

CENTRAL DELTA-MENDOTA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - 04

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CENTRAL DELTA-MENDOTA
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICY NUMBER THREE
SURFACE WATER PRIORITIZATION AND
GROUNDWATER EXTRACTION MANAGEMENT**

A. **WHEREAS**, effective August 28, 2019, certain entities whose boundaries overlie a portion of the Delta-Mendota Subbasin number 5-22.07 of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin identified in the California Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) Bulletin 118, formed a joint powers authority known as the Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Agency (the “CDMGSA”), which replaced a prior multi-agency groundwater sustainability agency. In 2026, two additional agencies joined the CDMGSA. The current 12 members of the CDMGSA are: Eagle Field Water District, Fresno Slough Water District, Mercy Springs Water District, Oro Loma Water District, Pacheco Water District, Panoche Water District, San Luis Water District, Santa Nella County Water District, Tranquillity Irrigation District, Widren Water District, the County of Fresno, and the County of Merced (each a “Member Agency”); and

B. **WHEREAS**, the CDMGSA is a groundwater sustainability agency (“GSA”) formed pursuant to the Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Agency Joint Powers Agreement, as amended, and the Joint Exercise of Powers Act for the purpose of implementing the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (“SGMA”) within the Central Delta-Mendota Region of the Delta-Mendota Subbasin (“Subbasin”); and

C. **WHEREAS**, in March 2023, DWR determined the revised Subbasin GSPs to be inadequate and the GSAs in the Subbasin subsequently developed a single, unified Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSP (“D-M Subbasin GSP”), which was finalized in November 2024 and supersedes and replaces the prior GSPs; and

D. **WHEREAS**, the D-M Subbasin GSP includes management actions and programs, including regional Pumping Reduction Plans (“PRPs”), which require reductions in groundwater extraction and increased reliance on alternative water supplies, including surface water; and

E. **WHEREAS**, the CDMGSA has previously adopted Administrative Policy Number One – Well Census and Registration and Administrative Policy Number Two – Well Metering and Reporting, which, inter alia, establish the framework for identifying wells and measuring groundwater extraction; and

F. **WHEREAS**, the CDMGSA now seeks to adopt Administrative Policy Number Three – Surface Water Prioritization and Groundwater Extraction Management (this “Policy”) to provide a framework for implementation of applicable regional PRPs and for prioritizing the use of reasonably available surface water supplies, as defined, in lieu of groundwater extraction; and

G. **WHEREAS**, the CDMGSA has the authority under the California Water Code, including but not limited to sections 10725, 10725.2, 10725.6, 10725.8, 10726.2, 10726.4, 10726.5, 10730.6, and 10732, and the Joint Powers Agreement forming the CDMGSA, to adopt rules, regulations, and administrative policies, require registration of groundwater extraction facilities, regulate groundwater extractions, impose fees and penalties, and take any necessary and proper actions to implement SGMA and the D-M Subbasin GSP; and

H. **WHEREAS**, adoption of this Policy will provide guidance to Member Agencies and groundwater users and will support coordinated implementation of the D-M Subbasin GSP and applicable regional PRPs; and

I. **WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors finds that adoption of this Policy is necessary and appropriate to support sustainable groundwater management and to avoid undesirable results within the Subbasin.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Agency finds as follows:

1. The facts stated in the Recitals above are true and correct and the Board of Directors so finds, orders, and determines.
2. The Board of Directors hereby adopts Administrative Policy Number Three – Surface Water Prioritization and Groundwater Extraction Management (the “Policy”), a copy of which is attached hereto as **Exhibit “1”** and incorporated herein by this reference.
3. The Policy establishes a framework to prioritize the use of reasonably available surface water supplies, as defined, prior to groundwater extraction and to support implementation of the D-M Subbasin GSP, including the applicable regional PRPs.
4. The CDMGSA staff, consultants, and legal counsel are authorized and directed to implement and administer the Policy, including coordinating with Member Agencies, developing procedures, and facilitating programs necessary to carry out the Policy.
5. Member Agencies are encouraged to implement the Policy within their respective jurisdictions through rules, regulations, ordinances, and water service programs consistent with applicable law and the D-M Subbasin GSP.
6. The CDMGSA may exercise any authority granted under SGMA and other applicable law to implement and enforce the Policy, including coordination with Member Agencies. Nothing in this Resolution or the Policy shall be construed as a final determination of water rights.

