interests |
| • Other Institutional Interests (e.g. UC Merced, Board of Education) |
| • Disadvantaged Community and Environmental Justice Interests |

The GSAs are seeking individuals who have a demonstrated commitment to community service and civic leadership, prior experience participating constructively on similar task forces and advisory committees, and an understanding of water issues.

Participation in the Stakeholder Committee will require a significant commitment of time and attention. The Stakeholder Committee is expected to meet approximately monthly beginning in April 2018 and complete its work in 2019.

The Stakeholder Committee application is attached.

Merced Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)
Stakeholder Committee
Application for Volunteers

The Groundwater Sustainability Agencies for the Merced Groundwater Subbasin are seeking volunteers to participate on the Stakeholder Committee. Ideal candidates will have a demonstrated commitment to community service and civic leadership, prior experience participating constructively on similar task forces or advisory committees, and an understanding of water issues. Volunteers are expected to make a firm commitment to participate in monthly meetings and review groundwater planning documents and other information during groundwater sustainability planning through 2019. The Stakeholder Committee will be appointed from the pool of applications received. Applications are due by **February 12, 2018** and should be submitted via email to the Merced Subbasin GSAs c/o Samantha Salvia, Woodard & Curran, ssalvia@woodardcurran.com, 415-321-3423.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Preferred Phone: (Mobile/Work/Home) _____

Email Address: _____

Disciplines/Perspectives: (check all that apply)

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|---|--|
| ☐ Groundwater Users | ☐ Other Business Interests (non-agricultural) |
| ☐ Community / Neighborhood Interests | ☐ Environmental Interests |
| ☐ Flood Management Interests | ☐ Other Institutional Interests |
| ☐ Agricultural Interests | ☐ Disadvantaged Community and Environmental Justice Interests |

Relevant Prior Experience (Task Forces, Advisory Committees, water issues):

Additional Comments: