Joint Meeting of the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSAs Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors and Coordination Committee

Monday, March 9, 2026, 1:00 PM

Grassland Water District Board Room
200 W Willmott Ave, Los Banos, CA 93635

Meeting Minutes

PARTICIPANTS:

Board Directors

Chase Hurley, Central DM GSA
Jim Stilwell, Farmers GSA
Joe Hopkins, Aliso Water District
Augustine Ramirez, Fresno County A&B
John Wiersma, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors
Ric Ortega, Grassland Water District
Vince Lucchesi, Northern DM Region – *Call in from noticed location*

Others Present

Lauren Layne, Legal Counsel, Baker Manock & Jensen
Taylor Blakslee, Hallmark Group
Palmer McCoy, Mercy Springs Water District
Lacey McBride, Central DM Region

Present Via Zoom/Phone

Adam Scheuber, Del Puerto Water District
Alma Antua, Westlands Water District
Amir Mani, EKI
Anona Dutton, EKI
Susan Xie, EKI
Andrew Francis, LSCE
Ethan Andrews, Provost & Pritchard
Gilbert Torres, Fresno County
Holly Stanitsas, Stantec
Jason Dean, Anatidae Consulting
Juan Cadena, Mercy Springs WD
Jules Barab, TriHydro

Kait Palys, INTERA
Leslie Dumas, Woodard & Curran
Maria Razo, Stanislaus County
Matt Garcia, Del Puerto WD
Manny Amorelli, James ID
Patrick McGowan, Panoche Water District
Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard
Ryo Takanashi, Water One
Scott Petersen, San Luis &Delta Mendota Water Authority
Will Halligan, LSCE

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**
   Committee Chair Hopkins called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
   Committee Chair Hopkins led 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 items.

4. **Election of Officers**
   Lauren Layne introduced this topic, and stated that pursuant the MOA, the Board needs to elect officers every March and rotate by alphabetical order of the GSA name. As such, current Chair is Joe Hopkins with Aliso GSA, and Chase Hurley (with Central DM GSA) is Vice Chair.

   MOTION

   Director Ortega made a motion to approve Chase Hurley as Chair and Jim Stilwell (Farmers GSA) as Vice Chair. Director Ramirez seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Chairman Hurley took over the meeting at this point.

5. **Opportunity for Public Comment**
   Chair Hurley opened the floor for public comments, and no public comments were provided.

Consent Calendar

6. **Committee to Review and Take Action on the Consent Calendar**
   - **a.** Minutes of the Special Joint DM Authority and Coordination Committee Meeting February 4, 2026
   - **b.** Minutes of the Joint DM Authority and Coordination Committee Meeting February 9, 2026
   - **c.** Budget to Actual Report

MOTION

Director Wiersma made a motion to approve the consent calendar, including the meeting minutes and budget to actual report. Director Hopkins seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Closed Session

7. Legal Counsel - **Anticipated Litigation - None**
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: (1 cases)

Open Session

8. **Report from Closed Session**
The Board did go into closed session.

Action Items

9. **Adopt a Resolution of Commendation for the SLDMWA for their Services to the Delta-Mendota Subbasin**
Director Martin had suggested the DM JPA Board draft and present a signed, framed resolution of commendation to the San Luis Delta Mendota Water Authority Board for their services to the Subbasin GSAs. The Board directed staff to facilitate the printing, signing, and framing of the resolution for the SLDMWA Board meeting on April 9, 2026.

MOTION

Director Ortega made a motion to approve the resolution of commendation to be presented to the SLDMWA Board. The motion was seconded by Director Hopkins and passed via unanimous roll call vote.

10. **Approval of the Northern DM Committee Consultant Contracts for Program Management Support and Technical Support Services**
Taylor Blakslee (Hallmark Group) provided an overview of the Northern DM Committee consultant contracts, noting that the DM JPA Board approved the Northern DM Committee FY27 Budget at the February 9, 2026 DM JPA meeting. Consultant contracts were presented to the Board and were approved for execution by the Board Chair.

