NORTHERN
DELTA-MENDOTA

Northern Delta-Mendota Region Management Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 1:00 PM
Patterson City Council Chambers, 1 Plaza Circle, Patterson, CA

Northern Delta-Mendota Region Management Committee Members and Alternates Present
Bobby Pierce, Chair – West Stanislaus Irrigation District
Adam Scheuber, Alternate – Del Puerto Water District (DPWD) – Entered the room at 1:05 p.m.
Vince Lucchesi, Member – Patterson Irrigation District (PID)
Tiffany Hill, Alternate – Merced County
Maria Encinas, Member – City of Patterson

Absent
Christy McKinnon, Member – Stanislaus County
Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director, San Luis- Delta Mendota Water Authority

Others Present
Karlee Liddy, Hallmark Group
Taylor Blakslee, Hallmark Group
Larrisa Camara, City of Patterson
Matt Garcia, Del Puerto Water District

Others Present via Zoom
Kait Palys, INTERA
Joel Andrews, City of Patterson
Fernando Almaraz, Baker Manock & Jensen
Anona Dutton, EKI
Amir Mani, EKI
Susan Xei, EKI
Natalie Cochran, Woodard & Curran
Margaret Califaris, TriHydro (Consultant for Stanislaus Co.)
Thomas Cleverdon

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Committee Chair Pierce called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Committee Chair Pierce led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Committee to Consider Corrections or Additions to the Agenda of Items, as Authorized by Government Code Section 54950 et seq.

There were no corrections or additions to the agenda of items.

4. Opportunity for Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

OPEN SESSION

Consent Calendar

5. Committee to Review and Take Action on the Consent Calendar

a. Minutes of the November 5, 2025 Northern Delta-Mendota Region Management Committee Meeting
b. Budget to Actual Report

Motion

Committee Member Vince Lucchesi provided the motion to approve the November 5, 2025 meeting minutes with amendments and the budget to actual report. Committee Member Maria Encinas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items

6. Committee to Consider Ratification of Delta-Mendota Coordination Committee Action Authorizing Water Authority Staff to Execute First Amendment to Task Order 011-F26-AA63-TO001 with Luhdorff & Scalmanini, Consulting Engineers

Mr. Blakslee provided background on the LSCE task order amendment on behalf of Scott Petersen (Water Policy Director, SLDMWA) which was included in the meeting packet. He stated there would be no net impact on the overall budget and staff recommended the committee approve the task order amendment for execution by the Water Authority.

Member Scheuber entered the room at 1:05 p.m. and was included in the vote of the motion below.

Motion

Committee Member Lucchesi provided the motion to approve the task order amendment and the budget to actual report. Committee Member Encinas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Committee to review and consider recommendation that the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Water Resources Committee and Board of Directors approve the draft FY27 budget for the Northern Delta-Mendota Management Region Activity Agreement (Fund 64)**

   Mr. Blakslee provided background on the FY27 Budget for the Northern D-M Region, which was included in the meeting packet. Member Lucchesi noted that the FY27 Budget is overall lower than that of FY26, and that Northern D-M Region activities are trending under budget so far this year. He expressed concern regarding the budget suitability to cover the full transition from the Water Authority to the Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Mr. Blakslee responded that the budget is expected to be sufficient to cover this transition and stated that the estimated costs from the RFP responses were in line with Mr. Petersen's budget for Fund 63 (agenda item 8).

   Motion

   Committee Member Lucchesi provided the motion to approve the draft FY27 budget for the Northern Delta-Mendota Management Region Activity Agreement (Fund 64). Committee Member Hill seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

8. **Committee to ratify recommendation of the Coordination Committee and the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Water Resources Committee and Board of Directors approve the draft FY27 budget for the Coordinated Delta-Mendota Management Region Activity Agreement (Fund 63)**

   Mr. Blakslee provided a summary of the budget items, including core activity costs and specific activities costs. He highlighted that there was significant discussion regarding the model calibration during the Coordination Committee (CC) meeting on December 8, 2025, where the CC ultimately decided to approve the budget with the caveat that they reconvene before any funds are spent on model calibration.

   Member Encinas asked if this model calibration would be performed basin-wide and Mr. Blakslee responded that it would be performed on the basin-wide scale.

   Member Lucchesi provided additional context regarding the quality of data feeding the model and noted that the CC directed a technical ad hoc committee to review the model calibration approach before any work is performed.

Member Scheuber emphasized that the value of performing the calibration needs to be communicated to member agencies. He reminded the Committee that their GSP stipulates all extractions are metered by January 1, 2026, and noted that estimates may continue to be used for reporting before more data is gathered and the model is calibrated.

Chair Pierce asked who developed the budget proposal for the model calibration and Mr. Blakslee responded that the Water Authority did, and that the JPA Board will vote for final approval once established.

Motion
Committee Member Hill provided the motion to approve the recommendation that the SLDMWA Water Resources Committee and Board of Directors approve the Coordination Budget for FY2027. Committee Member Lucchesi seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Committee to consider approval of Subbasin technical consultants to proceed with developing an optional Data Validation Standard Operation Procedure (SOP)

Kait Palys (INTERA) provided background on the purpose and next steps to develop the SOP to QA/ QC data before it is uploaded into the data management system, highlighting that this work would fall within the existing scope of the technical consultant budgets.

Motion
Committee Member Hill provided the motion to approve the recommendation that the SLDMWA Water Resources Committee and Board of Directors approve the Coordination Budget for FY2027. Committee Member Lucchesi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Report Items

10. SGMA Round 1 Grant Implementation Activities

Natalie Cochran (Woodard & Curran) gave a summary of the key grant dates and status of deliverables. She stated that one final amendment will be prepared and submitted in December and that amendment submittals are due to Leslie Dumas by this Friday, December 12th. She also reminded GSA representatives to reach out to Leslie if there are any projects that are anticipated to run into January.

