

# Merced GSP Joint Coordination & Stakeholder Advisory Committees Meeting

**November 3, 2025**

Meeting will begin at 10:00 am or a few minutes after – thank you for joining us!

**Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA  
Merced Subbasin GSA  
Turner Island Water District GSA-1**

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

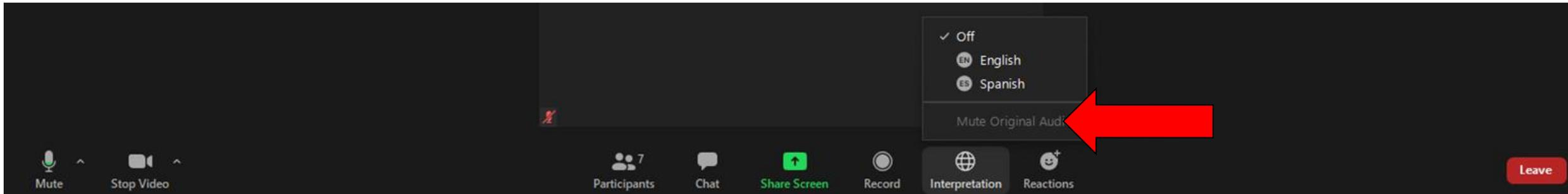


# Welcome, Instructions for Zoom

## Bienvenidos, Instrucciones para Zoom

We have two language audio channels available. English only speakers, please select English.

Si solamente habla español, debe seleccionar un canal de idioma



The meeting will have simultaneous interpreting, so you are welcome to comment in your native language.  
La junta será interpretada simultáneamente, así que le invitamos a que haga comentarios en su lenguaje nativo.

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# Agenda

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1. Call to Order and Welcome
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Coordination Committee Meeting Minutes
4. Public Comment
5. Reports
6. Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Update
7. Annual Report Update
8. Domestic Well Mitigation Program Development Update
9. Allocation Program Policies Coordination
10. Next Steps and adjourn

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Coordination Committee Roll Call

**Bold indicates recent changes**

<b>Representative</b>	<b>GSA</b>
Bryan Kelly	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Scott McBride	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Justin Vinson	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Frank Verduzco	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Ken Elwin ( <i>alternate</i> )	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
Mike Gallo	Merced Subbasin GSA
Nic Marchini	Merced Subbasin GSA
Bob Kelley	Merced Subbasin GSA
Gino Pedretti ( <i>alternate</i> )	Merced Subbasin GSA
George Park ( <i>alternate</i> )	Merced Subbasin GSA
Chase Hurley	Turner Island Water District GSA #1
Justin Darnell ( <i>alternate</i> )	Turner Island Water District GSA #1

## Stakeholder Advisory Committee Members

Committee Member	Interest/Affiliation	Alternate	Interest/Affiliation
Alvaro Arias	UC Merced	Phillip Woods	UC Merced
Arlan Thomas	MIDAC member	Ben Migliazzo	Live Oak Farms
Bill Eisenstein	River Partners		
Blake Nervino	Stevinson/Merquin		
Breanne Vandenberg	MCFB		
Caitie Diemel	ESJWQC		
Craig Arnold	Arnold Farms		
Daniel Melendrez	City of Merced		
Danielle Serrano	Serrano Farms - Le Grand		
David Belt	Foster Farms		
Eddie Rojas	E&J Gallo Winery		
Emma Reyes	Martin Reyes Farm/Land Leveling		
Jean Okuye	E Merced RCD		
Joe Sansoni	Sansoni Farms/MCFB		
Joe Scoto	Scoto Brothers/McSwain School Dist.		
Scott Menefee	Clayton Water District		
Lisa Kayser-Grant	Sierra Club		
Maxwell Norton	Unincorporated area		
Nav Athwal	TriNut Farms		
Simon Vander Woude	Sandy Mush MWC		
Susan Walsh	City of Merced	Bill Spriggs	Resident City of Merced
Thomas Dinwoodie	Master Gardener/McSwain		
Trevor Hutton	Valley Land Alliance		
Wes Myers	Merced Grassland Coalition	Lou Myers	Benjamin Land LP
Zachary Hamman	Cal Am Water		



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# Approval of Coordination Committee Meeting Minutes

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Approval of Meeting Minutes

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- August 18, 2025

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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## Questions/Comments from Public:

For remote attendees, If you would like to make a comment, please type the comment in the chat or raise your hand to request to be taken off mute

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced





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# Reports

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# GSA Reports

- Updates from each GSA on activities within their own jurisdiction:
  - Merced Subbasin GSA
  - Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
  - Turner Island Water District GSA #1

