Item 4.b

Informational Item: California Department of Fish and Wildlife presentation on using an emergency 1602 notification for flood control to increase access to recharge waters

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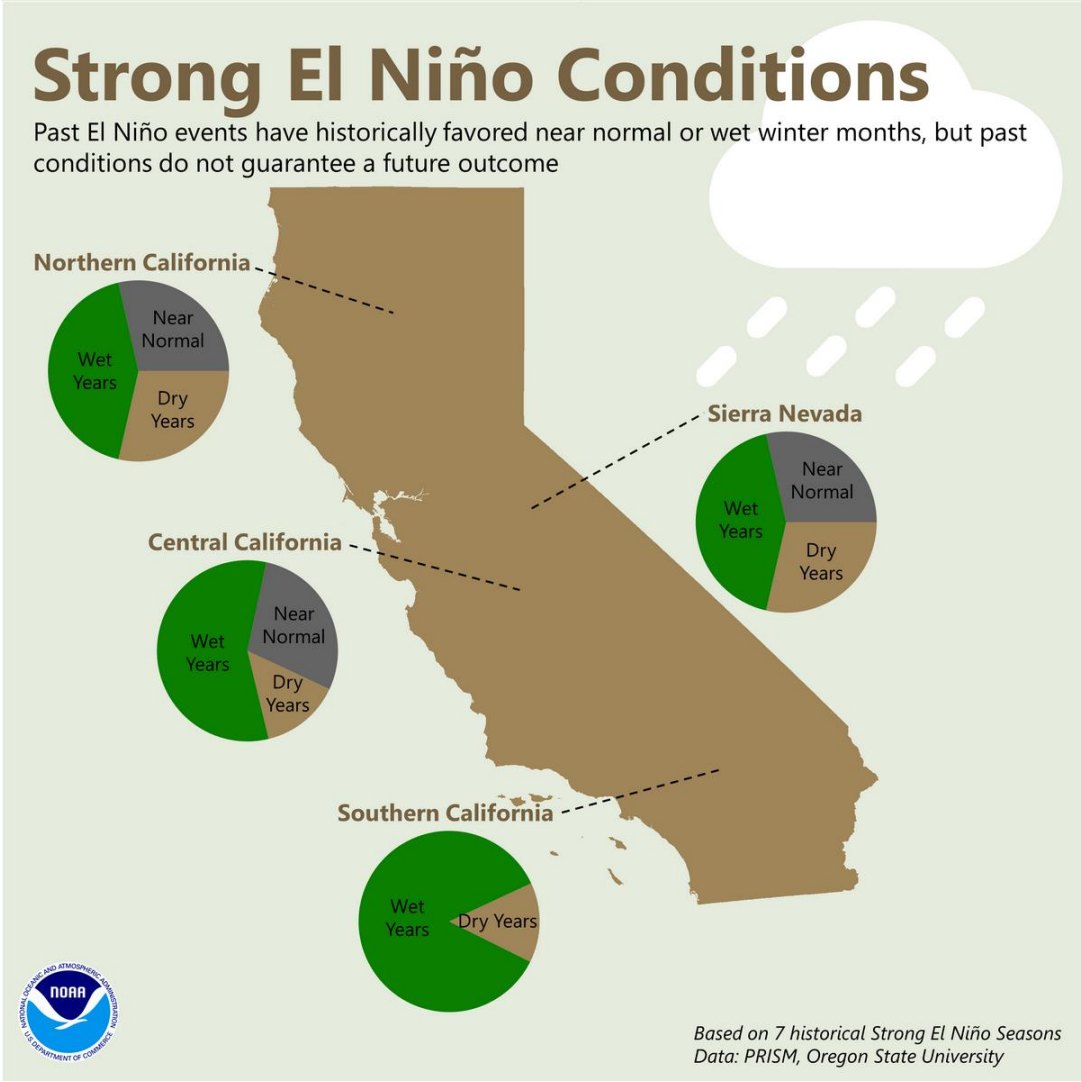
Storm Preparedness – Project Planning and Emergency Work in an El Niño Year



Presented by Sarah Paulson
Environmental Program Manager
CDFW Central Region

Best Practice – Plan Ahead!

- Recent observations of large areas of sea surface temperature anomalies in the Pacific
- National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center – high possibility of very strong El Niño from October to December 2026
- Prepare **now** for the precipitation-related hazards that may occur



What is an Emergency?

Defined in CA Public Resources Code Section 21060.3

- "a sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to, life, health, property, or essential public services."
- "…includes such occurrences as fire, **flood**, earthquake, or other soil or geologic movements…"

Emergency Work Notification



Fish and Game Code section 1610 exempts certain types of emergency work from section 1602

CDFW shall be notified within 14 days **after** emergency work begins

Notify for Emergency Work using the **EPIMS Permitting Portal**

What Qualifies?



Immediate emergency work necessary to protect life or property



Immediate emergency repairs to public service facilities because of disaster with proclaimed state of emergency



Emergency project activities to existing highways within one year of a disaster

Fish and Game Code section 1610(a)

Notification Process for Emergency Work

Applicant determines project qualifies as Emergency Work

EPIMS account creation

Create and submit Emergency Work Notification within 14 days of starting work

LSA Program Notification Review

The Applicant submits Notification



- There are no fees for Emergency Work Notifications
- No required mitigation or conditions
- Not an approval process, no agreement or permit is issued
- You will get an automated response
- You may be contacted for clarification

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 699.5

Already have another notification submitted?

- Emergency notifications can be submitted even if you are already in the process of obtaining an LSA Agreement
- When possible, get CDFW consultation before beginning or during emergency work
- We can identify ways to minimize impacts on resources and minimize the need for any remedial actions



LSA and EPIMS Resources

- LSA Program Page
- https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA

- EPIMS Login
- https://epims.wildlife.ca.gov/index.do

- EPIMS Help
- https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/EPIMS/Support

- EPIMS Q&A
- https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/EPIMS/Q-and-A

Central Region Contacts

LSA Program Office

R4LSA@wildlife.ca.gov

559-243-4593

Sarah Paulson

Sarah.Paulson@wildlife.ca.gov

559-417-7060



Looking Ahead

Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires and entity to notify CDFW if they will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream or lake or deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where is may pass into any river, stream or lake.



LSA Permitting Options

CDFW issues agreements (permits)for stream maintenance

- Standard
- Routine Maintenance
  - Regular, reoccurring activities
- Standard (up to 5 years) or Long Term
- Master Agreement (Long Term only)

CDFW also issues permits for restoration projects

- Restoration Management Permit (RMP)
- HREA (Fish and Game Codes 1652/1653)
- CEQA Exemption for specific types of projects



What to Expect



CDFW has 30 days to determine if your application is complete.