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7. If any provision of this Resolution or the Policy is held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision of this Resolution or Policy, which shall remain in full force and effect.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Agency this 26th day of March, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:	Aragona, Barcellos, McCoy, Montgomery, Ramirez, Silva, Western
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Miles, Salvador, Silveira, Sloan, Wade

Aaron Barcellos, Chairman

Attest:



Taylor Blakslee, Secretary

Date: 26 March 2026

CERTIFICATION OF SECRETARY

I, Taylor Blakslee, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the CENTRAL DELTA-MENDOTA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY, held on the 26th day of March, 2026.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have executed this Certificate on this 26th day of March, 2026.

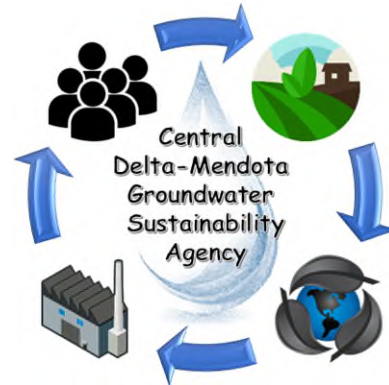
A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Taylor Blakslee".

Taylor Blakslee, Secretary
Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater
Sustainability Agency

EXHIBIT “1”

**Surface Water Prioritization and
Groundwater Extraction Management Policy**

CENTRAL DELTA-MENDOTA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY



Eagle Field WD ♦ Fresno County ♦ Fresno Slough WD ♦ Merced County ♦ Mercy Springs WD ♦ Oro Loma WD ♦ Pacheco WD
♦ Panoche WD ♦ San Luis WD ♦ Santa Nella County WD ♦ Tranquillity I.D ♦ Wdren WD

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

NUMBER THREE

SURFACE WATER PRIORITIZATION AND GROUNDWATER EXTRACTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted: March 26, 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

In order for the Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Agency (“CDMGSA”) to effectively implement the Delta-Mendota Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“D-M Subbasin GSP”), including the applicable regional Pumping Reduction Plans (“PRPs”), and to avoid undesirable results such as the chronic lowering of groundwater levels, it is necessary to reduce reliance on groundwater where feasible and prioritize the use of available surface water supplies.

Accordingly, it is the policy of the CDMGSA that landowners and groundwater extractors within the CDMGSA's jurisdiction shall utilize available surface water supplies made available by the CDMGSA or its Member Agencies, where Reasonably Available (as defined below), prior to extracting groundwater, consistent with the provisions of this Policy and applicable law.

Nothing in this Policy prevents Member Agencies from implementing programs, rules, regulations, or ordinances consistent with this Policy and the D-M Subbasin GSP.

AUTHORITY:

This Policy is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to the CDMGSA under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (“SGMA”), including, but not limited to, Water Code sections 10725, 10725.2, 10725.6, 10725.8, 10726.2, 10726.4, 10726.5, 10730.6, and 10732, and through the Joint Powers Agreement that formed the CDMGSA, as amended, pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act.

This Policy is further supported by the legislative intent of SGMA to achieve sustainable groundwater management and avoid undesirable results (Wat. Code, § 10720.1), and by applicable authority of Member Agencies under the Water Code, including but not limited to sections 35400, 35401, 35423, and 35413.

BACKGROUND:

In 2014, the California Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law a three-bill legislative package (AB 1739, SB 1168, and SB 1319), collectively known as SGMA. SGMA required those subbasins designated by the California Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) publication Bulletin 118 as being medium to high priority to form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (“GSAs”) by June 1, 2017, and then adopt and submit Groundwater Sustainability Plans (“GSPs”) to DWR by January 31, 2020.

