



County of Monterey

Item No.

Board Report

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Chambers
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Salinas, CA 93901

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Update on staff's participation in the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's Advisory Committee.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Background

The Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA) has an Advisory Committee which plays a key role in shaping groundwater management in the Salinas Valley by providing input and consensus-based recommendations to the SVBGSA Board of Directors. The Advisory Committee reflects a broad range of perspectives, representing agencies and groundwater users across the region. Members collaborate to support the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act through the integrated execution of six Groundwater Sustainability Plans. The Monterey County Water Resources Agency (Agency) has a seat on the Advisory Committee and will provide periodic updates to the Agency BOD as it affects or is of interest to the Agency.

Summary

Staff participated in the Advisory Committee's special meeting held on May 15, 2026.

The significant topics discussed at the meeting were the Demand Management Overview and the Integrated Implementation Strategy (IIS) Project and Management Action (PMA) Initial Portfolios.

Staff gave context to Demand Management (DM) by reinforcing that projects are the primary goal, but they are not a silver bullet. Management actions, which are changes in water use behavior, are necessary to bridge the gap. DM is the only Management Action that has been proposed by the SVBGSA to address SGMA's Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC). DM alone does not meet the Seawater Intrusion Minimum Thresholds (MTs) by 2040, but it does help in raising groundwater levels. The DM approach includes three phases. The first being the development of a Strategy, which began in 2023 and included a preliminary exploration of concepts. Then was the development of a framework structure that provides a roadmap for future decisions, which was completed in October 2025. Finally, procedures and policies are needed. This phase has not yet begun. Staff then presented DM Groundwater Modeling and Economic Analysis. The modeling results estimated approximate pumping reductions needed to avoid groundwater level undesirable results and demonstrated the connections between subbasins pumping impacts. The economic analysis included both a direct impact and the regional impacts. The implementation of DM has yet to be determined but it may be an interim solution until project constructed and/or to reduce a project's size.

Staff then provided results from their first round of the Integrated Implementation Strategy (IIS) Project and Management Action (PMA) Initial. No single project meets the SMCs in all four subbasins and therefore a portfolio of projects will be needed to meet them comprehensively. Staff then presented the results of three different Portfolios.

Portfolio 1 included the following PMAs: BGRP Injection Only, C&E 100 cfs Recharge Basins, CSIP Optimization, Ag DM 10% (North Valley), DM Domestic (Corral), and DM Deep Aquifers. The projects were summarized in a table by subbasin and MT. The modeled projects were mapped geographically, and the results were presented in relation to the MT. Portfolio 1 meets the MT for seawater intrusion and meets the MT for groundwater levels partially.

Portfolio 2 included the following PMAs: CSIP Optimization, Max NSIP, C&E Recharge Basins (100 cfs), Ag DM 10% North Valley, MCWD GSA Indirect Potable Reuse (Deep Aquifers), DM Domestic (Corral), DM Deep Aquifers, and drinking water treatment. Not all of these components could be modeled but the table outlining the results was provided as well as a map showing the modeled areas. Portfolio 2 does not move the seawater intrusion line significantly but does have a beneficial impact on groundwater levels.

Portfolio 3 included the following PMAs: BGRP Small, Ag DM 10% North Valley, DM Domestic (Corral), and DM Deep Aquifers. The projects were summarized in a table by subbasin and MT as well as a map showing the modeled areas. Portfolio 3 does not meet the MT for seawater intrusion or groundwater levels but it did have a beneficial result in the Deep Aquifers.

The Advisory Committee provided extensive feedback and ultimately described two additional portfolios of previously analyzed project components, for the SVBGSA staff and consultants to model. These results will be presented at the June meeting.

Additional information related to the Advisory Committee can be found on the SVBGSA's website: [<https://svbgsa.org/about-us/board-and-committees/advisory-committee/>](https://svbgsa.org/about-us/board-and-committees/advisory-committee/)

The Advisory Committee has the next regular meeting scheduled for June 18, 2026.

Prepared by: Shaunna Murray, Deputy General Manager, (831) 755-4860