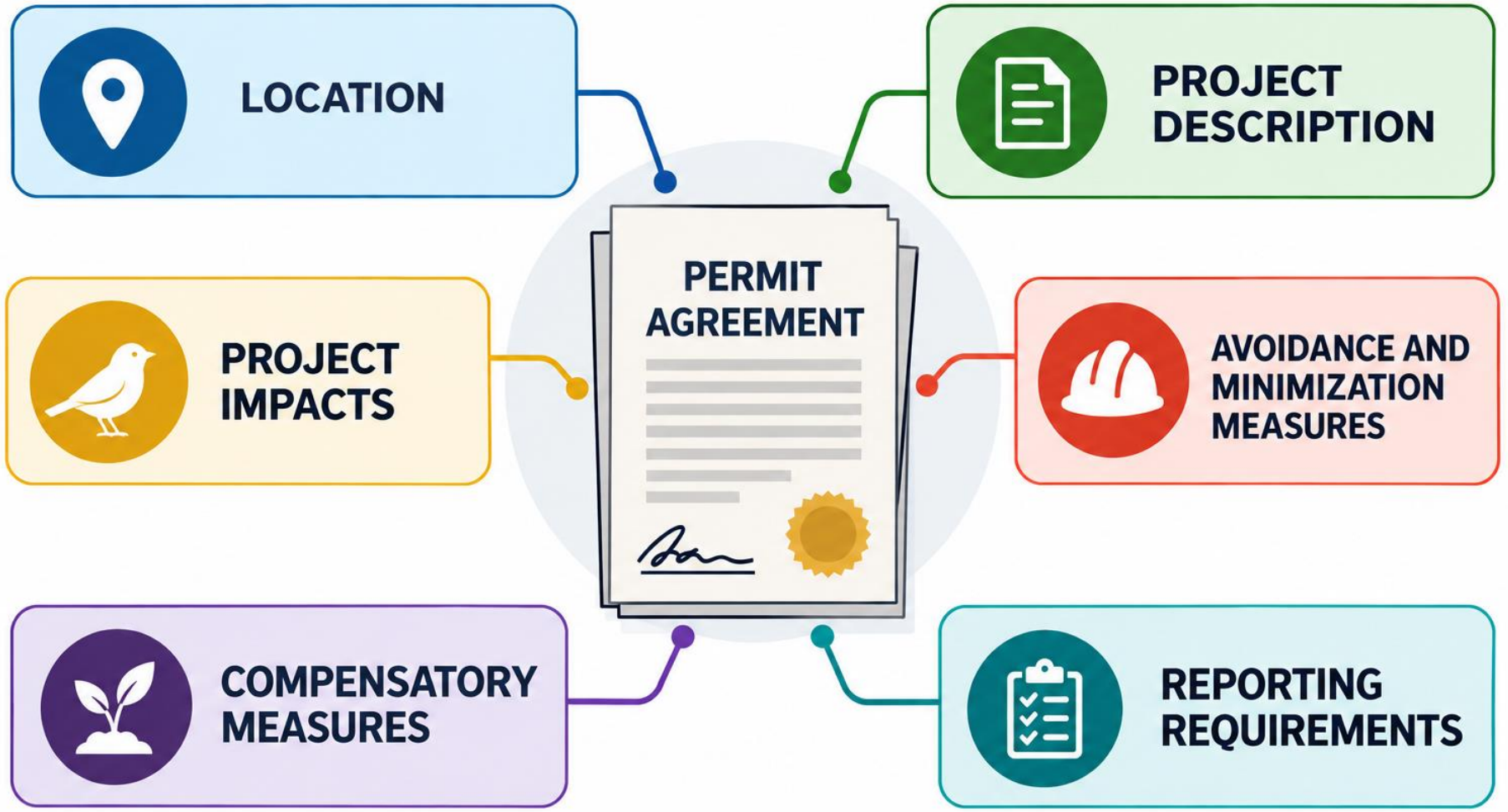
- A detailed project description is critical

Once your application is deemed complete:

- 60 days for issuance of a standard term agreement
- Standard term projects are approved through operation of law if this regulatory requirement is not met
- Long term agreements have no issuance timeline

CDFW must comply with CEQA when it issues LSA agreements.

