



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

Tuesday, May 19, 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
Ken Swanson, Grassland Water District
Vince Lucchesi, Northern DM Region

Others Present

Alberto Villa-Leyva, City of Gustine
Amir Mani, EKI
Brian Silva, San Luis Water District
Karlee Liddy, Hallmark Group
Jarrett Martin, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors
Lauren Layne, Legal Counsel, Baker Manock & Jensen
Lon Martin, San Luis Water District

Present Via Zoom/Phone

Adam Scheuber, Del Puerto Water District
Alma Antua, Westlands Water District
Anona Dutton, EKI
Brittany Harker, Stanislaus County
Caleb Stearns, West Stanislaus Irrigation District
Christy McKinnon, Stanislaus County
Ellen Wehr, Grassland Water District
Ethan Andrews, Provost & Pritchard
Gilbert Torres, Fresno County
Gordon Bonds
Hailey Rowbatham, EKI
Joel Andrews, City of Patterson
Kait Palys, INTERA

Lacey McBride, Merced County
Leta Spencer,
Lisa Beutler, Stantec
Maria Razo, Stanislaus County
Matt Garcia, Del Puerto WD
Michael
Palmer McCoy, Mercy Springs Water District
Patrick McGowan, Panoche Water District
Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard
Ric Ortega, Grassland Water District – *Joined online at 12:10 pm*
Ryo Takanashi, Water One
Sarah Boogay, Department of Water Resources
Steve Haze, Tranquillity Resource Conservation District
Thomas Spankowski, City of Newman
Will Halligan, LSCE

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Committee Chair Hurley called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Committee Director Stilwell led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Opportunity for Public Comment

Chair Hurley opened the floor for public comments, and Steve Haze, Tranquillity Resource Conservation District, provided public comment regarding coordination with the Fresno A and B GSAs to ensure regional representation for the California Water Plan. Director Ramirez stated he would follow up by the end of the week.

Consent Calendar

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

- a. Minutes of the April 13 2026 Meeting
- b. Budget to Actual Report

There were no comments or questions from the Board regarding the items in the consent calendar.

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, which passed unanimously.

Action Items

5. Consider Approving the Proposed Subbasin Model Calibration Phased Approach

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that during the April 13, 2026 DM JPA Board meeting, EKI presented a phased approach to the model update and while the Board generally supported a phased approach, they requested that the technical ad hoc further review and provide feedback to EKI. He added that the technical ad hoc met on April 22, 2026 to review and discuss the phased approach. The ad hoc confirmed unanimous support for the phased

approach as presented by EKI, as did the Central DM GSA Board and the Northern DM Region Management Committee during their meetings on April 23 and May 4, 2026, respectively.

MOTION

Director Lucchesi made a motion to approve the proposed Subbasin model calibration phased approach with the condition that a cost share approach be discussed and approved. Director Wiersma seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair Hurley opened the floor for public comment and Lon Martin (San Luis Water District) stated his caution of the land use assumptions in the modeling because aerial imagery and LandIQ data may not accurately represent a district like SLWD, which is over 50% fallowed land.

6. Consider Authorizing the Proposed Subbasin Model Calibration Cost Share

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that during the April 13, 2026 DM JPA Board meeting, the issue of cost sharing for the model calibration effort was raised. The Board directed staff to convene the budget ad hoc to address the cost share issue for the proposed model calibration and future technical basin-wide work. He added that the budget ad hoc met on April 21, 2026, and developed several cost share options for Board consideration, since they had agreed that the existing 1/7th cost share and the acreage-based cost share options (A and B) were not likely to receive consensus from the DM JPA Board. Mr. Blakslee also noted that the ad hoc discussed a minimum floor and maximum ceiling percentage for each participating member, but no formal recommendation was made. Last, he stated that the ad hoc noted there was a lack of clear understanding of what constitutes a technical cost and he recommended that the Board focus the cost share discussion on the current model calibration effort.

Ms. Layne then prompted Mr. Blakslee to introduce the grant funding opportunity through U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) that could potentially help fund part of the model calibration effort.

Director Martin asked if the cost share allocation is based on pumping, if the participation percentages would change each year based on reported pumping values. He mentioned that there were previous discussions on the cost share allocation for the JPA and referred to Exhibit B of the special project agreement under which the GSAs agreed to developing the single GSP for the Subbasin.

Chair Hurley asked for each representative of the seven GSA Groups to give their stance on the cost share allocation for the model calibration.

Director Stilwell expressed concern that the JPA Agreement is unclear on what activities would be subject to the 1/7th split moving forward. He stated his concern that the three smaller GSA Groups (Aliso, Fresno, Farmers) make up less than 7% of the total acreage of the Subbasin and are paying over 40% of the costs for Subbasin activities at the current 1/7th split. Lastly, he stated he did not receive specific direction regarding a minimum or maximum cost share percentage from his Board of Directors but knows that they do not approve of the 1/7th split for technical costs. He was comfortable with the 1/7th split for all other costs.