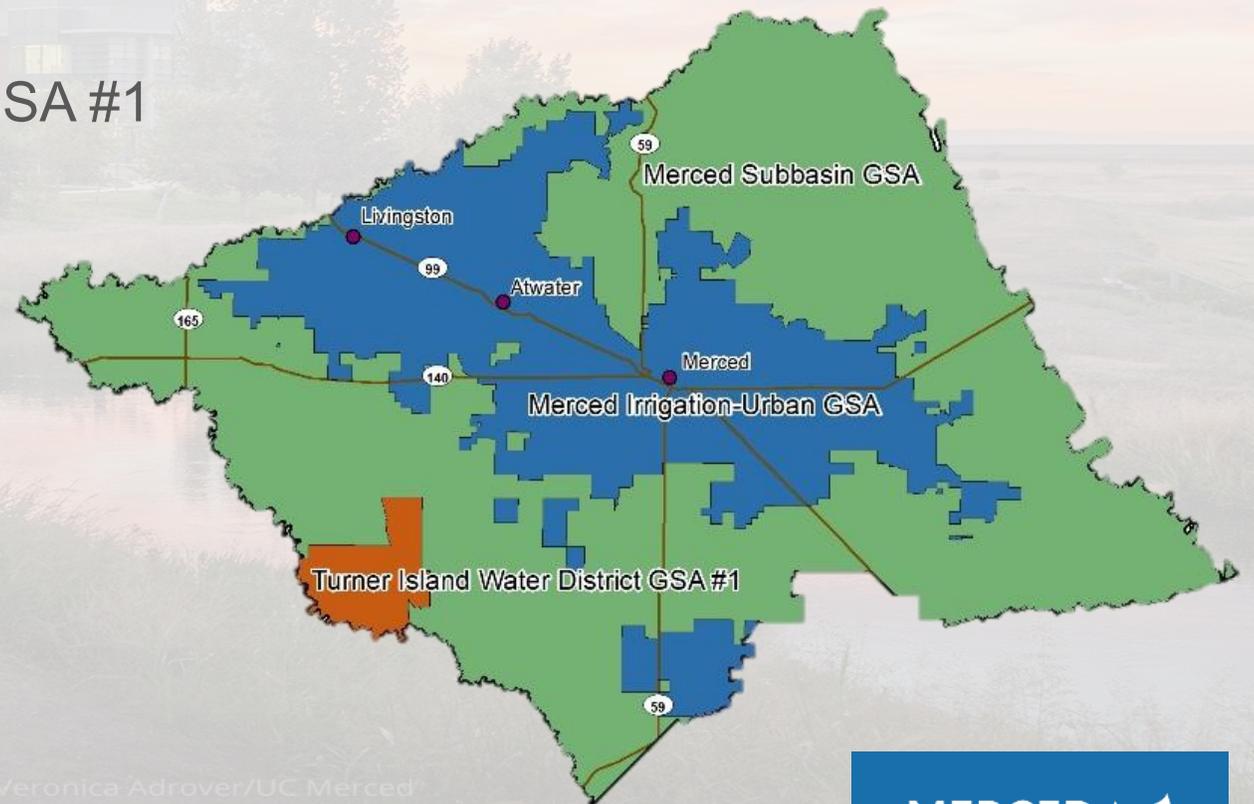


Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# Other Reports

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- [see separate Current Basin Conditions presentation file]

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Update

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Merced Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program (MLRP)

**Merced GSP - Joint Meeting of Coordination &  
Stakeholder Advisory Committees**

*November 3, 2025*



# Project Development Funding Available

## Development Funding Solicitation

- Released October 24th; Closes January 30, 2026
  - *Applications reviewed on rolling basis*
- \$750,000 total for project planning, design, and permitting (no implementation)
  - \$200,000 max per project, \$50,000 min per project



**MERCED MLRP**  
Community Water Environment

# Program Team

## Grantee:

Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MSGSA)

## Partners:

SocioEnvironmental and Educational Development Strategies (SEEDS)

East Merced Resource Conservation District (EMRCD)

River Partners

La Paloma Mutual Water Company

Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

## Program Management and Technical Support:

Valley Eco (VECO)

EKI Environment & Water, Inc.

Zanjero, Inc.