MOTION

Director Ramirez made a motion to approve the Northern DM consultant contracts with Hallmark Group and EKI for Program Management Support and Technical Support Services, respectively. The motion was seconded by Director Ortega and passed via unanimous roll call vote, with Director Lucchesi abstaining.

11. Approval and Ratification of the Special Project Agreement with the Central DM GSA

Ms. Layne provided a summary of the Central DM Special Project Agreement and Director Hopkins asked why a special project agreement is needed if the Central DM GSA is their own separate joint powers authority. Ms. Layne stated that they would still have to contract as 12 smaller entities and therefore it is easier to contract through the JPA rather than their smaller JPA.

MOTION

Director Ortega made a motion to ratify entering into the Special Project Agreement with the Central DM GSA. The motion was seconded by Director Lucchesi and passed via unanimous roll call vote, with Director Hurley abstaining.

12. Report on Technical Ad hoc and Consider Authorizing EKI to Perform Model Calibration ***Unanimous vote required.*

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that since this item was deferred during the FY27 budget approval process, unanimous Board approval is required for the motion to pass.

Amir Mani (EKI) provided background on the purpose and goal of the model calibration and provided a readout from the technical ad hoc committee meeting on February 26, 2026. Anona Dutton (EKI) provided a summary of the benefits and potential risks avoided by calibrating the model in the current fiscal year.

The Board participated in a healthy discussion regarding the pros and cons of performing the model calibration in this fiscal year, with those opposing the action stating that the calibration should take place next year, with improved data input from the well registration and metering requirements (required as of January 2026). Some Board members expressed concern for the cost distribution of the model calibration and wanted to review the cost sharing for the single GSP preparation as a potential example. Several Board members asked about GSAs reporting surface water deliveries and how that impacts pumping estimates from the model. They also inquired about EKI potentially performing the calibration is phases, rather than all at once in this fiscal year.

The Board directed staff to convene the technical ad hoc committee to discuss this topic and to defer this item to the April 13, 2026, meeting.

13. Approval of Administrative Policies

Ms. Layne introduced this item and stated that any invoices will come to the Board for approval before payments are made and ensured the Board that separation of costs amongst the Central and Northern groups would be maintained.

MOTION

Director Wiersma made a motion to approve the administrative policies, including the fiscal controls policy. The motion was seconded by Director Lucchesi and passed via unanimous roll call vote.

14. Direction on DWR Grant Extension and Authorize a Contract with Woodard & Curran for Grant Administration

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and outlined the associated costs to submit one additional invoicing package to the Department of Water Resources. The Board directed staff to facilitate the execution of the contract with W&C to submit one additional invoicing package to DWR. The Board also directed staff to work with Aliso, Del Puerto Water District, and EKI to map existing or planned subsidence benchmark sites and to recommend up to six additional benchmark sites to fill data gaps.

MOTION

Director Ortega made a motion to approve the administrative costs of not to exceed $50,600 for W&C to extend the grant through April 2027. The motion was seconded by Director Ramirez and passed via unanimous roll call vote.

15. Approval of the Guidance Document for Groundwater Monitoring

Kait Palys (INTERA) introduced this item and stated that she would like feedback from the technical ad hoc by March 20, 2026. Director Wiersma asked if the GSP requires that an RMS be replaced if it cannot be used for sampling and Ms. Palys responded that the GSP does not explicitly require this but noted that new data gaps may occur if the inaccessibility to the RMS for sampling is not addressed.

Director Stilwell asked if EKI has a recommendation for identifying a proxy well or replacing an RMS and Ms. Palys stated that those are policy considerations to be presented to the Board at a subsequent meeting, as different GSAs have different levels of resources to address those challenges.

The Board directed staff to convene the technical ad hoc to provide feedback and a recommendation to the Board at the April 13, 2026, meeting.

Report Items

16. Update on the Status of the DM Subbasin GSAs MOA

Ms. Layne introduced this item and stated that GSAs should notify staff of the Board meeting date by which they will have the MOA approved. Staff will continue to track MOA signatures and will distribute an executed copy once all 21 signatures have been received.

