Meeting of the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSAs Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors
Monday, October 12, 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 – called in from a noticed meeting location

Others Present
Karlee Liddy, Hallmark Group
Kathryn Dixon, Hallmark Group
Lauren Layne, Legal Counsel, Baker Manock & Jensen
Palmer McCoy, Mercy Springs Irrigation District
Jarrett Martin, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors

Present Via Zoom/Phone
Amir Mani, EKI
Adam Scheuber, Del Puerto Water District
Adan Ortiz, Fresno County
Alma Antua, Westlands Water District
Andrew Francis, LSCE
Anona Dutton, EKI
Brittany Harker, Stanislaus County
Ellen Wehr, Grassland Water District
Ethan Andrews, Provost & Pritchard
Gilbert Torres, Fresno County
Kiti Campbell
Lisa Beutler, Stantec
Maria Razo, Stanislaus County
Matt Brady
Matt Garcia, Del Puerto WD
Patrick McGowan, Panoche Water District
Rachel Alstrom, Baker Manock & Jensen

Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard
Sam Cunningham, Provost & Pritchard
Scott Petersen, San Luis Delta-Mendota Water Authority
Steve Chedester, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors
Susan Xie, EKI
Taylor Blakslee, Hallmark Group
WaterOne AI

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
Chair Hurley called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance
Chair Hurley led the pledge of allegiance.

3. 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
Chair Hurley opened the floor for public comments, and there were none provided.

Consent Calendar

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

- **a.** Minutes of the September 21, 2026 Meeting
- **b.** Budget to Actual Report

MOTION
Director Wiersma made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. Director Ramirez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously via a roll call vote.

Closed Session

6. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation (Layne)
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 case)
The Board entered closed session at 1:06 p.m.

Open Session

7. Report from Closed Session
The Board returned from closed session at 1:16 p.m. Legal counsel, Lauren Layne, stated that there was no reportable action.

Action Items

8. Direction on Public Comment Letters on the DM Subbasin GSP
Blakslee introduced this item and stated that on September 1, the Board directed EKI to develop a scope of work to review and recommend potential responses to public comments on the Delta-Mendota Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). He reminded the Board that the GSP is still under review by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Member

Martin stated that in his conversation with a DWR representative, he was told that the GSP would likely not be reviewed until Q1 2027 and that responses to comment letters are not required by DWR at this time.

Chair Hurley stated that he understands EKI needed to estimate costs to review and potentially respond to comment letters and added that he was expecting a lower cost estimate but wants to hear from the DM JPA Board members. Member Wiersma stated that he generally agrees and Jarrett Martin highlighted that there were some comments on subsidence that he would recommend focusing on a planned response. Member Hopkins stated that he would like to understand if funds for task 4 are being repurposed, if there is anything that would then not be completed under task 4. Member Ortega stated that he is not sure the level of hours required to review the letters but proposed that perhaps EKI could lower the amount not to exceed the scope. Member Stilwell stated that he feels that EKI does not need to conduct a deep dive review of the comments at this time

The Board provided direction to EKI to present the top 5-10 issues from the comment letters at next Board meeting.

MOTION

Director Wiersma made a motion to approve EKI to repurpose no more than $30,000 from Task 4, but requested only an initial analysis be conducted by the November Board meeting. Director Lucchesi seconded the motion, which passed unanimously via roll call vote.

9. Ratify Authorization of Budget Amendment with Woodard & Curran for DWR Grant Administration

Blakslee introduced this item and stated that the Board provided direction on this item at the last meeting, but a full Board vote was not possible at that time due to a quorum issue.

MOTION

Director Wiersma made a motion to authorize the $10,000 budget amendment with Woodard & Curran. Director Hopkins seconded the motion, which passed unanimously via roll call vote.

10. Direction on Grant Opportunities

Blakslee introduced this item and reminded the Board of the September 30, 2026, deadline for list of potential projects from GSAs, and stated that the list of potential projects and Project and Management Actions from the DM Subbasin GSP is included in the packet. Chair Hurley proposed that the list could be separated into projects to be pursued at the Basin level and GSA level respectively. Member Ortega stated that he feels some projects should be pursued perhaps down to the district level. Anona Dutton (EKI) stated that she would recommend applying as a Subbasin for grant opportunities, as it would potentially be a stronger application.

Member Hopkins asked if there are Subbasin-wide projects recommended by EKI and EKI stated that replacing some wells in the RMW, subsidence technical studies, ISW studies, addressing State Board comments, and the model itself could be Subbasin-wide benefit projects. He added that he would like to see those basin-wide projects incorporated into the project list for future consideration of approval by the Board.

The Board provided direction to staff for grants to be submitted on behalf of subbasin but with a project activity agreement for GSAs that benefit from a project. Member Ramirez added that in the past, cost sharing agreements were based on the proportion of the grant money that each GSA received. Member Hopkins asked about a timeline and Mani stated that SGM grant draft guidelines have been provided by DWR and are open for public comment by December and will be finalized in February of 2027. Mani estimated that concept papers would be due in early summer 2027. Lastly, he stated that staff can continue to work at GSA level for projects that consultants can present at upcoming meetings.

11. Review and Consider Taking Action to Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSAs JPA to Use Teleconferencing as Authorized by the Ralph M. Brown Act

Layne introduced this item and stated that under the JPA, budget items require unanimous approval and reminded the Board that they directed staff to draft this resolution to allow for additional teleconference voting consistent with the Brown Act, exercising the emergency exemption.

MOTION

Director Ortega made a motion to adopt the resolution authorizing the DM JPA Board to use teleconferencing for emergency cases. Director Hopkins seconded the motion, which passed unanimously via roll call vote.