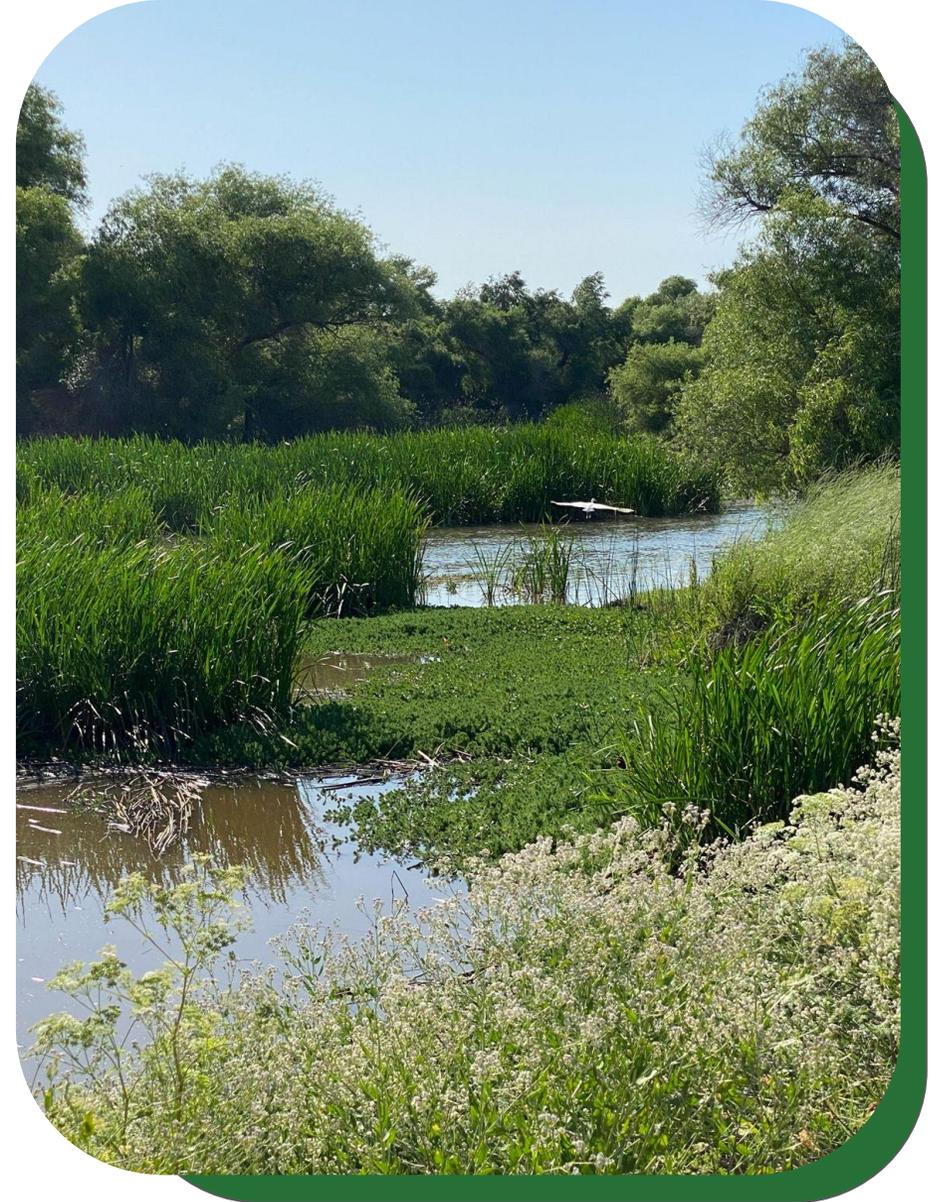
# MLRP's Purpose

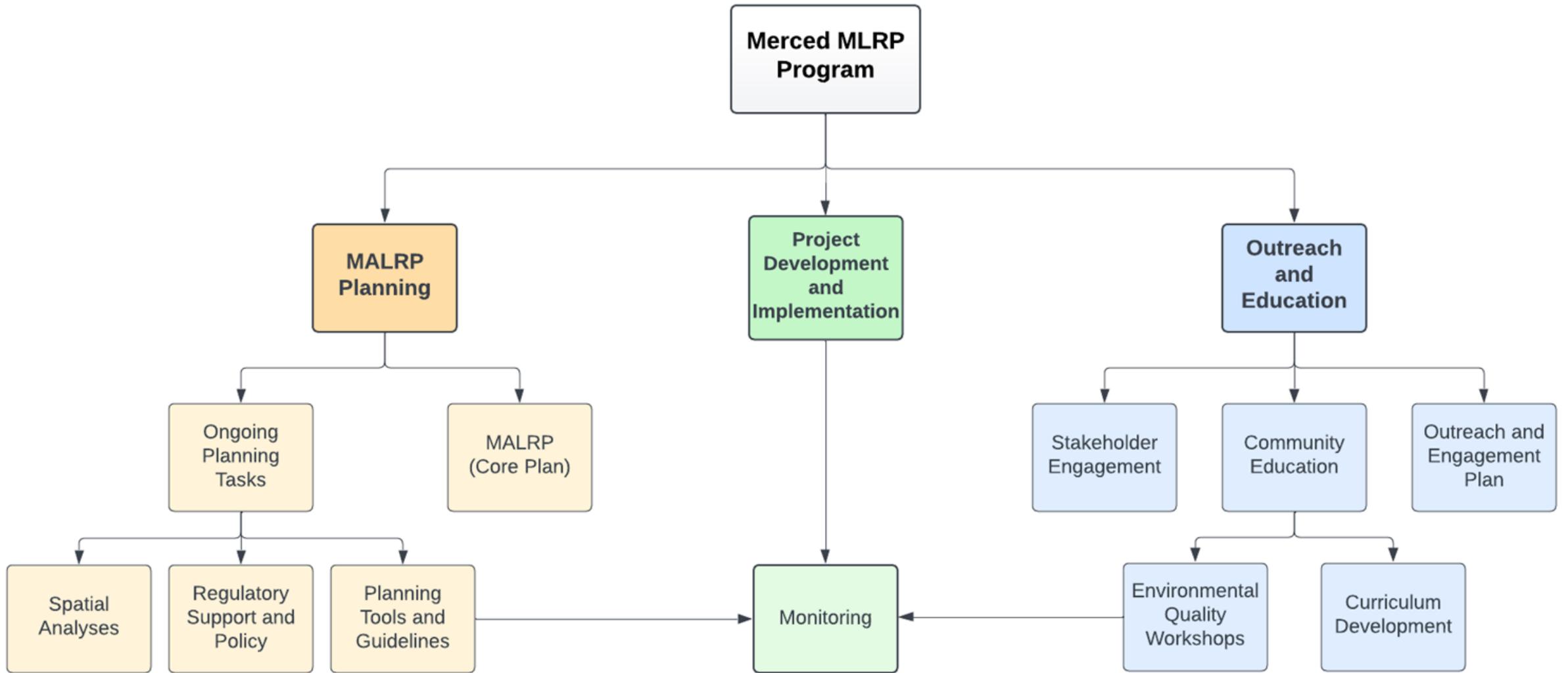
1. Support groundwater sustainability and drought relief
2. Assist irrigated ag land transitions to use less water
3. Sustain land-based economies
4. Create or restore wildlife/pollinator habitat
5. Reduce the impacts of groundwater depletion on lives, property, and the economy
6. Prioritize disadvantaged community benefits