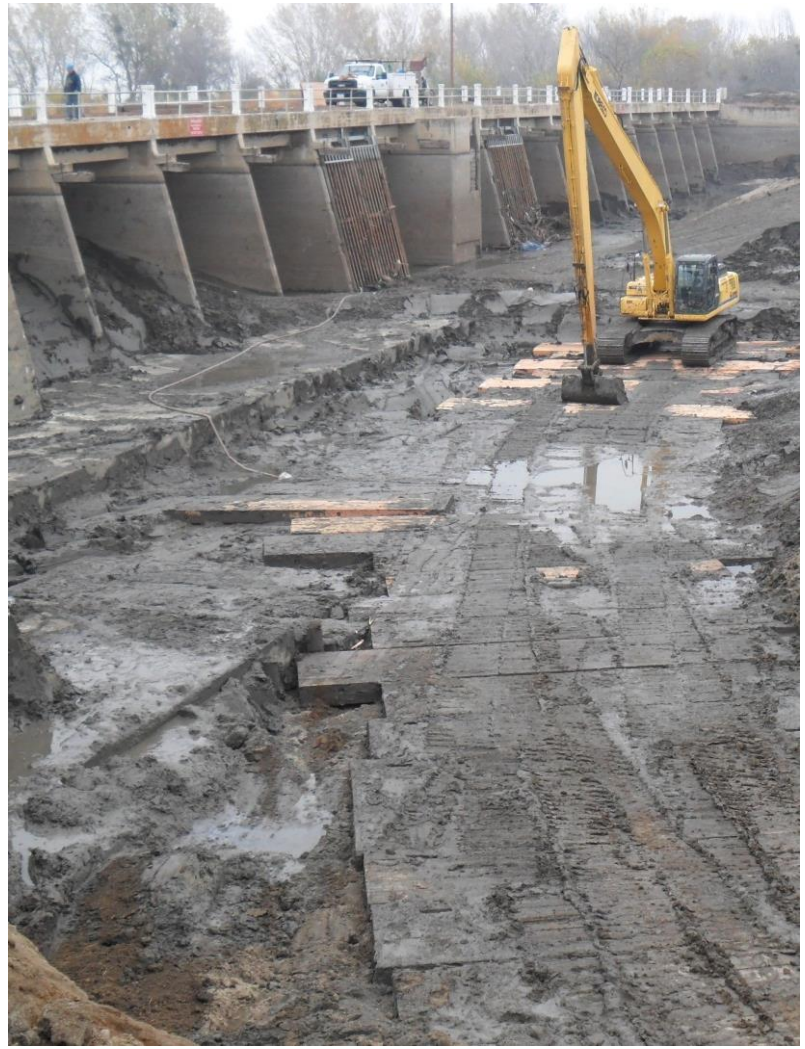
Agreement (Permit) Contents



Amendments and Extensions

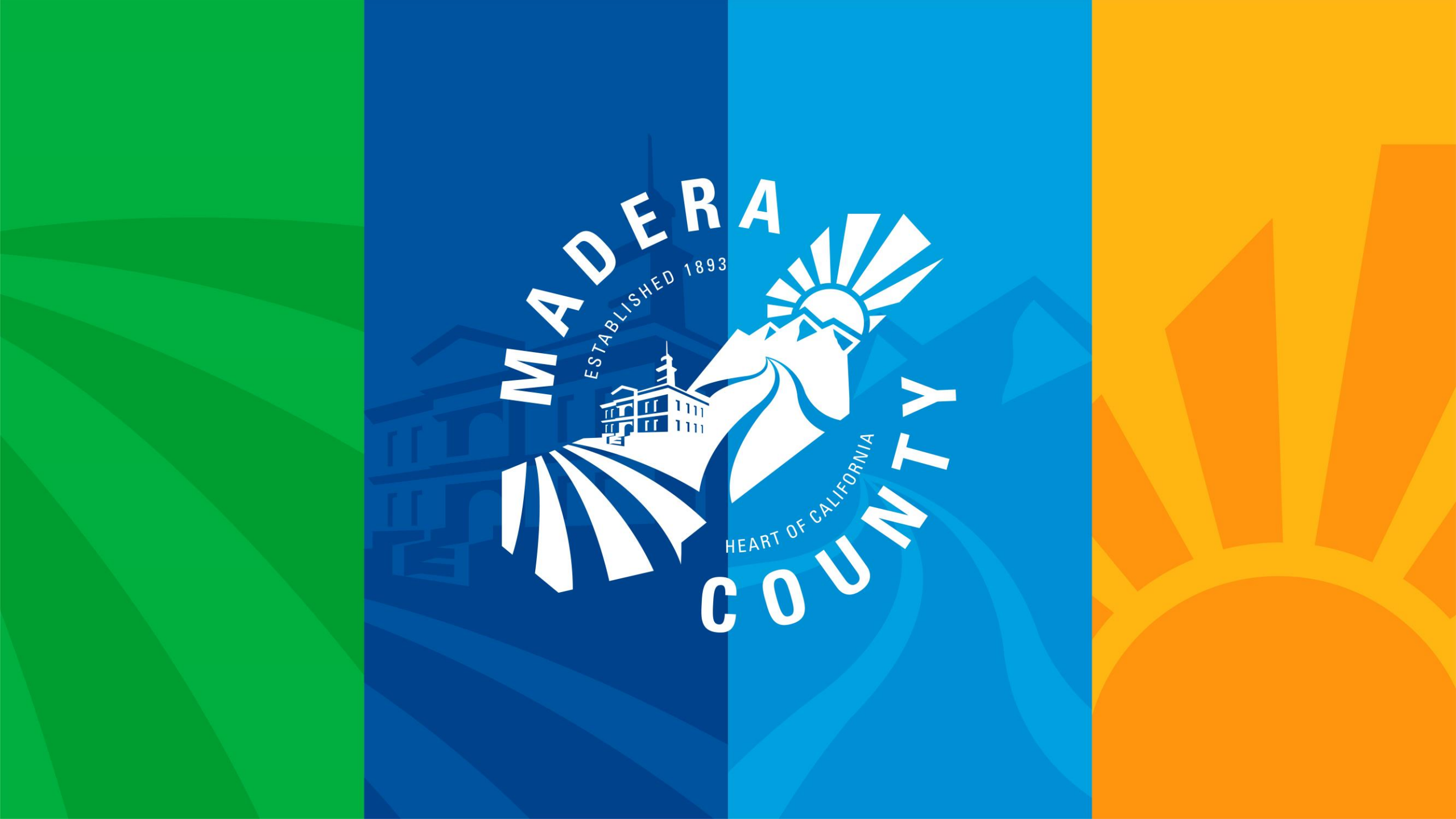
- Amendments can be issued for valid agreements, significant changes to the project or project description may warrant a new notification.

- Extensions must be requested prior to the agreement expiration date. You will receive a one-year grace period while CDFW responds to your request. Extensions are granted for up to five years.



Questions?




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Item 4.c

Informational Item: Review Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and MaderaCountyWater.com

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Web Content Accessibility

Background

- April 24, 2024 Federal Register published Department of Justice's (D.O.J.) updated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II regarding accessibility.
- Deadline to meet requirements is April 26, 2027

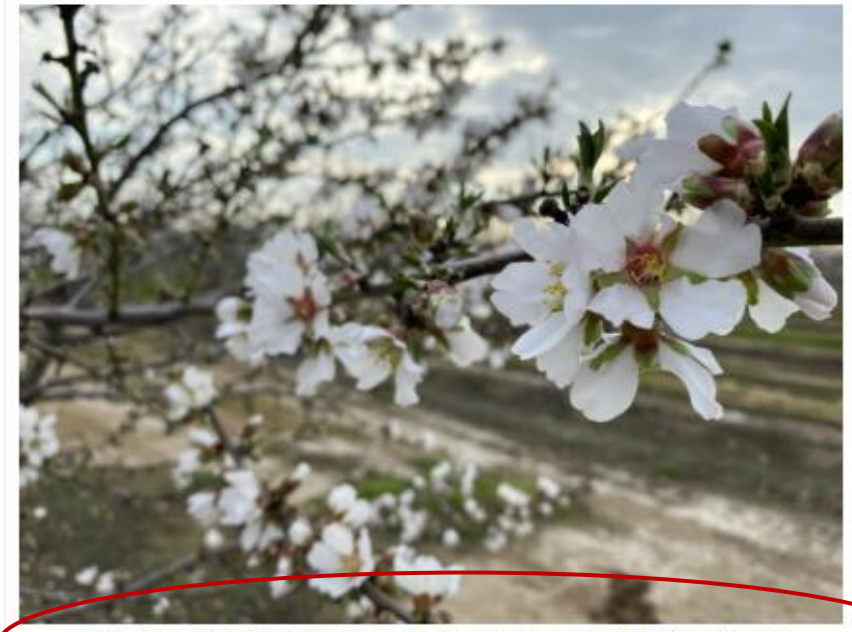
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Rules

1. Website needs to be accessible to screen reader to pick up all content
2. No alternate versions of website.
3. All photos and graphics have descriptions that can be read by a screen reader.
4. Screen reader should be able to read tables from left to right. No merged cells in tables
5. Hyperlinks must display topic relating to it (e.g. www.google.com = google

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- Before: description was inside box.
- Solution: Move description outside the box so screen reader can pick it up.