The CDMGSA is located within the Delta-Mendota Subbasin (Basin number 5-022.07), a high priority subbasin (the “Subbasin”). The CDMGSA is one of 21¹ separate GSAs in the Subbasin that initially developed and coordinated six independent GSPs to cover the entire Subbasin. In March 2023, DWR determined the revised GSPs to be inadequate, prompting the GSAs to develop a single, unified GSP for the Subbasin. The single D-M Subbasin GSP was fully adopted by all GSAs in the Subbasin in November 2024 and supersedes and replaces the prior coordinated GSPs.

Originally formed by 10 member agencies, effective August 28, 2019, the CDMGSA has expanded its membership and now consists of 12 member agencies. The CDMGSA participates in Subbasin-wide coordination through the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSAs Joint Powers Authority (“DM Authority”), but remains responsible for implementing SGMA within its jurisdiction.

The D-M Subbasin GSAs have adopted regional PRPs as part of the single D-M Subbasin GSP. The PRPs establish temporary and permanent reductions in groundwater extractions during periods and in locations where groundwater levels are projected to decline below sustainability thresholds, particularly in areas identified as at risk for Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels (“CLGWL”). A Dashboard has been developed to track and view data for the Subbasin, which is divided into four zones,

¹ All 12 members of the CDMGSA each individually elected to have the powers of a GSA. Widren Water District and Oro Loma Water District each joined the CDMGSA in January and February 2026, respectively. So, you could also state that there are 32 GSAs in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.

including Zone 1 (Aliso, Farmers, Tranquillity, and Fresno GSA Group), Zone 2 (Grassland, and SJREC GSA Groups), Zone 3 (Northern DM GSA Group), and Zone 4 (Central DM GSA). The PRPs are designed to be implemented in coordination with the Domestic Well Mitigation Program and rely on well registration and extraction data to identify affected wells and ensure sustainable groundwater management.

Implementation of the PRPs requires accurate data, reduced groundwater pumping, and increased reliance on alternative water supplies. Surface water is a key component of that strategy. This Policy supports those objectives by prioritizing the use of surface water where available. A copy of the CDMGSA PRP adopted February 27, 2025, is incorporated by this reference and may be found on the CDMGSA website at cdmgsa.com.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to support implementation of the D-M Subbasin GSP and the PRPs. This Policy is also intended to reduce groundwater extraction where alternative surface water supplies are available. This Policy provides a consistent framework for Member Agencies. It also provides tools to avoid undesirable results, including overdraft and impacts to domestic wells.

POLICY AND GUIDELINES

1. **Surface Water Prioritization Requirement** – Landowners and groundwater extractors shall use surface water before extracting groundwater when surface water is Reasonably Available. Surface water is considered “Reasonably Available” when (i) delivery is physically possible and (ii) legally authorized. Whether or not surface water is considered Reasonably Available may also depend on water quality, cost, and operational feasibility. This requirement applies to the extent feasible, and does not override existing contractual obligations or physical limitations. For example, applicable Central Valley Project Contract Municipal and Industrial (“M&I”) shortage policies and applicable requirements pursuant to the California Health & Safety Code shall not be overridden by this Policy.

2. **Burden of Proof** – Where surface water is determined by the CDMGSA or the applicable Member Agency to be Reasonably Available, it shall be presumed that the landowner or groundwater extractor can utilize such surface water as the primary water supply. The burden shall rest on the landowner or groundwater extractor to demonstrate, to the reasonable satisfaction of the CDMGSA Board or its designee, that the use of surface water is infeasible or otherwise excused due to physical, contractual, economic, or other relevant constraints.

3. **Member Agency Implementation** – Member Agencies may implement this Policy through local rules, regulations, or ordinances. They may also incorporate this Policy into existing water delivery programs. Member Agencies may require landowners to use available surface water as a condition of groundwater extraction. They may also limit or allocate groundwater pumping. Member Agencies may adopt

rules governing water delivery under their existing authority. This includes the ability to condition or withhold service in appropriate circumstances and charge a fee per acre-foot.

4. **Integration with Pumping Reduction Plan** – This Policy incorporates the CDMGSA Pumping Reduction Plan by reference. Implementation of this Policy must be consistent with an applicable PRP, including consistency with groundwater reduction targets, implementation phases, and monitoring requirements. Member Agencies may use this Policy as a tool to achieve PRP objectives and sustainability goals.