# Merced MLRP Goals

Work collaboratively with landowners and stakeholders on regional planning and implementation of multibenefit projects that:

- Increase the groundwater sustainability of the subbasin
- Provide direct benefits to disadvantaged communities
- Increase native habitat connectivity, particularly along the proposed wildlife corridor





# Merced MLRP Project Development & Implementation



# Project Solicitations

*Competitive application process released to the public for Implementation Projects and Development Projects (planning, designs, permitting).*

## **Merced MLRP Solicitations**

- 11/15/24 - Implementation Project RFP released - \$5M (closed)
- 4/25/25 - Community Benefit Project RFP released - \$1.2M (closed)
- 10/24/25 - Development Project RFP released - \$750,000 available  
*(accepting applications until January 30, 2026)*

# MLRP Implementation Projects

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Funding Allocated</b>	<b>Status</b>
Project 3 - Amsterdam Recharge Basin	\$539,000	Under Contract with MSGSA
Project 6 - Nevada Ranch	\$1,200,000	Contract not yet executed
Project 7 - Bear Creek Ranch Transitional Seeding	\$1,200,000	Under Contract with MSGSA
Le Grand Community Project	\$1,080,811	Contract not yet executed
<b>Current Total:</b>	<b>\$4,019,811</b>	

# Project 3 - Amsterdam Water District MLRP

- **Applicant:** (Landowner)
- **Partners:** Water & Land Solutions
- **MLRP Funding Allocated:** \$539,000
- **Project Type:** Wildlife-friendly recharge basin
- **Project Duration:** Perpetuity
- **Project Location:** East and West of Hwy 59, North of Merced

## Project Summary:

- Remove approx. 15 acres of almond trees to create a 10 acre groundwater recharge basin with pollinator and wildlife benefits.
- Perimeter berms to be installed around adjacent orchard for potential future Agricultural Managed Aquifer Recharge (AgMAR)

## Project Updates

- Initial monitoring photos taken
- Soil samples taken from possible site locations
- Site location analysis underway

# Project 7 - Bear Creek Ranch Transitional Seeding Project

- **Applicant:** La Paloma Mutual Water Company
- **MLRP Funding Allocated:** \$1,200,000
- **Project Type:** Native Grassland Restoration
- **Project Duration:** 10 years
- **Project Location:** SE of Stevinson, adjacent to San Luis Wildlife Refuge

## Project Summary:

- Transition from cropland to native grassland restoration and cover cropping on 1,090 acres, as part of a larger floodplain restoration and groundwater recharge project

## Project Updates

- Initial monitoring photos taken
- Native seed purchasing underway
- Site plan design updates provided, accounting for additional program work on the property

# Project 6 - Nevada Ranch

- **Applicant:** Gladstone Land Corporation
- **MLRP Funding Allocated:** \$1,200,000
- **Project Type:** Grazing pasture/ Habitat restoration
- **Project Duration:** 50 years
- **Project Location:** Le Grand, East of S. Santa Fe Ave

## Project Summary:

- Transition 150 acres of almonds to native grassland for grazing
- 50 year deed restriction impinging the use of groundwater on the property

## Project Updates

- Project approved by both DOC and MSGSA Board
- Pending contract execution

# Le Grand Community Project

- **Applicant:** Community Foundation of Merced County
- **MLRP Funding Allocated:** \$1,080,811
- **Project Type:** Recreational space with native habitat
- **Project Duration:** 10 year MLRP project period, Perpetual groundwater retirement
- **Project Size:** 20 acres
- **Project Location:** Le Grand, adjacent to the High School

## Project Summary:

- Transition irrigated agricultural land into a passive recreation space, including native habitat restoration and walking trails.
- Land acquisition and easement to permanently retire the use of groundwater on the site; allocation will be forfeited. Cessation of surface water use for irrigated agriculture on 10 acres.

## Project Updates

- Project approved by both DOC and MSGSA Board
- Pending contract execution

# Project Development Funding Available



**Funding Available** - Maximum of \$150,000 per project, minimum of \$50,000  
(*\$750,000 total for Development Projects*)



**Due Date** - Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and must be submitted by January 30, 2026



**Eligibility** - Applications must only include planning, design, and permitting actions; projects will not be implemented prior to March 30, 2027, but should achieve “shovel-ready” status by that date through MLRP funding.