17. Update on the SWRCB Staff Recommendation to return the DM Subbasin to the Department of Water Resources

Director Martin asked if anyone will be attending an SWRCB ribbon cutting ceremony on April 7, 2026, and Director Hurley stated that he will be able to attend. They will work with EKI and Lauren to develop messaging to thank the SWRCB staff. Director Martin also stated that the strike team needs to meet as soon as possible and that the Plan Manager should work with DWR to review the GSP. Susan Xie (EKI) gave an overview of the SWRCB staff's suggested actions for GSP implementation improvement, which were included in the Board packet.

18. Update on the Letter of Termination of the Cost Sharing Agreement with SLDMWA

Ms. Layne provided a summary of the letter requested by the SLDMWA Board and stated that the Water Authority will pay bills through April 13, 2026, for all invoices through the end of February. Staff will distribute the resolution from the SLDMWA Board approving the letters.

19. Program Management Report and Update on Action Items

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that action items will be presented in a clearer format at subsequent meetings. Director Hopkins stated that all policies should be made available on the website, including links to form 700.

20. GSP Implementation Updates

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

   EKI staff provided an update on the PRP implementation and tracking.

b. **Report from GSAs with Exceedances**

   Mr. Blakslee provided an overview of any exceedances, noting that staff will reach out to those GSAs will exceedances to provide an initial report during the next meeting.

   Director Wiersma left the meeting at 3:26 p.m.

c. **Update on the Draft Water Year 2024-2025 Annual Report**

   Mr. Blakslee provided an overview the annual report status, stating that feedback is due to W&C by March 13, 2026, to give time to incorporate edits. The Board directed staff to schedule a special meeting to approve the annual report during the week of March 23, 2026.

21. SGMA Round 1 Implementation Grant

a. **Update on Status of Subsidence Monitoring Project**

   Jarrett Martin provided a brief update and there were no questions.

22. Update on Facilitation Support Services Outreach Activities

a. **Update on Status of Meetings with Adjoining Subbasins Regarding Comment Letters on Periodic Evaluations**

b. Update on the Domestic Well Mitigation Policy Workshop

Holly Stanitsas (Stantec) stated that the draft agenda for the Merced meeting was provided in the meeting packet and that the draft newsletter is currently being reviewed by the communications subcommittee.

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23. Next Steps

- Staff to facilitate the printing, signing and framing of the resolution of commendation for the SLDMWA Board meeting on April 9, 2026.
- Staff to facilitate the execution of the Northern DM consultant contracts.
- Staff to facilitate the execution of the Central DM GSA SPA.
- Staff convene the technical ad hoc, consider cost share options for the model calibration and provide an update to inform Board decision on April 13, 2026.
- Staff to maintain the policies for JPA records and post to website if directed by legal counsel.
- Staff to facilitate the execution of the contract with W&C to submit one additional invoicing package to DWR.
- Staff work with Aliso, DPWD, and EKI to map subsidence benchmark sites and recommend ~6 additional sites to fill data gaps.
- Staff to convene the technical ad hoc and provide 2 policy recommendations regarding timing for proxy well identification and replacing an RMS.
- GSAs provide staff with Board date by which they will approve the MOA. Staff to track signatures and distribute executed copy.
- Staff to schedule a Special Meeting during the week of March 23, 2026.

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

Nothing to report.

25. Member Reports

Nothing to report.

26. Next Meeting(s):

a. April 13, 2026, 1 p.m. PST, Grassland Water District Board Room

27. Adjournment

Chair Hurley adjourned the meeting at 4:01 p.m.

DELTA-MENDOTA SGMA

2026 DELTA-MENDOTA SUBBASIN GSAs JPA BOARD MEETING DATES *(2nd Monday, unless otherwise listed)* - Grassland Water District Board Room

April 13, 2026
May 18, 2026
June 8, 2026
July 13, 2026
August 10, 2026
September 21, 2026
October 12, 2026
November 16, 2026
December 14, 2026

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
DMS	Data Management System
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
FSS	Facilitation Support Services
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
ISW	Interconnected Surface Water
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Minimum Threshold
PRP	Pumping Reduction Plan
RMW	Representative Monitoring Wells
SLDMWA	San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (Authority)
SMC	Sustainable Management Criteria
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board