Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association - GSP Project and Management Actions (PMAs) Submittal for Inclusion in GSP List of Projects

Date: March 27, 2026

Project Name and Contact

Project or Management Action Name:

Triple A Ranch - In-Lieu and Direct Recharge Project

Contact Person:

Christy McKinnon, Stanislaus County

Organization/Affiliation (Project Proponent):

Stanislaus County

Contact Phone:

(209) 525-6818

Contact Email:

cmckinnon@envres.org

Project or Management Action Description and Status

Project or Management Action Description:

The Triple A Ranch - In-Lieu and Direct Recharge Project (Project) is intended to be a cooperative long-term project between Modesto Irrigation District (MID) and Triple A Ranch within the Modesto Subbasin (Subbasin). MID is one of the two agricultural water suppliers within the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association Groundwater Sustainability Agency (STRGBA GSA). Triple A Ranch is located within the Non-District East Area (NDE), one of the four distinct areas within the STRGBA GSA, which is managed by Stanislaus County. This Project is designed to be implemented with no impact to MID's existing agricultural and urban customers and nest within MID's recently approved Long-term Groundwater Replenishment Program (LT GRP) (https://www.mid.org/water/irrigation-water/programs-services/long-term-groundwater-replenishment-program/). Currently developed agriculture in the NDE portion of the Modesto Subbasin (Subbasin) is estimated to be approximately 36,000 acres, of which approximately 30,000 acres are deciduous fruits and nuts (permanent crops). With limited exception, the entire NDE area is solely reliant on groundwater from the Subbasin.

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Historically (1972-2020), Wet and Above Normal Water Years (WYs) have occurred approximately 47% of the time on the Tuolumne River. Under the current Final Environmental Impact Statement for the relicensing of Don Pedro Reservoir, there is estimated to be approximately 1,500,000 AF of surface water in Wet WYs and 620,000 AF of surface water in Above Normal WYs in the Tuolumne River above and beyond that necessary to meeting existing customer demands (all Tuolumne River Partners) and the recommended instream flow obligations. As a result, 60,000 AF of Tuolumne River surface water amounts to approximately 4% and 10% of available surface water supply respectively, for Wet and Above Normal WYs. Capitalizing on this available supply is a defined project within the approved Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Subbasin and serves as the underpinning for MID's LT GRP.

The Project involves the delivery of approximately 12,000 AF of surface water from the Tuolumne River in Wet and Above Normal water years (WYs) through participation in MID's LT GRP. In general, the Project includes the construction of a new turnout off MID's Modesto Reservoir and subsequent conveyance through newly constructed private irrigation conveyance infrastructure, with connections to existing conveyance infrastructure, to support in-lieu recharge of approximately 3,000 acres of currently developed permanent crops during the growing season. In addition to the in-lieu benefits, the Project proponent is also planning to initiate direct recharge in an existing unlined irrigation reservoir which is approximately 20 acres in size. The magnitude of the direct recharge benefit will be quantified as Project design continues and post Project monitoring occurs but is currently estimated at approximately 1,000 AF per year on average.

Project or Management Action Location (please provide a map if available):

See attached.

Which Sustainability Indicator(s) does this Project or Management Action address:

1. **Groundwater Levels**
2. **Groundwater Storage**
3. **Groundwater Quality**
4. Land Subsidence
5. **Surface Water Interaction**

This Project will address; (1) groundwater levels, (2) groundwater storage, groundwater quality, and (3) surface water interaction (interconnected surface waters)

Project or Management Action Status (Ongoing, Planned, Potential or Concept):

Planned

Has a feasibility assessment been conducted? If so, please list the agency and provide the documentation (or provide web link to download).

Feasibility assessment is ongoing at the time of this submission.

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Estimated Cost:

An initial estimated cost of the Project was determined to be in the range of approximately $7M.

Potential Funding Sources:

Grant funding and local cost-share.

Management Action or Project Yield (e.g. water contributed to the groundwater system, acre-feet per year):

7,000 AF/year on average.

Please describe any required Permitting and Regulatory Process and status of permitting and CEQA/NEPA compliance:

Permitting and Regulatory Process	Status
CEQA IS/MND	
USACE 404	
CVRWQCB 401	
USFWS Conditions	
NMFS Conditions	
CDFW LSAA	
CVRWQCB Dewatering	
CVRWQCB Construction Storm Water	
CVFPB Encroachment	
USACE 408	

Does this Management Action or Project serve a disadvantaged community? If so, which one(s)?

The Project is located where overdraft has led to groundwater level declines that are impacting groundwater levels in hydrologically downgradient areas to the west, where many of the Subbasins' disadvantaged communities (DACs), severely disadvantaged communities (SDACs), and domestic well users are located.

Additional Information Sources:

N/A

Other Information:

N/A

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