**Technical Assistance** - Application support/technical assistance is available!  
(Submit a request form at [mercedmlrp.org](https://mercedmlrp.org) or email [info@mercedmlrp.org](mailto:info@mercedmlrp.org))

# Project Types

## Planning, design, and permitting for:

### **Agriculture**

- Dryland Farming
- Low Water Use Crop
- Rotational Strip Cropping
- Rangeland / Grazing

### **Habitat**

- Habitat Restoration
- Pollinator Habitat
- Floodplain Habitat
- Wildlife Corridor

### **Other Benefit**

- Low-Impact Solar
- Groundwater Recharge
- Community Recreation
- Provision of Tribal Resources

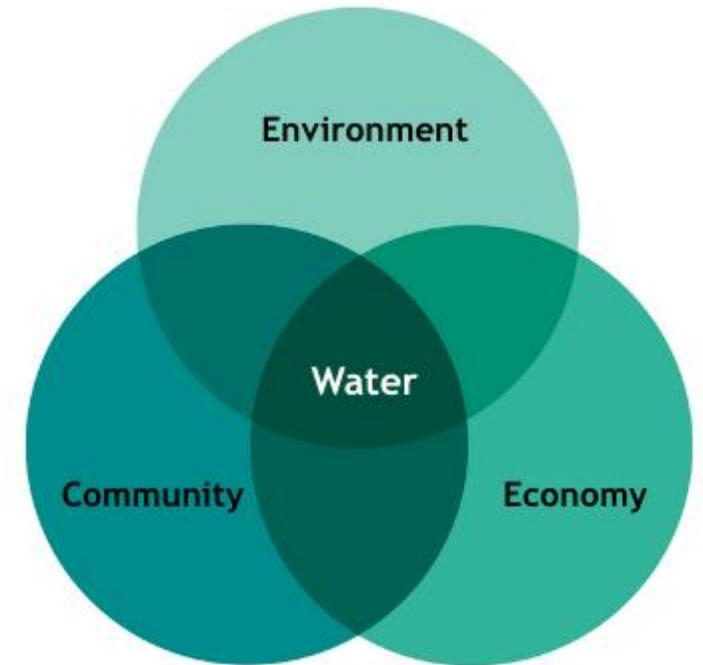
# Project Selection Criteria

## Priority Project Selection Criteria:

- Merced Water Quality and Supply
- Disadvantaged Community Benefits
- Agricultural and Economic Resiliency
- Regional Ecological Benefits

## Additional Criteria:

- Geographic Prioritization
- Feasibility and Cost-Effectiveness
- Proposed Wildlife Corridor
- Regional Coordination
- Additional Criteria and Considerations





# Project Eligibility

- Must be located within the Merced Subbasin
- Provide groundwater benefits by converting irrigated ag land to less water-intensive use(s)
- Address at least one of the Priority Criteria
- Maintain water savings and additional benefits for 10+ years once implemented
- *Funding is restricted to reimbursement of planning, design, and permitting costs only.*

# Applicant Eligibility

- Landowners
- GSA within Merced Subbasin
- Nonprofits
- Public Agencies
- Local Governments
- California Native American Tribes



# Resources

## Virtual Applicant Workshop:

**November 19th, 3-4pm**

Use the QR Code to register  
for the Zoom link or visit [mercedmlrp.org](https://mercedmlrp.org):



## Free Technical Assistance:

- Support for project concept development
- Application development support

## Merced MLRP Website:

[mercedmlrp.org](https://mercedmlrp.org)

Email: [info@mercedmlrp.org](mailto:info@mercedmlrp.org)

**Thank You**





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# Annual Report Update

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# DWR Review of WY 2024 Annual Report

- *“The submitted information appears to satisfy the annual report requirements of the GSP Regulations (23 CCR § 356.2), so the Department does not require additional information for purposes of reviewing the annual report at this time.”*
- Initial version also said: *“The Department noted that the annual report did not provide an update on all the applicable sustainable management criteria for the Subbasin...”*
- Revised letter corrects error in above, confirming that the GSAs did provide an update on all applicable SMC.