Blooming white flowers on tree branches against a blurred natural landscape background

Welcome to the Department of Water and Natural Resources for Madera County.

Our department manages the County Groundwater Sustainability Agency ("white area"), Flood Control Agency, Drought Workgroup and participates in and supports a variety of natural resource issues.

We do not handle issues related to water accounts, such as setting up an account or paying a bill (call Public Works at (559) 675-7811). For flood inquiries in an emergency, call the sheriff's dispatch at (559) 675-7770.



Photo Description: Blooming white flowers on tree branches against a blurred natural landscape background.

Allocation Chart 2026-2040

Madera County GSA Madera Subbasin 2026 through 2040 Allocation Table in inches of ETAW			
Year	Sustainable Yield	Transitional Water	Total
2026	12.3	12.9	**25.2**
2027	12.3	12.0	**24.3**
2028	12.3	11.1	**23.4**
2029	12.3	10.2	**22.5**
2030	12.3	9.2	**21.5**
2031	12.3	8.3	**20.6**
2032	12.3	7.4	**19.7**
2033	12.3	6.5	**18.8**
2034	12.3	5.5	**17.8**
2035	12.3	4.6	**16.9**
2036	12.3	3.7	**16.0**
2037	12.3	2.8	**15.1**
2038	12.3	1.8	**14.1**
2039	12.3	0.9	**13.2**
2040	12.3	0.0	**12.3**

Allocation Chart 2026-2040

Madera County GSA Madera Subbasin 2026 through 2040 Allocation Table in inches of ETAW			
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2031	12.3	8.3	**20.6**
2032	12.3	7.4	**19.7**
2033	12.3	6.5	**18.8**
2034	12.3	5.5	**17.8**
2035	12.3	4.6	**16.9**
2036	12.3	3.7	**16.0**
2037	12.3	2.8	**15.1**
2038	12.3	1.8	**14.1**
2039	12.3	0.9	**13.2**
2040	12.3	0.0	**12.3**

Madera County Groundwater Sustainability Agency Madera Subbasin 2026 through 2040 Allocation Table in inches of ETAW

- Before: Table was uploaded an image and pdf. There is no description following the graph. Screen reader can not read table for allocations.
- Solution: Uploaded table as HTML document so it will prompt another tab to open that will allow screen reader to read to client. Moved the title to the bottom of the chart.

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Item 4.d

Action Item: Discussion and recommendation to the Board of Directors to enter into an Amendment with Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc. extending the term to December 31, 2028

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Background

Raftelis Financial Consultant's assists the County of Madera GSAs to meet the SGMA requirements. The services they offer are broken down into two components:

- **Component 1** – Annual Check – In (Annual Services) – In process
- **Component 2** – County GSA Support Services
- Total Amount of Existing Contract (not to exceed) $500,000.00, currently remaining balance $358,841.64

There is no financial increase associated with this extension.

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Staff Recommendation

Consideration and recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve the extension with Raftelis Financial Consultants, inc. until December 31, 2028.

Item 4.e

Action Item: Discussion and recommendation to the Board of Directors to enter into an Amendment with GEI Consultants, Inc. extending the term to December 31, 2028

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Background

GEI Consultants (GEI) evaluate appeals of measurement data

GEI evaluates

- monthly measurement data from flow meters
- installation of meters
- calibration of meters
- any other information provided

GEI makes an assessment of all data, which is considered final

GEI process 5-7 appeals yearly, 2022-current = 19

GEI's contract has a balance of $113,605.50, but expires December 2026, so staff recommends an extension for time only. Total Contract amount was $280,000.00

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Staff Recommendation

Consideration and recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve the extension with GEI Consultants, Inc. until December 31, 2028.

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Item 4f.

Action Item: Discussion and recommendation to the Board of Directors to amend the Domestic Well Mitigation Program Resolution to remove the age requirement for wells

This Resolution is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ('CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15307 (action of regulatory agency to protect natural resources), 15308 (action of a regulatory agency to protect the environment), and 15061(b)(3) (the "common sense" exemption where a project is exempt if it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment).

30-Year Age Limit

- Luhdorff & Scalmanini, a groundwater consulting firm, identified 30 years as the useful life of a domestic well.

- Madera County GSA used this benchmark as a cost-control measure.

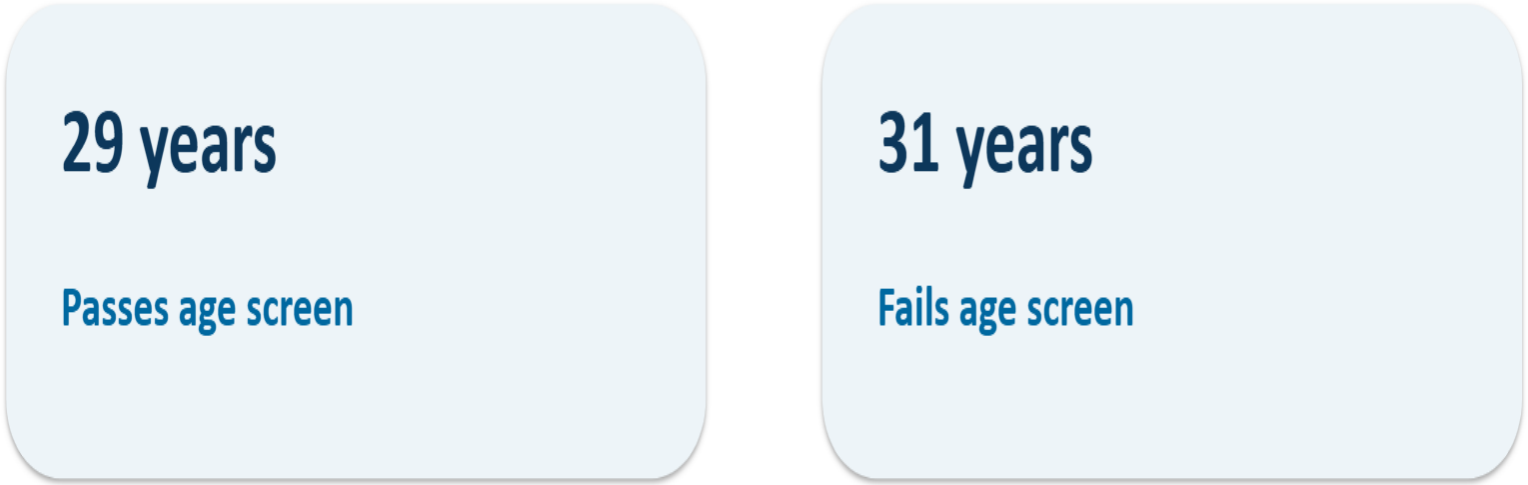
- The limit was intended to distinguish age-related deterioration from failures caused by declining groundwater levels.