Director Ramirez also stated that his Board would struggle to approve the 1/7th split for Subbasin costs moving forward, and that he did not receive specific direction regarding a

minimum or maximum cost share percentage from his Board of Directors. However, he stated that he does not want to stall EKI's progress to calibrate the model.

Director Swanson stated that Grassland Water District is firm on maintaining the 1/7th cost share allocation for the model calibration.

Director Lucchesi stated that a modified cost allocation for the model calibration was discussed as a potential option in the past when developing the budget and that all seven members of the GSA Groups agreed not to pursue the model calibration nor the modified cost share allocation at that time. He highlighted a list of "coordinated activities" that all GSAs agreed to, along with the cost share allocation for those activities as outlined in Exhibit B of the JPA agreement. Further, he stated that since a unanimous vote is required under the JPA agreement to approve budget items, the ability for a single GSA Group to veto a budget item is the value of the 1/7th split. Lastly, he stated he received direction from the Northern DM Region Management Committee to either approve the existing 1/7th cost share allocation or to entertain a cost share allocation under which the smaller GSA groups consolidate their seat and therefore, their vote.

Director Hopkins stated that Aliso has been prepared to continue paying the 1/7th cost share allocation for the model calibration but is open to different allocation approaches.

Director Wiersma expressed concern that by entertaining a new cost share allocation, the Board is demanding a lot of work from staff and legal counsel to rework agreements that have already been made and all 21 member agencies would have to approve. He stated that one could argue that the model calibration effort is not a technical cost, but rather an administrative cost, as the model is not used in the day-to-day management of his GSA. Lastly, he stated he does not particularly agree with any of the cost share allocation options presented and prefers the current 1/7th split. He also asked if the Board would entertain the cost share allocation for the model calibration as presented in Exhibit B of the special project agreement under which the GSAs agreed to develop a single GSP.

Director Hurley stated that the Central DM GSA Board directed him to approve the existing 1/7th cost share allocation or option D (50% entity split and 50% gross pumping), since that is how the Central DM GSA is splitting their budget costs. He then opened the floor for public comment.

Lon Martin (San Luis Water District) recommended keeping the cost share allocation as simple as possible and basing it even partly on pumping would be complex.

Director Martin stated that as the Department of Water Resources hosts meetings with the Subbasins their expectation will likely be that the DM Subbasin will have a calibrated model. He proposed two ideas regarding the cost share allocation. First, he proposed that each GSA Group could contract directly with EKI for Phase 1 data collection and calibration, where each GSA Group only pays what they feel is needed for their level of data. There was discussion that this was already being done and the work contemplated by the Board is truly for the Subbasin coordination of the information to calibrate the model. He also proposed that the smaller GSA Groups could use potential remaining SGMA Round 1 Grant implementation funds (~\$40,000) towards the model calibration effort. There was discussion this may not be possible.

Ms. Dutton cited two sections of the SGMA regulations that require the use of a model for establishing water budgets in the Subbasin and offered to share those sections with the Board if directed.

The Board committed to the following action: each GSA Group representative will present the 1/7th cost share allocation and that of Exhibit B of the special project agreement under which the GSAs agreed to develop a single GSP to their respective Board of Directors. Each GSA Group representative will come back to the next DM JPA Board meeting (June 8, 2026) with direction from their respective Boards regarding the model calibration cost share allocation.

The Board agreed to authorize EKI to begin the model calibration work (Phase 1) under the current 1/7th cost share allocation and will approve a cost share allocation for the remainder of the model calibration work at the June 8, 2026 meeting. No action was taken.

a. Consider Authorizing EKI to Develop and Submit a USBR WaterSMART Applied Science Grant Application to Partially Fund the Model Calibration

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that the Applied Science grant opportunity could fund projects up to \$400,000, with a required 50% non-federal cost share split.

MOTION

Director Hopkins made a motion to approve the contract with EKI (not to exceed \$30,000) to develop and submit a USBR WaterSMART Applied Science Grant Application to partially fund the model calibration. Director Lucchesi seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Rick Iger (Provost & Pritchard) stated that funding for an update to the Subbasin's well census report should be woven into the grant application. Mr. Mani stated that a technical ad hoc can be convened as soon as possible to discuss the scope of the USBR grant application.