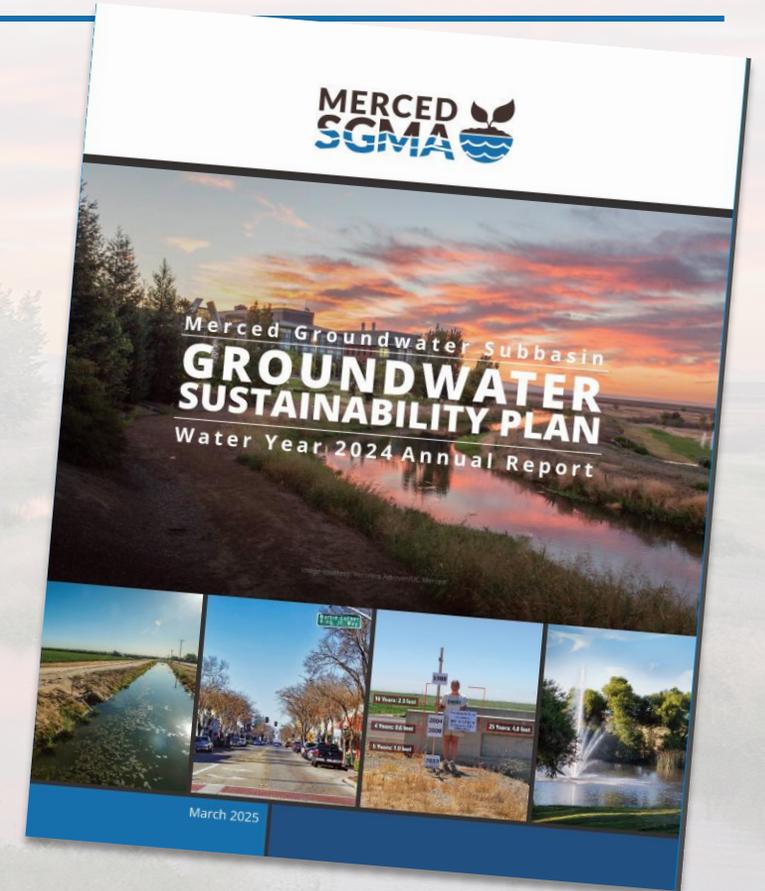


image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# WY 2025 Annual Report Development Starting Shortly

- Keep an eye out for an email from Woodard & Curran for data requests from local agencies (next few weeks)

Month	Agricultural Groundwater Production			Urban Groundwater Production		
	Volume (AF)	Method of Measurement (please enter "Direct" or "Estimate")	Accuracy of measure (+/- AF)	Volume (AF)	Method of Measurement (please enter "Direct" or "Estimate")	Accuracy of measure (+/- AF)
10/1/2024						
11/1/2024						
12/1/2024						
1/1/2025						
2/1/2025						
3/1/2025						
4/1/2025						
5/1/2025						
6/1/2025						
7/1/2025						
8/1/2025						
9/1/2025						



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# Domestic Well Mitigation Program Development Update

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



# DRAFT Program Development and Refinement

## Merced Groundwater Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

### Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA

City of Atwater  
City of Livingston  
City of Merced  
Le Grand CSD  
Planada CSD  
Winton Water and Sanitary District  
Merced Irrigation District