Chair Pierce asked to clarify that the work product needs to be complete, but they do not yet need to have the final invoices and Ms. Cochran confirmed that is correct.

11. Delta-Mendota Subbasin Budget

This item was covered in the action items presented by Mr. Blakslee.

12. JPA Status

a. Committee to discuss Northern Delta-Mendota Region Management Committee transition following JPA adoption

Legal Counsel Fernando Almaraz, on behalf of Lauren Layne (Baker Manock & Jensen) stated that Lacey McBride (Merced County) provided comments on the draft special projects agreement that was presented to the Committee during the November 5, 2025 meeting.

Member Hill stated that the comments were primarily requests for additions to the governance portion of the special agreement.

Chair Pierce stated that their legal counsel approved and signed the special project agreement.

Staff noted action to distribute the Merced County comments on the special projects agreement to Northern DM Region GSAs for review and feedback by December 22, 2025. The Committee will consider approval of the final agreement on January 7, 2026.

b. JPA schedule and status update

Mr. Blakslee stated that there are 2 GSAs remaining to adopt the JPA, with the new deadline being January 6, 2026.

13. GSP Implementation Updates

a. Update on November Groundwater Level Monitoring Event

Natalie Cochran (Woodard & Curran) provided an update and requested monitoring data from GSA representatives by December 12, 2025.

b. Update on Annual Report Development

This item was not included in the publicly-posted agenda. Ms. Cochran stated she sent out an information request to GSA representatives regarding non-PRP elements. She also sent an email requesting feedback or edits to the water surface elevation point maps from GSA representatives by December 19, 2025.

c. Update on Pumping Reduction Plan and GSP Implementation Tracking and Exceedance Reporting

Susan Xie (EKI) gave an update on the PRP component reporting deadlines. Chair Pierce asked what is used as the baseline for the pumping reduction. Ms. Xie stated that the baseline for comparison is based on average annual pumping under the 2030 scenario. Amir Mani (EKI) responded that the baseline for the West Stanislaus Irrigation District GSA is based on average pumping between 2019 and 2023, which is reported in the PRP. He stated it may be worth having a future discussion regarding using a percentage reduction versus the exact pumping volume from the model.

Member Encinas asked if there must be consensus amongst the group or if the pumping reduction approach can vary by GSA. Mr. Mani responded that the technical recommendation would be to use a consistent method amongst all GSAs as the basin-wide goal is to reduce pumping and mitigate overdraft.

Member Scheuber asked if the model projected a higher level of extraction than the City of Patterson is pumping, and Member Encinas stated that the extractions are higher than what the model projected.

Mr. Blakslee asked if this is a zone-specific decision to be made, or if all zones should agree on one approach for pumping reductions. Mr. Mani stated that it can be a zone-specific decision to be made in the near future.

Chair Pierce asked if the reduction is set through 2030, and Member Scheuber confirmed that is correct. He stated they are focused on the 9,000 acre-feet in the lower aquifer and decided on a proportional reduction every year to reach that goal after 5 years (about 1,100 acre-feet reduction per year for the Northern DM Region). Lastly, he stated that a rolling annual average will be more practical given diverse water year conditions.

Mr. Mani stated that the approach can be amended in the PRP to be tracked at a rolling 3-year average and iterated the importance of tracking in January 2026.

Member Encinas stated that there are several planning documents (Master Water Plan, Urban Water Management Plan, Chromium-6 Feasibility Study) that will include the maximum extraction number and she needs to know if that number will be defendable and enforceable.

Chair Pierce directed staff to work with EKI to agendize a discussion regarding the reduction approach for an upcoming meeting (perhaps January).

Ms. Xie and Mr. Mani continued to provide an overview of wells with groundwater quality exceedances, recommending confirmation samples be taken and investigations take place to determine whether the exceedance is due to basin management.

Member Scheuber shared that another quarterly sample was taken for well 01-002 in November, and that the MT was not exceeded for TDS. He stated that they will perform further investigation on the well near Ingram Creek and that well 01-004 has always exceeded for Nitrate, but is slowly improving.

14. Program Management Report

a. Review of Previous Meeting Action Items

Ms. Palys reminded GSA representatives to submit water use by service sector to Woodard & Curran as soon as possible to help move the draft of the annual report forward. Mr. Blakslee emphasized that getting the data back to the technical consultants is critical for timely delivery of the annual report to DWR.

b. Schedule of Key Milestones

Ms. Palys asked if there were any questions regarding the schedule of milestones. There were no comments or questions.

CLOSED SESSION

15. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation

The Committee will meet in closed session to confer with legal counsel on significant exposure to anticipated litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Government Code Section 54956.9: (2 cases)

The Northern Committee entered closed session at 1:08 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

16. Report from Closed Session

The Northern Committee returned from closed session at 2:20 p.m. Legal counsel Fernando Almaraz stated there was no reportable action.

17. Next Steps

Ms. Palys reviewed the action items, including:

1. December 22, 2025 deadline for Northern DM Region GSAs to review and provide feedback on Merced County’s comments on the draft special projects agreement.
2. Staff to begin developing the groundwater data validation SOP.
3. Staff to agendize a discussion regarding pumping reduction approaches for the January or subsequent meeting.

4. GSA representatives to submit responses to all data requests for annual report development as soon as possible.

18. Reports Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(a)(3)

No reports were discussed under this item.

19. Next Meeting

Chair Pierce announced the next meeting will take place on January 7, 2026.

20. Adjourn

Committee Chair Pierce adjourned the meeting at 2:24 p.m.