7. Consider Approving the Groundwater Monitoring Guidance Document

Karlee Liddy introduced this item and stated that Kait Palys (INTERA) drafted the document with input from EKI, and that it is intended to be used by field staff and GSA staff responsible for collecting and inputting data into the DMS. Will Halligan (LSCE) asked how the comments regarding a timeline for GSAs to identify an appropriate proxy well and replacement RMS were incorporated and Ms. Liddy responded that a specific timeline was removed, as comments from the technical ad hoc indicated that it may be challenging for smaller, low-resourced GSAs to meet a specific 2 year timeline. Ms. Palys stated that further edits can be incorporated into the final document.

MOTION

Director Wiersma made a motion to approve the guidance document, barring any substantive final edits from the technical ad hoc. Director Hopkins seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Director Lucchesi left the meeting room at 2:03 pm.

Report Items

8. Update on the Domestic Well Mitigation Policy Briefing

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that the briefing will take place on June 5, 2026, and will be recorded and posted online for public access. He stated that staff will work with the communications ad hoc and legal counsel to finalize the public workshop presentation and well mitigation application. The Board did not have any questions or comments.

9. Update on Houston Engineering Improvements to the Data Management System

Mr. Blakslee introduced this item and stated that the FY2027 budget for the Subbasin JPA already accounts for the DMS enhancements and has been approved by the Northern and Central DM GSA Groups. Staff will work with Houston to implement the improvements.

10. Program Management Report and Update on Action Items

Mr. Blakslee highlighted that DWR is planning Subbasin meetings on subsidence in June, and that he will provide any meeting materials that will be shared with DWR in the Board packet for June 8, 2026. Director Wiersma asked who from the DM Subbasin JPA Board would be on that meeting, and Mr. Blakslee responded that he will work with the Chair to determine those attendees.

11. Update on PRP Implementation and Exceedance Reporting

a. Update on Q1 and Q2 Data Submittal to the DMS

Ms. Dutton emphasized the importance of the subsidence avoidance plans and stated that staff will follow up with GSAs regarding potential Q1 groundwater quality exceedances and reporting requirements.

Mr. Iger stated that he had comments and questions regarding the memo and presentation on this agenda item. He stated he will provide those comments to EKI and staff will facilitate a discussion regarding his concerns and questions.

Director Hopkins stated that well 09-232 is a newly drilled well and staff stated they will work with GSAs to ensure the quality of data uploaded into the DMS appropriately represents the wells in the monitoring network.

b. Report from GSAs with Exceedances - Nothing to report.

Director Ortega entered the meeting online at 2:10 p.m.

12. Update on Facilitation Support Services Outreach Activities

Lisa Beutler (Stantec) introduced this item and stated that she is working to schedule the Turlock interbasin meeting. She also shared that during the Chowchilla and Merced meetings with DWR regarding subsidence, they stated that their meetings with the DM Subbasin have been productive and helpful.

To avoid potential quorum issues, the Board determined that Will Halligan (LSCE) would attend the Kings Subbasin meeting (June 19, 2026) on behalf of Director Ramirez. Director Hurley asked Lisa who from the Kings Subbasin would be attending, and she stated that she would follow up with a list of attendees. The Board confirmed the following directors as members of the communications ad hoc committee: Directors Hurley, Lucchesi, Ortega.

13. Next Steps

Blakslee listed the following next steps:

- Director Ramirez to follow up with Steve Haze.
- Work with EKI to refine land use assumptions in the pumping estimates of the model.
- Distribute the Exhibit B Cost Share Allocation from the Special Project Agreement for the development of the single GSP.
 - All 7 GSA Group leads present the Exhibit B cost share allocation to their respective Boards to get direction regarding the cost share for the remainder of the model calibration work.
- EKI to begin phase 1 of the model calibration under the current 1/7th cost share allocation. Board to revisit the remaining cost share allocation in June.
- Staff work with GSAs to identify district with existing SAM account for grant application.
- Staff convene the technical ad hoc to refine the scope of the grant application and consider including well census updates as part of the application, and to provide final round of feedback for the groundwater monitoring guidance document.
- Staff work with the communications ad hoc and legal counsel to finalize public workshop materials
- Coordinate with Chair Hurley to identify Board members attending the DWR meeting in June.
- Distribute any DWR meeting materials to the Board by June 8, 2026.
- Staff work with GSA representatives to provide an update on the status of compliance with registration and metering policies.
- Staff follow up with GSAs regarding exceedance reports.
- Staff hold the domestic well mitigation policy workshop on June 5, 2026. Workshop will be recorded and posted on the website.
- Staff provide a list of the Kings Subbasin representatives attending the June 19, 2026 interbasin meeting.
- Staff work with Chair to reestablish the members of the various ad hoc committees.

14. Member Reports

There were no member reports.

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

Nothing to report.

16. Next Meeting(s):

- a. June 8, 2026, 1 p.m. PST, Grassland Water District Board Room

17. Adjournment

Chair Hurley adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m.



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

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