Applicant Concerns

- Applicants denied because of well age report that their wells were in good working condition before water supply was lost.
- A well's age alone does not establish why it stopped producing water.
- A strict cutoff can exclude a well affected by groundwater decline even when it was otherwise functional.

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Well Failures



Both wells may have been fully functional before groundwater decline. The two-year difference does not determine the cause of failure.

Well Assessments

- A professional assessment evaluates the condition of the well and the likely cause of failure.

- An older well may fail because of groundwater decline; a younger well may fail for unrelated reasons.

- Of assessments completed to date, 21% identified a failure cause other than groundwater decline.

- Removing the age limit would not eliminate the need to establish a qualifying cause of failure.

Well Age Removal

- Focuses assistance on domestic wells impacted by declining groundwater rather than an age threshold.

- Allows the County GSA to evaluate actual conditions and evidence of failure.

- Reduces the risk of excluding otherwise eligible households because of age or incomplete records.

- Retains cost controls through eligibility reviews, professional assessments, and the existing $35,000 per-property funding cap.

Staff Recommendation

Recommend to Board of Directors to approve amendment to the Domestic Well Mitigation Resolution that removes the well age requirement.

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Item 4g.

Informational Item: Review Financial Update for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

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GSA Financial Update

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

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County GSA Overview

220,000 acres across 3 subbasins

- 120,000 irrigated acres
- 100,000 rangeland (never irrigated) (fee exempt)

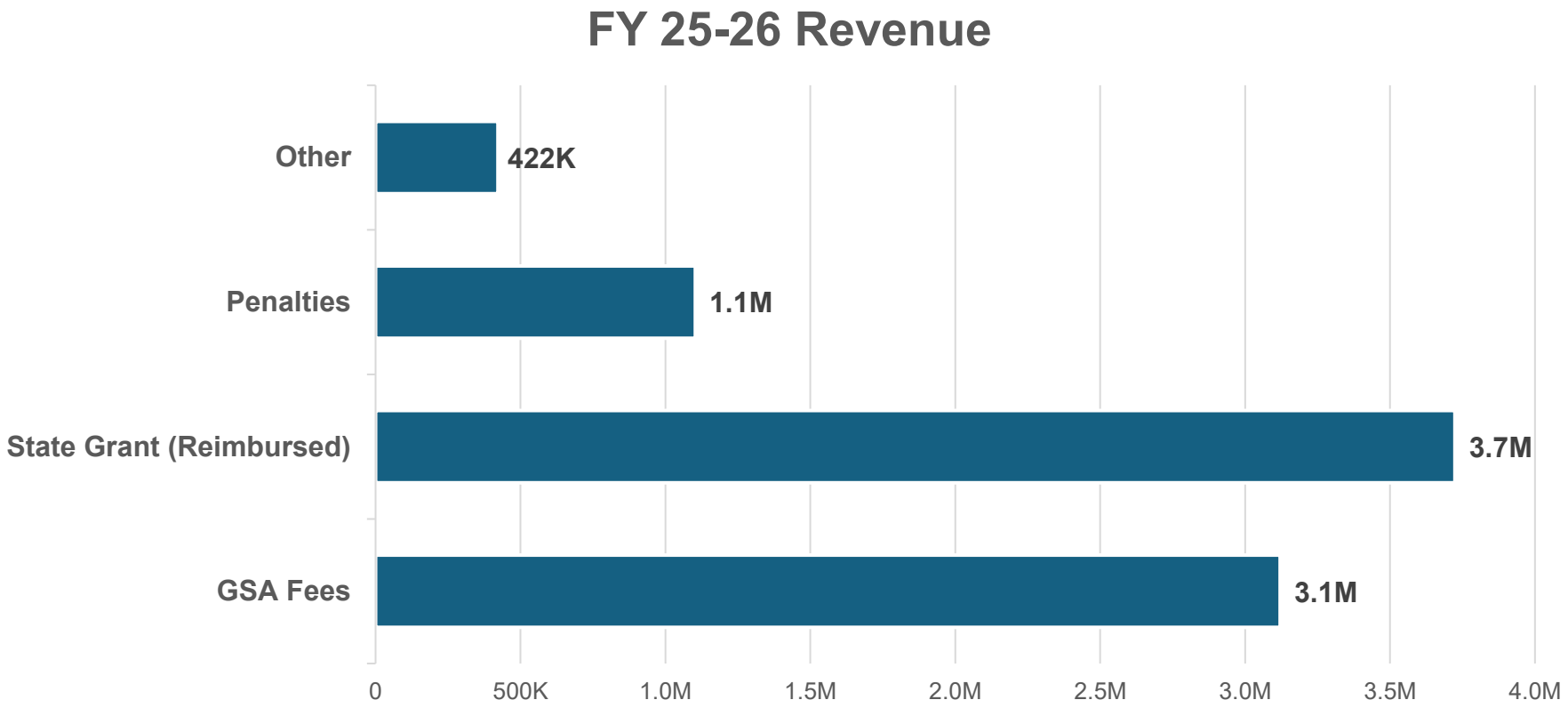
Responsibilities

- Develop & update GSPs
- Annual reports & monitoring wells
- Grant Management

Programs

- Demand Reduction – two options to track water use
- Land Repurposing – supported by grants
- Recharge Projects – multiple grant-funded efforts
- Domestic Well Mitigation – development and services
- Outreach & Education – SGMA rules & grower guidance

