



Board Report

File #: WRAG 24-085, **Version:** 1

Consider recommending that staff release the 2023 groundwater extraction data to the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency or Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency, upon request and consistent with existing Non-Disclosure Agreements, prior to publication of the Agency's 2023 Groundwater Extraction Annual Summary Report. (Staff Presenting: Amy Woodrow)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Board of Directors:

Recommend that staff release the 2023 groundwater extraction data to the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency or Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency, upon request and consistent with existing Non-Disclosure Agreements, prior to publication of the Agency's 2023 Groundwater Extraction Annual Summary Report.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Each year, since 1993, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency ("Agency") has collected groundwater extraction data from wells that are in Agency Zones 2, 2A, or 2B, and which have a discharge pipe with an inside diameter of at least three inches, using its Groundwater Extraction Management System ("GEMS"). Groundwater extraction data from agricultural users are submitted on a "reporting year" basis, which is a period from November 1 through October 31, while data from urban users are submitted on a calendar year basis (January 1 through December 31). All data are due to the Agency by February 15 following the end of the "reporting year." The requirements that define these and other aspects of the groundwater extraction reporting program are described in Agency Ordinances No. 3717 and 3718.

Following the February 15 due date each year, Agency staff engages in an outreach period to coordinate with well owners or operators who have not submitted data. This is followed by 2-3 months of data review, quality control procedures, and data processing. Finally, the Agency produces a Groundwater Extraction Annual Summary Report each year that is presented to the Basin Management Advisory Committee ("BMAC") and Board of Directors, then posted on the Agency's website for the public.

In 2020, the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency ("SVBGSA") began incorporating the GEMS data in its annual reports, which are required to be submitted to the Department of Water Resources ("DWR") for each subbasin by April 1 of each year following adoption of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan ("GSP"). In 2022, the Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency ("MCWD GSA") and SVBGSA began developing annual reports for the Monterey Subbasin, which also utilize the GEMS data. As a result, the GEMS data are shared with the SVBGSA and MCWD GSA on an annual basis, in a manner consistent with Non-Disclosure Agreements with each entity (Attachments 1 and 2, respectively). MCWRA has historically shared GEMS data with the SVBGSA and MCWD GSA once the Groundwater Extraction Annual Summary Report has been received by the Agency Board of Directors, which typically occurs in August of each year.

Due to a misalignment between the GEMS reporting period and the GSP annual report deadlines, the SVBGSA and MCWD GSA annual reports include groundwater extraction data that lags one year behind the rest of the

data in the annual reports. For example, the annual reports for Water Year 2023 included groundwater extraction data from Water Year 2022 because the GEMS data are not available until after the annual report submittal.

The Agency is working with the SVBGSA to resolve this timing issue for future reporting years, however, DWR has requested that the SVBGSA update its Water Year 2023 annual reports with corresponding groundwater extraction data as soon as possible. To support that effort, Staff is recommending that the GEMS data be shared with the SVBGSA as soon as the data review, quality control, and data processing steps are complete, but before the Agency's 2023 Groundwater Extraction Annual Summary Report is presented to BMAC and the Board of Directors. Agency staff will still prepare a Groundwater Extraction Annual Summary Report on the usual timeline, but making this adjustment to the data sharing process will allow the SVBSGA and/or MCWD GSA to have the GEMS data 6-8 weeks earlier than might otherwise occur.

This action is consistent with Agency Strategic Plan Goal B, Strategy 2 (Collaborate with local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, define MCWRA's role, and implement a GSA integration plan).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency; Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

FINANCING:

Funding for the GEMS program is included in Funds 111 and 116 of the Agency's FY24 budget. Agency staff time related to fulfilling data requests for GSA annual reports is funded through a Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Services between MCWRA and the SVBGSA (Attachment 3) and a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Technical and Professional Assistance between MCWRA and the MCWD GSA (Attachment 4).

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Attachments:

1. Non-Disclosure Agreement between the Monterey County Water Resources Agency and the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
2. Non-Disclosure Agreement between the Monterey County Water Resources Agency and the Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency
3. Memorandum of Understanding between the Monterey County Water Resources Agency and the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency regarding Technical and Professional Assistance to the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan
4. Memorandum of Understanding between the Monterey County Water Resources Agency and the Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency regarding Technical and Professional Assistance to the Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan
5. Board Order

