

Frequently Asked Questions

What is MLRP?

MLRP is a [California Department of Conservation](#) (DOC) grant program funding local entities in regions needing to improve groundwater sustainability. Madera County is one of eight grantees across the state that has been awarded an MLRP grant to develop and implement a local MLRP program.

The purpose of MLRP is to support growers to envision and implement ag land repurposing projects that support groundwater sustainability while also producing additional benefits for rural communities and ecosystems. The program is voluntary yet recognizes that SGMA-related impacts have and will require many growers in Madera County to make land use changes. MLRP offers the opportunity for ag landowners to access state and other funding sources to proactively transition their land (or portion of their land) to a less water intensive use. For communities, MLRP aims to encourage and reward land repurposing projects that create benefits to community health, economic well-being, water supply, flood risk reduction, habitat, renewable energy and more. Each regional MLRP program is creating a plan design that defines the specific types of land repurposing projects and community benefits that best align with local needs and considerations.

Still have questions about what MLRP is all about?

- Reach out via email at mlrp@maderacounty.com.
- Schedule an in-person or virtual appointment with a Madera County Water Resources Specialist. [Click here](#) for more information about appointment options and scheduling.
- Refer to the graphic below for clarifications to common questions and misconceptions about what MLRP is and isn't.

Who are the partners and stakeholders involved in the Madera County MLRP program?

In Madera County, there are several stakeholder partners working together to develop and implement the “MLRP Madera” program in our region. The primary organizations that are part of the MLRP Madera partnership and support network include Madera County, Madera/Chowchilla Resource Conservation District, Madera Ag Water Association (MAWA), Linguistica Interpreting & Translation, LLC, ERA, and Zanjero, Inc. MLRP Madera is also part of the statewide network of grantees that are supported by Self-Help Enterprises, Environmental Defense Fund, and Environmental Incentive

What is the process for developing the MLRP Madera plan and program?

Between fall 2023 and spring 2024, MLRP Madera partners developed the plan and program for MLRP in Madera County. An important part of this effort is getting input from growers, residents and community stakeholders through workshops and other outreach activities. The

input process will help inform the criteria for land repurposing project types as well as the co-benefits that are desired by the community.

Once the MLRP Madera plan development process is complete, the process and timeline for applying for MLRP Madera funds will be announced. It is expected that the MLRP Madera solicitation announcement will be made in early summer 2024 and the application window will open shortly after. To receive MLRP Madera news and announcements, email your request to mlrp@maderacounty.com.

What are the requirements for MLRP funding?

Eligible applicants for MLRP Madera funding are individuals or entities that own or have defined responsibility for agricultural land in Madera County. All regional MLRP plans and projects must also meet the Department of Conservation's rules and requirements for funding. For a proposed land repurposing project to be eligible, it must:

1. Be in a [Madera County GSA](#)
2. Provide at least one desired outcome that benefits rural communities or ecosystems
3. Implement at least one eligible project type to convert irrigated (or previously irrigated) ag lands to a less water intensive use
4. Have a duration of at least 10 years (per a contract agreement)
5. Be consistent with the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the area.

For MLRP in Madera County, additional eligibility requirements or guidelines may apply, which will be specified in the MLRP Madera plan.

What types of land repurposing projects qualify for MLRP funding?

The CA Department of Conservation has empowered local grantees with the flexibility to determine which land repurposing project types make the most sense and will provide the greatest benefits to their communities. That said, local MLRP programs must follow the guidelines for MLRP at the statewide level. For projects, MLRP requires ag land transitions to use less water than the previously irrigated cropland and provide benefits that are maintained for a minimum of 10 years.

The statewide guidelines also present broad project types that may be funded by MLRP. These include:

- Transition of irrigated land to dryland farming or non-irrigated rangeland.
- Transition to less water intensive crops, including those for native seed production.
- Planting of cover crops or conservation cover.
- Facilitation of renewable energy projects that have an overall net greenhouse gas reduction.
- Creation or restoration of habitat such as pollinator habitat, wetland habitat, upland habitat and riparian habitat.
- Creation of parks or community recreation areas.

- Development of multibenefit groundwater recharge areas.
- Restoration of floodplains.
- Reestablishment of Tribal land uses.
- Implementation of Tribal cultural practices.

With the statewide project guidelines in mind, MLRP Madera will develop a localized plan for the project types that will be funded in Madera County. Grower and resident input is important to the MLRP Madera process for developing the project type list along with the specifications for each project type. This input is being gathered through the MLRP Madera outreach process, which includes workshops, surveys and direct stakeholder engagement.

How can I participate, get more information and stay informed?

Outreach and engagement with growers, residents and stakeholders is a very important part of the MLRP Madera program. There are several resources and ways to stay informed and participate, including:

- **Workshops:** There will be several opportunities for growers and residents to ask questions and provide direct input on the MLRP Madera program. Check the Madera County Water and Natural Resources [website](#) for the most up-to-date information on workshop events.
- **Email:** Interested parties and stakeholders can send comments and questions related to MLRP Madera to mlrp@maderacounty.com.
- **Interest Form:** Are you considering a land repurposing project or learning more about land repurposing project options? Submit an [interest form](#) to get connected to information and resources.
- **Are there other land repurposing programs in addition to MLRP in Madera County?**
- Currently, MLRP is the only active Madera County land repurposing program. Other recent programs include the Madera County GSAs Voluntary Land Repurposing Program (VLRP) and the Department of Water Resources Targeted Land Repurposing Program (also known as LandFlex). See the table below for more information on the various land repurposing programs in Madera County, including the current status.



Land Repurposing Programs in Madera County

	Madera County GSA's Voluntary Land Repurposing On Hold	Department of Water Resources LandFlex (Targeted Land Repurposing) Closed	Department of Conservations Multibenefit Land Repurposing Current
Primary Focus?	Expedite the reduction of consumptive use of groundwater	Expedite the reduction of consumptive use of groundwater	Facilitate conversion to an alternative productive land use function as less groundwater is available
Who is eligible?	County GSA Growers only	County GSA Growers in Madera Subbasin only	All GSA Growers throughout Madera County
Who funds?	County GSA Growers with GSP Fee	Department of Water Resources Plus County GSA Growers with GSA Admin Fee	Department of Conservation Plus County GSA Growers with GSA Admin Fee
What is the timeline?	Under a preliminary injunction	Enrollment in 2023 (completed)	Enrollment in 2024 and 2025 for 2025 and beyond
What are the requirements?	Grower sells "sustainable yield" and "transitional water" for a set period of time	Grower sells "sustainable yield" and "transitional water" for year one and "transitional water" in years until 2040	TBD Plan and process under development during 2023
What is the contract length?	2-5 years	Through 2040	Minimum 10 years
What is landowner compensation?	Varies, equal to the applicant's accepted bid price times acres.	Fixed -Fallow: \$350/AF (\$808/acre) -Retire TW: \$1000/AF (\$1250/acre) -Land Use Transition: \$250-2800/acre	TBD Plan and process under development during 2023