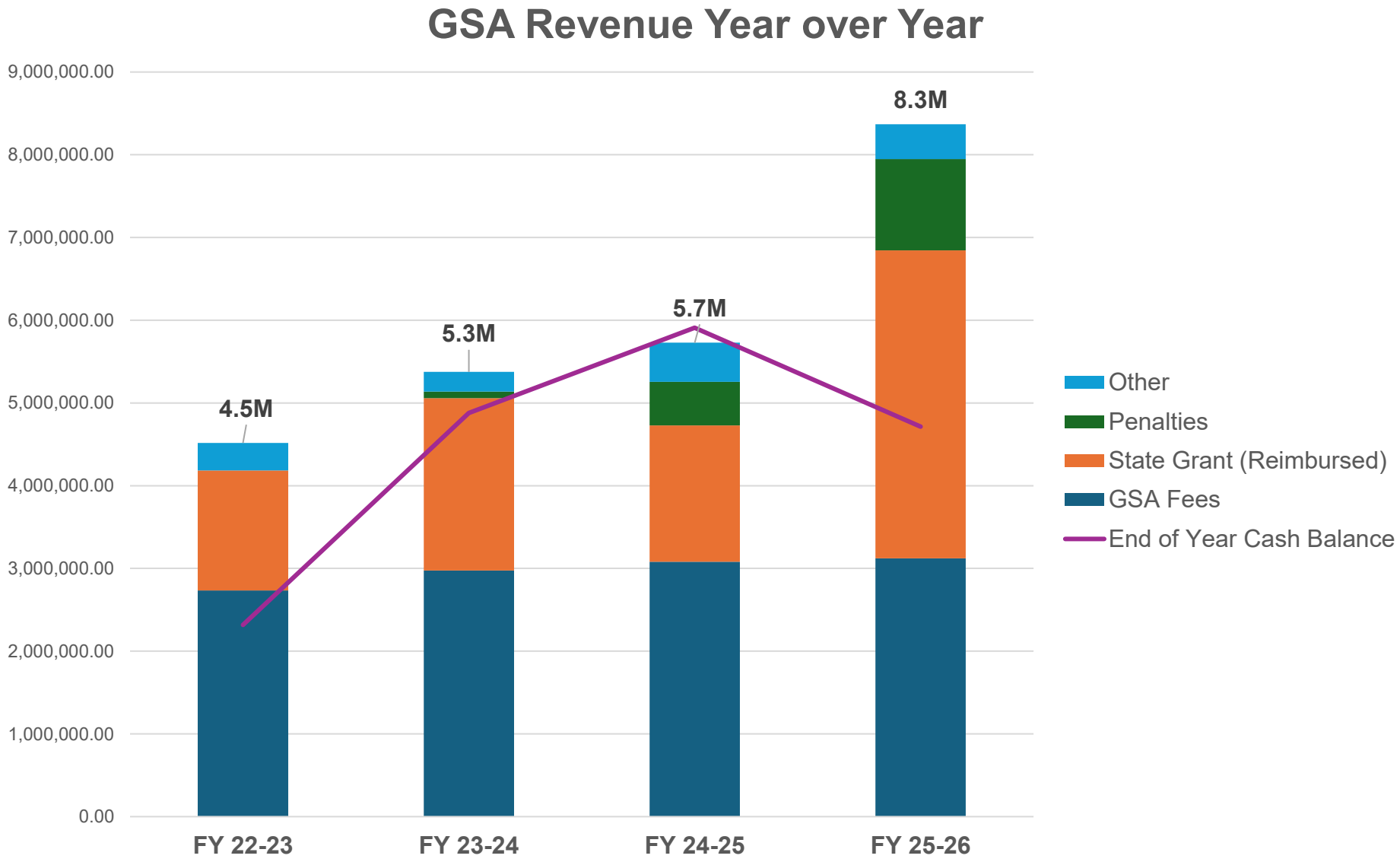
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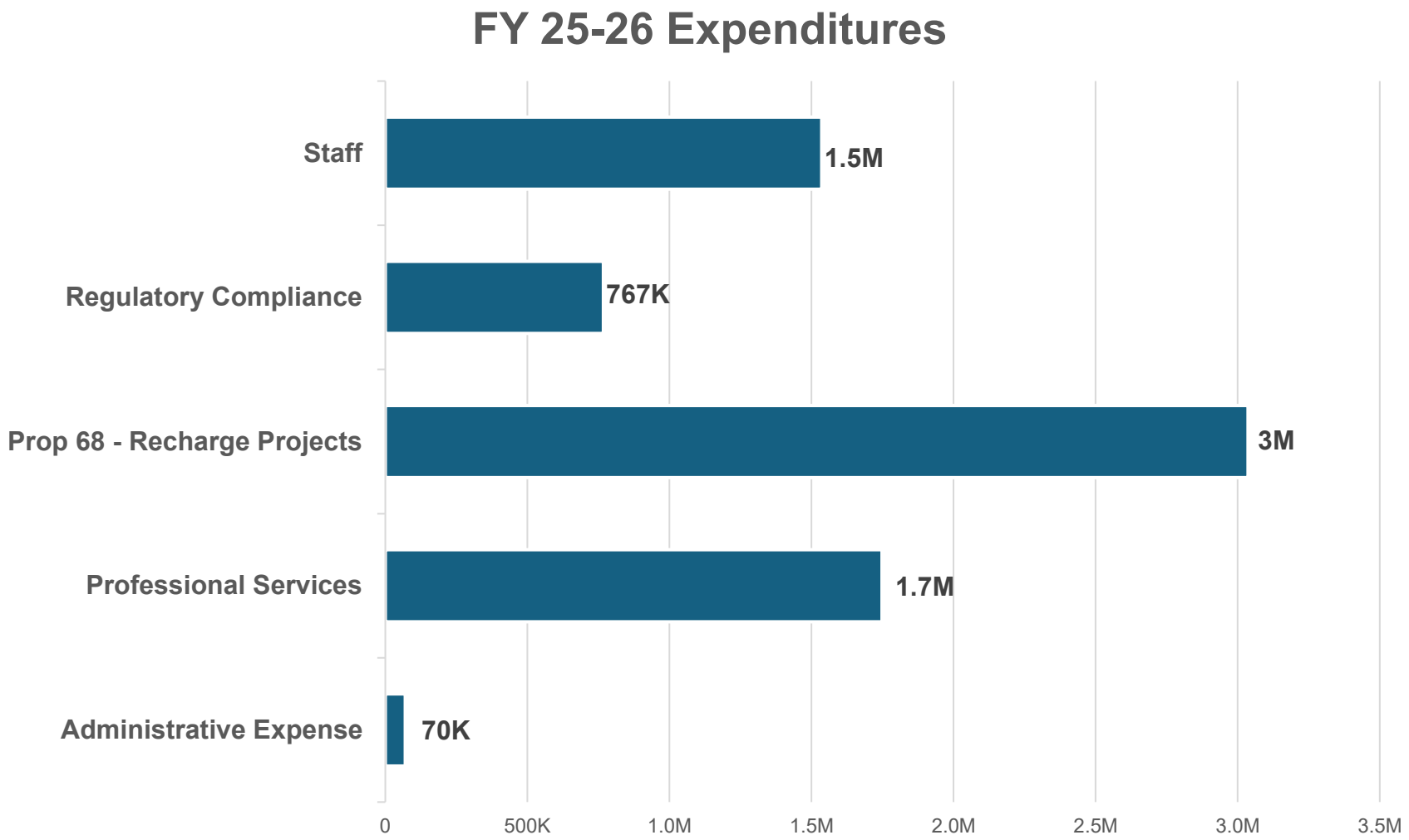
*Other includes cost reimbursements for Drought & Flood labor, annual GSP development, and interest on cash.

