



County of Monterey

Item No.4

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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Overview of the Development of a Deep Aquifers Management Recommendations Memorandum.
(Staff Presenting: Amy Woodrow)

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

In April 2024, Montgomery & Associates prepared the Deep Aquifers Study (Study) for the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA) and funding partners. The Study defined the Deep Aquifers and offered science-based guiding principles for groundwater users and agencies, focused on preventing further degradation of the Deep Aquifers and raising groundwater elevations to reduce risks of seawater intrusion and land subsidence. In the summer and fall of 2024, the Study was presented to the Boards of Directors of the SVBGSA, Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MCWDGSA), and Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA), as well as to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors.

Following publication and presentation of the Study, staff from the County of Monterey Health Department, MCWDGSA, MCWRA, and SVBGSA participated in a Deep Aquifers Working Group (Working Group) to collaborate on development of interim local protective management actions and potential long-term management actions, strengthen monitoring coordination, and recommend pathways for operationalizing management actions within existing statutory authorities.

The Working Group is finalizing a Deep Aquifers Management Recommendations Memorandum (DA Memo), which is intended to supplement the Study and build upon recommendations in reports from MCWRA released in 2017 and 2020, in addition to the Study's guidance. The purpose of the DA Memo is to create a recommended structure for managing the Deep Aquifers and to identify actions or projects that could be deployed to sustainably manage them.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

County of Monterey Health Department, Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency, Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

FINANCING:

Funding for MCWRA staff participation in the Working Group was financed by annexation funds in Fund 111, for which sufficient appropriations were available in the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget. Funding for future monitoring activities that may result from actions described in the DA Memo may be associated with the Groundwater Monitoring Program in Fund 111, but such activities have not yet been identified.

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