### Merced Subbasin GSA

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

### Turner Island Water District GSA-1

Turner Island Water District

### Coordination Committee

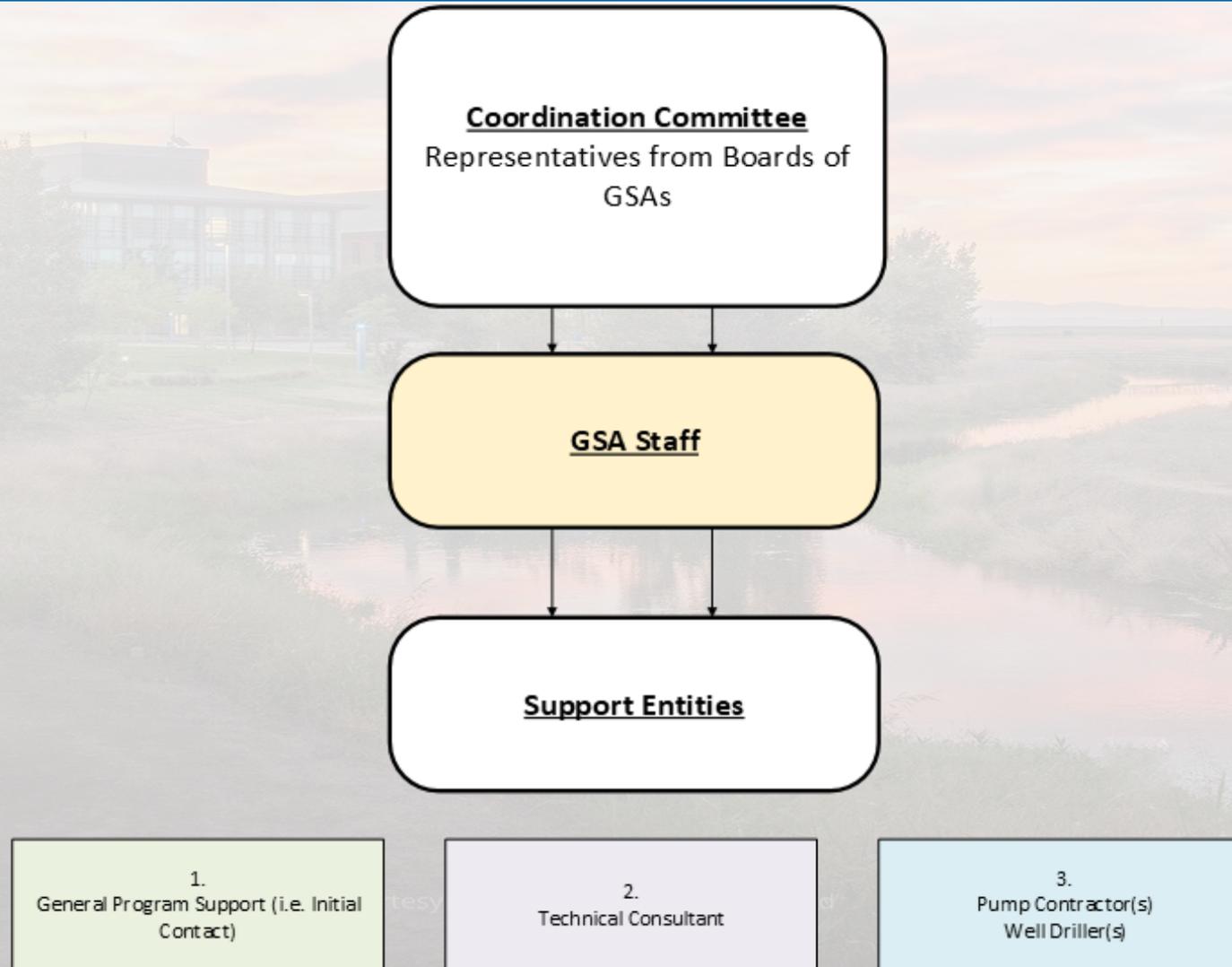
Representatives from Boards of GSAs

### GSA Staff

### Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Growers  
City Residents  
Disadvantaged Communities  
County Residents / Domestic Well Owners  
Environmental  
Schools  
Private Water System Providers  
NGOs

# DRAFT Program Implementation Structure



# DRAFT Program Process



Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# DRAFT Program Process, ctd.

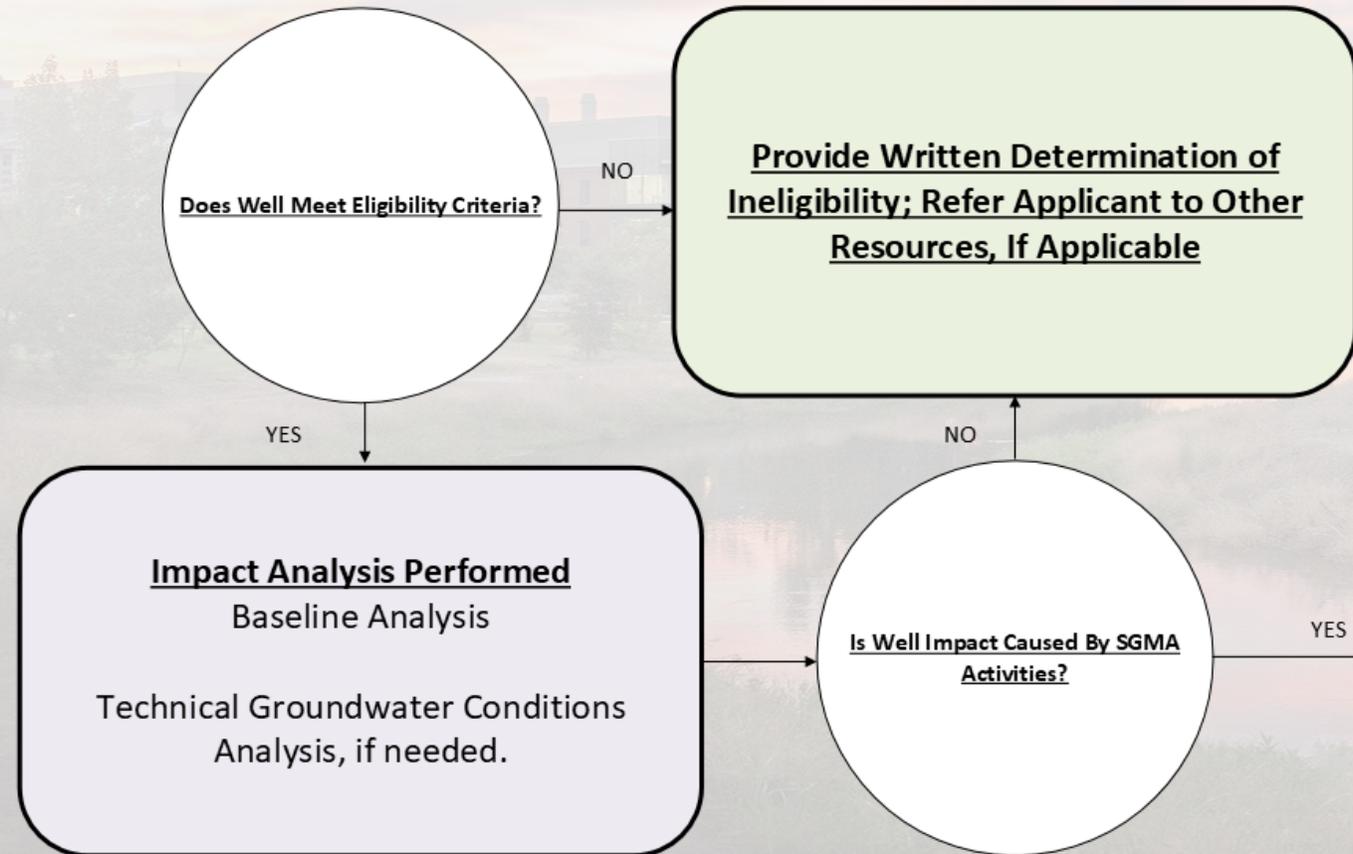


Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# DRAFT Program Process, ctd.