*Penalties include $502k (Madera) & $691k (Chowchilla)

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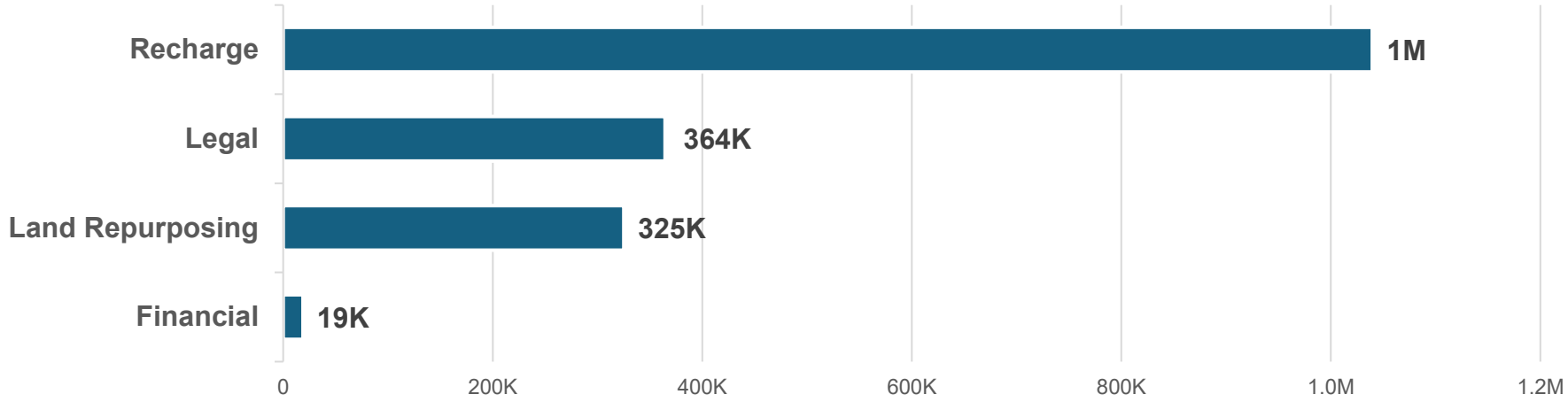


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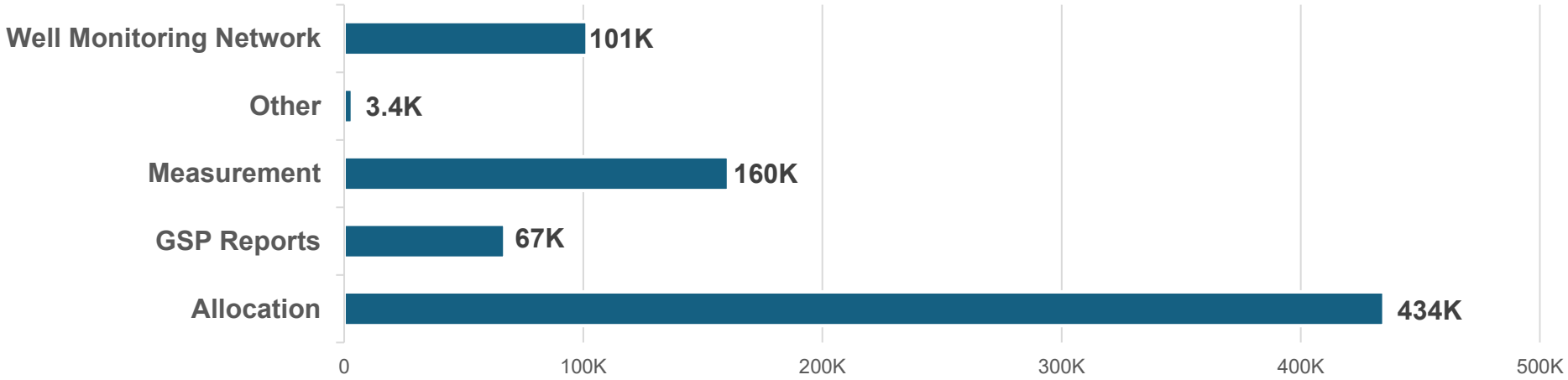


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FY 25-26 Professional Services Expenditures

