

MADERA

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HEART OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY



# Background

- Growers identified numerous recharge possibilities
- A survey identified approximately 40,000 acres of willing growers with projects
- Grants were applied for beginning with “low hanging fruit”  
Previous planning work done  
Access to water
- Keys for recharge include:
  - Legal ability to take water
  - Suitable soil and crops (for flood-mar)
  - Capitalizing on existing infrastructure



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# Prop 68 – Round 1

- Chowchilla Subbasin:
  - \$4.2 million dollars for Flood-MAR projects from Eastside Bypass
  - Design includes permanent points-of-diversion from Bypass and conveyance infrastructure to appropriate landowners
  - About 2,900 acres of Flood-MAR, about 64 acre in basins
- Madera Subbasin:
  - \$4.2 million dollars for Flood-MAR projects and a dedicated recharge basin from MID laterals
  - Design includes three new turnouts and one rehabilitated turnout
  - About 2,500 acres of existing agricultural land



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## Prop 68 – Round 2

- Chowchilla Subbasin
  - \$3.2 million for Flood-MAR projects from the Eastside Bypass
  - Design includes two points-of-diversion from the Eastside Bypass to appropriate landowners for Flood-MAR
  - About 700 acres of existing agricultural land
- Madera Subbasin – Bypass Floodwater Recharge
  - \$542,300 for future Flood-MAR project
  - Planning, design, permitting, public outreach for one turnout and conveyance to appropriate landowners
  - About 2,600 acres of existing agricultural land



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# Actions Taken to Date

- 2023 has been off to a wet start
- Landowners along the Bypass eligible to take water for flood relief, but no legal basis to generate a credit against their allocation
- County Staff engaged with DWR to expedite water rights applications
- Expecting two authorized temporary water rights for diversions along the Bypass
- Utilizing water availability analysis based on flood conditions for potential third water right along additional flood control infrastructure



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# Ongoing Actions

- County staff participate in state-wide Flood-MAR Coordinating Committee
- DWR Merced Watershed work provided nexus and direct example for flood condition water availability analysis
  - Staff has been closely coordinating with DWR team lead
- Grant funded projects are pursuing permanent water rights for ongoing project operations, once constructed
- County works in close coordination with partner agencies to achieve recharge goals (TTWD, AWD)



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# Key Components of 2023 Policy

- 2023 Temporary Emergency Recharge Policy
  - 75% credit for water applied
  - Water application must be lawful
  - Retroactive to January 1, 2023
  - Landowner responsible for conveyance, permit compliance, easement acquisition, etc.
- Feedback received
  - Give higher percent credit
  - Desire to use the credit beyond 2023
  - Recognition of expediency by County staff



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## Staff Recommendation

- Adopt temporary emergency recharge policy that is:
  - Retroactive to January 1, 2023
  - Gives a 75% credit for water applied on the surface of the ground
    - Different values may be considered in the future, if supported by scientific documentation
  - Requires metering
  - Requires a legal right or agreement to take the water
  - Requires landowner responsibility for conveyance, permit compliance, easement acquisition, etc.



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