12. Consider Approval of an Operating Reserve Policy

Blakslee introduced this item and stated that a draft reserve policy was included in the packet for Board consideration of approval. He added that staff does not see a need for an emergency reserve fund, but recommends a 20% operational reserve policy. Member Lucchesi informed the Board that the Northern DM Committee adopted a similar policy and Member Ramirez stated that he feels 20% is high and would recommend a lower amount. Member Stilwell stated he would recommend a fixed reserve fund amount. The Board provided direction to staff to implement a fixed amount for the reserve fund and to bring this item back to the Board for approval in a subsequent meeting. Jarrett Martin suggested $140,000 as a starting point for the reserve fund to be considered by the Board during the budget development process for FY 2028, after being considered by the budget ad hoc.

Blakslee reminded the Board that the budget development process is conducted in a 2-step approach, first listing out the budget components and then presenting cost estimates on those budget components. He added that the budget ad hoc committee convened on October 6, 2026, and those components will be reviewed at the Central DM GSA and Northern Committee meetings.

Report Items

13. Quarterly Update on the Domestic Well Mitigation Policy

Blakslee stated that the Domestic Well Mitigation Policy requires that the Board discuss any updates on the implementation of the policy on a quarterly basis. There were no questions from the Board regarding this item.

14. Update on Model Phase 1 Schedule and Status of GSA Data Reporting

Blakslee introduced this item and gave an update on information requested from GSA entities and the Chair opened the floor to those who were on the technical ad hoc meeting regarding the model calibration recommendations. Member Stilwell expressed concern that the technical committee may not have authority to give direction to the ad hoc but rather give a recommendation to the DM JPA. Director Wiersma stated that he feels that the technical ad hoc should have the authority to make nitty-gritty decisions, while some of the broader items should be brought to the Board.

Member Ramirez stated that he would only be concerned for the ad hoc making decisions that may have an impact on the budget and Mani stated that in the scope that was approved in July at the DM JPA Board outlines the model platform being a major first decision by the ad hoc. Jarrett Martin expressed that he is comfortable with the ad hoc making recommendations and decisions that continue progress on the model calibration and Member Lucchesi agreed. Member Stilwell asked if the scope of work needs to change at all for the model calibration and Mani stated that he feels the scope should not need to change, as the decision regarding the model platform was included in the original scope that was approved by the Board in July. Staff will work with the model calibration technical ad hoc and will bring any points they feel are appropriate for Board-level discussion to the DM JPA Board.

15. Update on the Development of the Water Year 2026 Annual Report

Blakslee introduced this item and stated that data is due November 13, with a goal to get a draft Annual Report to the Board for review and discussion in February 2027. Chair Hurley asked if this would be the first or second year for PRP reporting, and Mani confirmed this year would be the second annual report with PRP implementation and reporting included.

16. Update on PRP Implementation

a. Q3 Exceedance Reporting by GSA

Blakslee stated that GSAs did a great job getting groundwater level data for Q3 uploaded to the DMS, with only some water quality results missing at this time. Staff will follow up with GSAs that are still waiting for water quality results to be provided by the respective labs. Susan Xie (EKI) reminded the Board that Q4 groundwater level data should be sampled in October with a deadline of November 30, 2026 to QA/QC and upload the results.

17. Program Management Report and Update on Action Items

Blakslee provided an overview of the action items that have been accomplished since the last DM Subbasin JPA Board meeting, along with updates on current action items. The Board did not have any questions regarding this report item.

18. Update on Facilitation Support Services Outreach Activities

Lisa Beutler (Stantec) stated that she has requested that GSAs compile their outreach statistics to be included in an appendix for the annual report. She added that a form was sent to the Subbasin GSA points of contact to review and add any missing information by November 1, 2026. She stated that she will plan the Modesto/Turlock Subbasin meeting once the interconnected surface water BMPs are released. Member Hopkins stated that several of the interbasin coordination meetings from earlier in the year require follow up, and Blakslee stated

that the next outreach ad hoc meeting is to take place in November. A list of those basins and decisions on next steps will be provided at a subsequent Board meeting.

19. Update on Water Blueprint Activities

Steve Chedester (SJREC) stated that the advisory committee is convening this month and is planning to get draft of the United Water Plan to the Board for review by the end of this month. Blakslee stated that staff will coordinate with Chedester to schedule an educational presentation in either November or December.

20. Next Steps

Mr. Blakslee listed the following next steps:

- EKI draft a list of 5-10 top concerns from the GSP comment letters.
- Authorize W&C budget amendment and advise them to submit final grant application and finish subsidence benchmark work.
- Staff continue to work on grant priorities and provide information to the Board once eligibility and guidelines are released.
- Staff revise reserve policy to incorporate $140,000 fixed amount, discuss at the budget ad hoc, and bring back to the Board during budget discussion.
- Staff to use discretion with the technical ad hoc on what should be brought back to the Board for consideration.
- Staff to communicate with GSAs for data submission for the RFI due to Egnyte by November 13, 2026.
- Staff to continue to work with Houston to make DMS updates.
- Staff to work with interbasin outreach subcommittee to discuss a plan for interbasin meetings and present to the Board.
- Staff to work with Steve Chedester to determine when to have Blueprint presentation at the Board.

21. Member Reports

Chair Hurley stated that he and Jarrett Martin met with the technical consultants for the Merced Subbasin to provide more details on the 2-foot subsidence limit for the Subbasin. There were no other reports provided by Members.

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

Nothing to report.

23. Next Meeting(s):

a. November 16, 2026, 1 p.m. PST, Grassland Water District Board Room

24. Adjournment

Chair Hurley adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

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

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