5. **Relationship to Other CDMGSA Policies** – This Policy is intended to supplement other CDMGSA policies, including Administrative Policy Number One – Well Census and Registration, and Administrative Policy Number Two – Well Metering and Reporting. These policies provide the data necessary to implement this Policy by allowing the CDMGSA and its Member Agencies to identify wells, measure groundwater use, and manage extraction.

6. **Compliance and Enforcement** – The CDMGSA and its Member Agencies may take all actions authorized by law to implement and enforce this Policy, particularly in areas where groundwater extraction reductions are required under the D-M Subbasin GSP, including a PRP, and related CDMGSA policies. To ensure compliance with the requirement to utilize Reasonably Available surface water prior to groundwater extraction, the CDMGSA and/or its Member Agencies may take the following actions:

a. Adopt and enforce rules, regulations, ordinances, or resolutions that condition, limit, or prohibit groundwater extraction where surface water is Reasonably Available, pursuant to SGMA, including but not limited to Water Code sections 10725.2 and 10726.4. Such measures may include requiring participation in surface water delivery programs as a condition of groundwater use.

b. Establish and enforce groundwater extraction allocations, pumping restrictions, or rotational pumping requirements consistent with the D-M Subbasin GSP and applicable PRP pursuant to SGMA, including but not limited to Water Code sections 10726.2 and 10726.4. Groundwater extractions may be reduced, suspended, or conditioned on the use of Reasonably Available surface water supplies.

c. Require or implement programs under which groundwater extractors must accept and use Reasonably Available surface water supplies in lieu of groundwater pumping, consistent with Water Code section 10726.2(d), including agreements to reduce or cease groundwater extraction.

d. Utilize data collected under Administrative Policy Number One – Well Census and Registration, and Administrative Policy Number Two – Well Metering and Reporting to verify compliance. The CDMGSA may require reporting, conduct audits, and perform inspections to confirm that surface water is being utilized prior to groundwater extraction, consistent with Water Code section 10725.4.

e. Impose fees, charges, and civil penalties for non-compliance, including for unauthorized groundwater extraction where surface water is Reasonably Available, pursuant to SGMA, including but not limited to Water Code sections 10730.6 and 10732. Penalties may include monetary assessments and ongoing daily penalties for continuing violations.

f. Initiate administrative or judicial enforcement actions, including actions for injunctive relief or civil penalties. The CDMGSA may also order the cessation of groundwater extraction following notice and hearing, as authorized by law.

g. Member Agencies, who all retain the powers of GSAs, may exercise their independent authorities to enforce this Policy, including adopting rules governing water service, conditioning or withholding delivery of water, and enforcing compliance through administrative or judicial remedies pursuant to applicable provisions of the Water Code.

h. The CDMGSA may coordinate with Member Agencies to issue notices of non-compliance and to facilitate local enforcement. Member Agencies are required to take timely enforcement action within their jurisdictions to ensure consistency with the D-M Subbasin GSP and the applicable PRP.

i. All enforcement actions taken pursuant to this Policy shall be consistent with SGMA, the D-M Subbasin GSP, and applicable law. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed as a final determination of water rights.

7. **Agreements and Programs** – The CDMGSA and Member Agencies may enter into agreements to implement this Policy, including arrangements with landowners, water districts, or other entities; develop incentive programs to encourage the use of surface water in lieu of groundwater; and coordinate with other entities in and outside the Subbasin to implement this Policy.

8. **Local Control** – This Policy is intended to preserve local control. Member Agencies may tailor implementation based on local conditions, including infrastructure, water availability, and economic considerations. Pursuant to Water Code section 10725(b), a GSA has the power to provide the maximum degree of local control and flexibility consistent with the sustainability goals of SGMA.

9. **Amendment** – This Policy is subject to changes in the regular operation of the CDMGSA, as it may be revised from time to time by the Board of Directors.

10. **Policy Review** – This Policy shall be reviewed by the CDMGSA regularly, but in no event less than once every five (5) years or as necessary to ensure consistency with the D-M Subbasin GSP, SGMA, and applicable agreements, including the MOA.