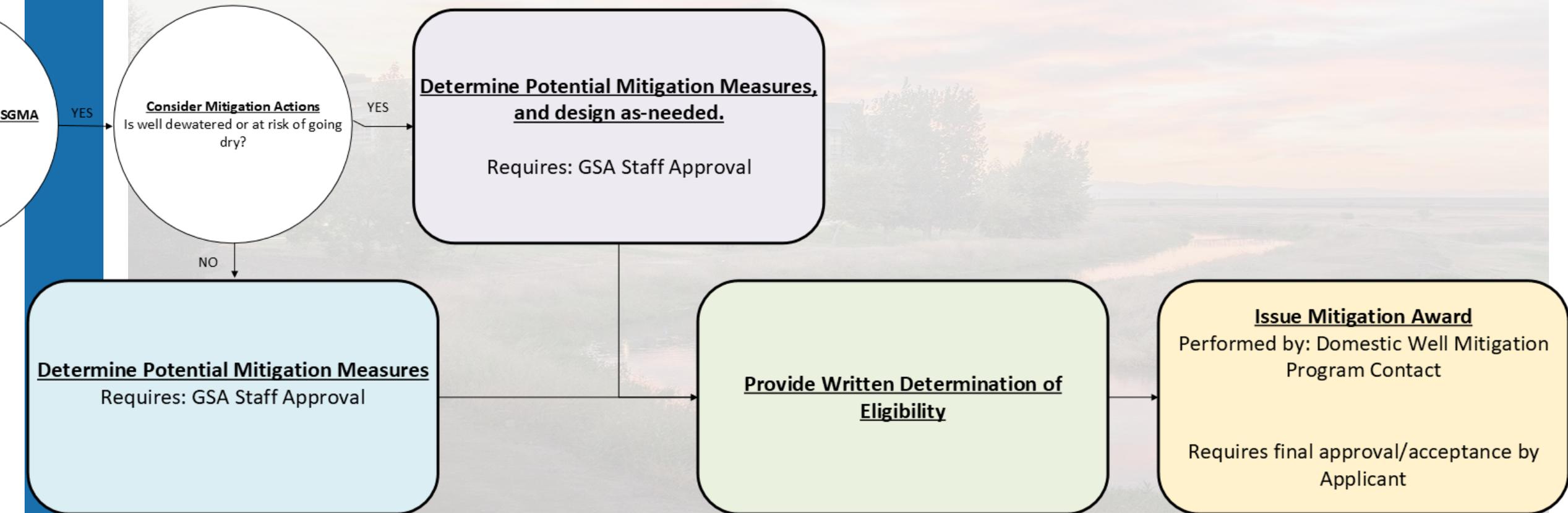


Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# DRAFT Merced Domestic Well Mitigation Program Framework

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## Well Eligibility Criteria

- The well is within the Merced Subbasin
- The well existed prior to adoption of the Domestic Well Mitigation Program or if drilled to a GSA-recommended depth if constructed after adoption of the Program
- The cause of well failure is declining groundwater levels resulting from overdraft pumping that occurred after July 19, 2022, and is attributable to sustainable groundwater management under the Merced GSP
- There is evidence connecting GSA management actions to well's ability to provide potable water
- The well does not supply water for non-domestic use
- The well does not extract more than 2AF
- The well has not been previously mitigated by this program or any other mitigation program

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# DRAFT Merced Domestic Well Mitigation Program Framework

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## Mitigation Award:

If eligible for mitigation, Domestic Well Mitigation Program will provide a Mitigation award, including the combination of approved Long-Term Mitigation Measures and amount of Financial Assistance.

Program will issue reimbursement, in the maximum amount for full mitigation of \$30,000.

Wells replaced after July 19, 2022 and before the adoption of the Program may be reimbursed at maximum amount of \$30,000.

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# **DRAFT** Merced Domestic Well Mitigation Program Framework

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## **Mitigation Measures**

### Emergency Water Supply

- Bottled drinking water
- Tanked supply

### Long Term Solution

- Connection to a Public Water Supply System
- Modifications to Existing Well System
- Well Deepening
- Well Replacement

## **Appeals**

Appeals may be Program Decisions through a written appeal submitted within 30 days of Mitigation Award.

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

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# Next Steps:

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- Finalize Domestic Well Mitigation Program policy language/document.
- Present to Board of Directors of GSAs.
- GSAs coordinate implementation of the Mitigation Program.

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Allocation Program Policies Coordination

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# Next Steps

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Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced



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# What's coming up next?

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- Next meeting likely in February/March
- Discuss anticipated DWR Depletion of Interconnected Surface Waters Guidance
- Outcomes from interbasin coordination meeting planned with Delta-Mendota Subbasin

Image courtesy: Veronica Adrover/UC Merced

# Merced GSP Joint Coordination & Stakeholder Advisory Committees Meeting

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**Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA**  
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