

Personnel:

First, I'd like to welcome Yolanda Maciel, our new Senior Secretary. Yolanda joined the Agency team on January 26th and is quickly settling into her new responsibilities. And, as we welcome Yolanda, we also say farewell to Jarod Hansen and Riley Clark. Jarod has been a valued member of our northern maintenance crew, while Riley's contributions to our Hydrology & Environmental Resources section, especially our Groundwater Monitoring Program, have been greatly appreciated. We will miss Riley's and Jarod's contributions to the team and wish them both well in their future endeavors. Recruitment for both positions will commence soon. To the south, our dam maintenance crew will soon be welcoming a new member, Edgar De Leon Rivas, who will start in his new role on February 23rd. Lastly, the recruitment for a Water Resources Engineer remains open, applicant screening is underway, and interviews will be scheduled in the near future.

Groundwater Monitoring Program:

The opportunity for well owners to register their wells for free has been extended until March 31, 2026, thanks to the California Department of Water Resources grant funding made available through the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency. The Agency is working with the SVBGSA and the District 2 and District 5 Supervisor's offices to set well registration and groundwater management informational workshops – see attached flier. An in-person workshop will be held in District 2 at the Prunedale Grange Hall at 5:30 p.m. on February 24th and a District 2 and District 5 webinar will be held at 5:30 p.m. on February 25th. We are also working with District 5 to set an in-person meeting likely in the Corral De Tierra area.

Agency staff and the SVBGSA have also embarked on another round of public outreach. Recently, Piret Harmon, the SVBGSA General Manager, and Amy Woodrow, our Senior Hydrologist, were interviewed by the Monterey County Weekly. You can read the article here:

[A local effort is underway to build an inventory of smaller wells, but it is slow going. | News | montereycountynow.com](https://www.montereycountynow.com/news/a-local-effort-is-underway-to-build-an-inventory-of-smaller-wells-but-it-is-slow-going/)

Agency staff is also working closely with the SVBGSA to finalize various water supply and projects feasibility studies and preparing our 2026-27 fiscal-year workplan.

Dam Safety & Operations Future Funding Strategy:

Regulatory Program Cost Study: The Agency has held a “kick-off” meeting with the Vega Economics team to discuss study process and to identify historical documentation beneficial to establishing a basis for the Cost Study.

Dam Materiality General Benefits Study: Agency staff are working with One Water Econ to formulate a scope of work to perform analyses of the materially general benefits created by the existence of the Agency's dams. Materiality, in this context, involves understanding what information is significant for decision-making and reporting. It helps us identify risks and opportunities, ensuring we meet legal and financial obligations while also addressing stakeholder expectations for

transparency and accountability. We recognize that existence of the dams creates both constant and dynamic benefits and obligations. Examples of constant benefits are expansive, including creating opportunity for both specific dynamic benefits, such as flood management and groundwater recharge, as well as general benefits, such as enhanced economic activity and tax revenue, recreation, and ecosystem management. Examples of constant obligations include facility maintenance and regulatory compliance, while dynamic obligations can generally be thought of in the context of operations. The aim of this study is to analyze and quantify the general benefits created by the dams. A draft scope of work will be presented to the Planning Committee for review and Board of Directors for consideration in March.

Flood Management and Reduction Benefits Study: Agency staff are working with FlowWest to examine the availability of tools and their capabilities for analyzing the benefits of the Agency's flood management activities beyond the historical flood inundation boundaries within Zone 2C. Both the original 1998 Historical Benefits Analysis, which helped inform the creation of Zone 2C, and the 2024 Update, analyze a specific geographic space within the Salinas Valley; however, we recognize the extent of flood management and reduction activities extend beyond those geographic boundaries. Benefits include protection of roadways and the maintenance of intra-county travel for personal, commercial, and recreational purposes, including to and from the Peninsula, as an example. If suitable tools are identified, a scope of work will be drafted to support consideration of initiating this study, perhaps in March or April.

Groundwater Recharge Benefits Study: The 1998 Historical Benefits Analysis and the 2024 Update relied upon the best available integrated groundwater-surface water models of their time. The hydrologic models in use today – the Salinas Valley Integrated Hydrologic Model (SVIHM), Salinas Valley Operational Model (SVOM), and Seawater Intrusion Model (SWIM) – have been updated by the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency since last used by the Agency for the 2024 Update. The Agency and SVBGSA have agreed to consolidate around the current versions of the models for foreseeable planning purposes and to cooperate in future revisions to help ensure the quality and uniformity of results. Revising the 2024 Update remains an option; however, prior to undertaking such an endeavor, consideration must be given to the extent such a revision might improve the quality of information already provided in the 2024 Update. Accompanying the hydrologic modelling for the 2024 Update is an economic analysis, which evaluated the avoided costs linked to the hydrologic benefits stemming from operation of the Agency's dams. The Agency is considering the potential to expand beyond the avoided cost analysis to examine what, if any, other economic benefits are derived from conservation related operations of the dams, i.e. not flood or ecosystem management activities. For example, exploring the business model benefit of water supply reliability, e.g. multi-year sales contracts. Consideration of this potential study is in its infancy and further updates will be provided in the future.



Well Registration Workshops

Talleres de registro de pozos

Groundwater is one of Monterey County’s most important shared resources.

Well owners are invited to attend an in-person or online workshop to learn why well registration and groundwater monitoring matter—and get hands-on help completing the required form.

El agua subterránea es uno de los recursos compartidos más importantes del condado de Monterey.

Se invita a los propietarios de pozos a participar en un taller presencial o en línea para aprender por qué son importantes el registro de pozos y el monitoreo del agua subterránea, y para recibir ayuda práctica para completar el formulario requerido.

+ TACO TRUCK!

24 February | 5:30-7 p.m.
Prunedale Grange Hall
 71890 Moro Rd. Salinas, CA 93907
 Hosted by District 2 Supervisor Glenn Church in partnership with MCWRA and SVBGSA

25 February | 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Zoom: bit.ly/GMP-Workshop-Feb
 Hosted by District 2 Supervisor Glenn Church and District 5 Supervisor Kate Daniels in partnership with MCWRA and SVBGSA



Salinas Valley Basin
Groundwater Sustainability Agency