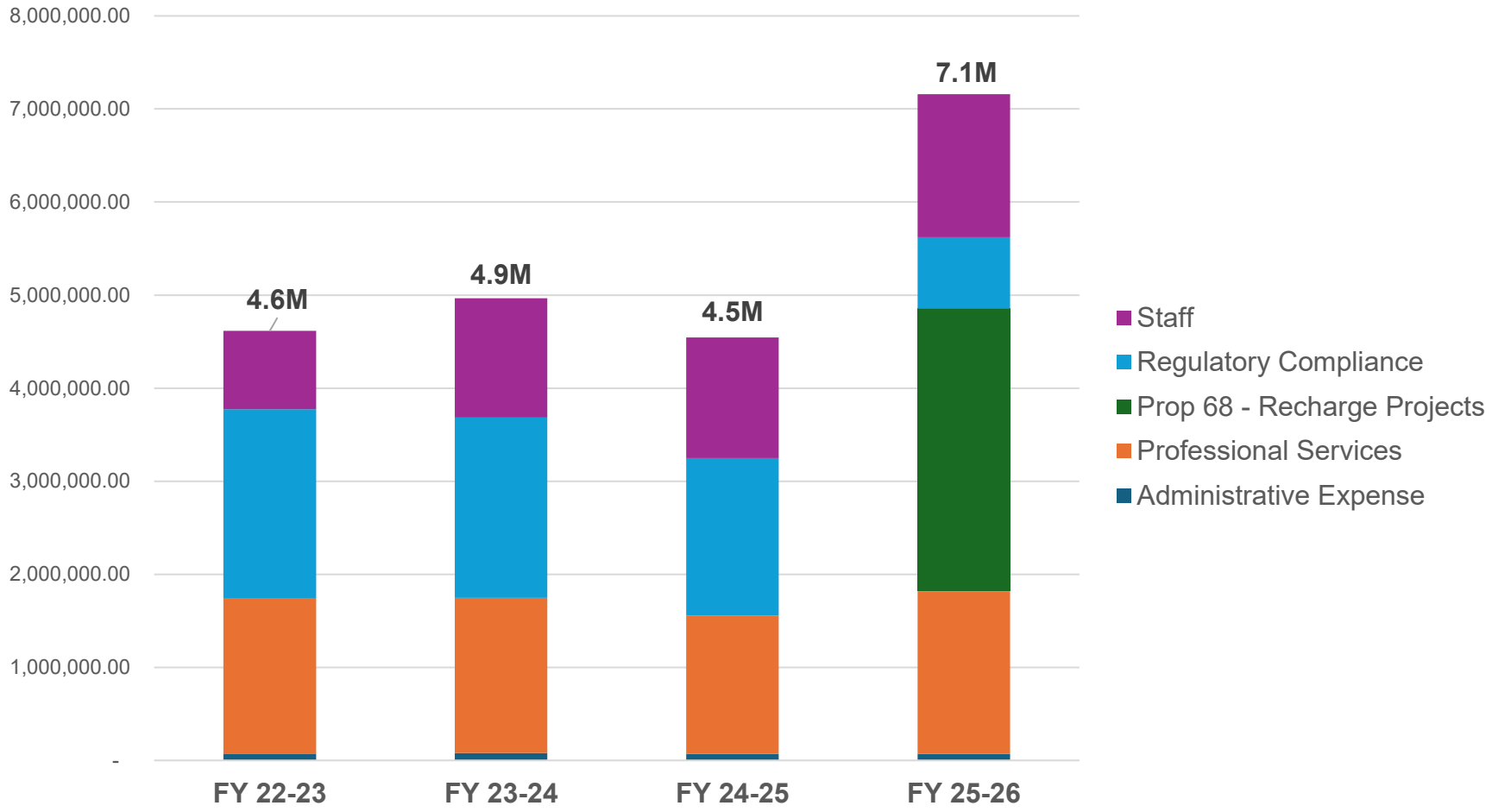


FY 25-26 Regulatory Compliance Expenditures



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GSA Expenditures Year over Year



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Revenue Source	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	Grand Total
GSA Fees	2,734,845	2,974,749	3,079,675	3,120,738	11,910,007
State Grant (Reimbursed)	1,450,960	2,084,426	1,648,434	3,723,802	8,907,622
Penalties	0	79,880	526,121	1,103,190	1,709,191
Other	332,283	236,285	473,650	422,266	1,464,483
Grand Total	4,518,088	5,375,340	5,727,880	8,369,996	23,991,303

Expense Category	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	Grand Total
Administrative Expense	65,876	79,379	70,426	70,715	286,397
Professional Services	1,670,973	1,667,708	1,486,484	1,748,115	6,573,280
Prop 68 - Recharge Projects	0	0	0	3,036,351	3,036,351
Regulatory Compliance	2,036,770	1,938,044	1,690,579	767,500	6,432,892
Staff	840,951	1,280,277	1,298,132	1,535,850	4,955,210
Grand Total	4,614,570	4,965,407	4,545,621	7,158,531	22,277,428

Professional Services	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	Grand Total
Financial	11,120	11,775	54,279	18,914	96,087
Land Repurposing	209,673	834,075	796,623	325,122	2,165,493
Legal	461,677	366,658	236,336	364,515	1,429,186
Recharge	988,503	455,200	399,246	1,039,565	2,882,514
Grand Total	1,670,973	1,667,708	1,486,484	1,748,115	6,573,280

Regulatory Compliance	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	Grand Total
Allocation	215,341	791,148	541,067	434,754	1,982,309
GSP Reports	162,861	263,382	534,792	67,123	1,028,158
Measurement	888,193	722,420	510,459	160,677	2,281,750
Other	43,793	96,232	4,262	3,401	147,687
Well Monitoring Network	726,581	64,862	99,999	101,546	992,988
Grand Total	2,036,770	1,938,044	1,690,579	767,500	6,432,892

Financial Observations

- Grants are not a reliable long-term funding source
- Technical expertise is necessary for state compliance
- Litigation can be expensive
- Cost saving measures include in-house field work, outreach, writing and design for publications, decrease in measurement methods

Item 4.h

Action Item:

Discussion and recommendation to the Board of Directors of the scope of work and budget for Davids Engineering, Inc. to prepare the Chowchilla Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Annual Reports for Water Years 2026–2028, at a total cost of $267,500 over three years; the Chowchilla Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency, on behalf of the Chowchilla Subbasin, will enter into an agreement with Davids Engineering, Inc.; your approval authorizes the Director of Water and Natural Resources to notify the Chowchilla Subbasin

Project Objective

- Per the Groundwater Sustainability Management Act and the California Code of Regulations Title 23 (23 CCR) §356.2: Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Annual Reports must be prepared and submitted to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) by April 1 of each year following the adoption of the GSP
- Chowchilla Water District GSA is the plan manager
- This proposal went to the Chowchilla GSP Advisory Committee on 10/14/2026 where it was approved to move forward
- Scope must be approved by all four GSAs within the Chowchilla Subbasin (Madera County GSA, Merced County GSA, Chowchilla Water District GSA and Triangle T Water District GSA)

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Proposal

Davids Engineering will prepare the Chowchilla Subbasin GSP Annual Reports for Water Year (WY) 2026 through WY 2028 to ensure compliance with SGMA regulations and provide critical data on groundwater conditions, water budgets, storage changes, and sustainability progress.

Task 1: Prepare General Information, Including an Executive Summary and a Map of the Chowchilla Subbasin Location.

- **Subtask 1.2.** Prepare a Detailed Description and Graphical Representation of Groundwater Conditions
- **Subtask 1.3.** Quantify Water Budget Components
- **Subtask 1.4.** Calculate Change in Groundwater Storage
- **Subtask 1.5.** Prepare a Description of Progress Towards Implementing the GSP
- **Subtask 1.6.** Prepare and Submit the GSP Annual Reporting Containing All Components Required by DWR as Stated in the GSP Regulations

Task 2: Perform Other General Services, As Requested (Optional).

Cost of Proposal

Task Number	Task Name	DE Labor Cost	LSCE Labor Cost	Estimated Total Cost
1	Prepare and Submit the GSP Annual Report (WY 2026)	$22,000	$25,700	$47,700
2	Perform Other General Services, As Requested (WY 2026)	$20,000	$20,000	$40,000
3	Prepare and Submit the GSP Annual Report (WY 2027)	$22,700	$26,500	$49,200
4	Perform Other General Services, As Requested (WY 2027)	$20,000	$20,000	$40,000
5	Prepare and Submit the GSP Annual Report (WY 2028)	$23,300	$27,300	$50,600
6	Perform Other General Services, As Requested (WY 2028)	$20,000	$20,000	$40,000
Total, WY 2026 (Tasks 1-2)		**$42,000**	**$45,700**	**$87,700**
Total, WY 2027 (Tasks 3-4)		**$42,700**	**$46,500**	**$89,200**
Total, WY 2028 (Tasks 5-6)		**$43,300**	**$47,300**	**$90,600**

- Total cost for the three-year contract is $267,500
- Chowchilla Subbasin will use an existing cost-share agreement to split the cost by acreage among the four GSAs within the Chowchilla Subbasin

Staff Recommendation

Recommendation to the Board of Directors of the scope of work and budget for Davids Engineering, Inc. to prepare the Chowchilla Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Annual Reports for Water Years 2026–2028, at a total cost of $267,500 over three years; the Chowchilla Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency, on behalf of the Chowchilla Subbasin, will enter into an agreement with Davids Engineering, Inc.; your approval authorizes the Director of Water and Natural Resources to notify the Chowchilla Subbasin