



Section O. Planning Coordination

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Section O. Planning Coordination

The purpose of this section is to ensure an appropriate level of coordination with local, State, and federal agencies and stakeholders to minimize conflict within the region and to optimize the utilization of the region's water resources. In addition, the RWMG is ultimately responsible for representing the IRWM Plan to adjacent IRWM regions and in coordinating regional efforts that could have far-reaching benefits. As a resource document, the section includes a complete list of all public agencies representing the IRWM Region, and where they need to be included in any RWMG coordination effort. The end of the section contains existing agreements and coordination efforts taking place on a Water Planning Area level. Much of this information is summarized from the 2012 Master Water Report.

O.1 COORDINATE WATER MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES TO AVOID CONFLICT

This section discusses and recognizes non-purveyor type entities (i.e. State agencies, agricultural groups, and environmental groups) that have a stake or role in water resources management/issues, such as the following (not listed in any order of importance) list of the more visible water resources related agencies and stakeholders:

- Individual Rural and Agricultural Residents/Water Users
- Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs)
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 3)
- State Water Resources Control Board
- State Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- Morro Bay Estuary Program
- Central Coast Vineyard Team
- San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau
- Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC)
- Subcommittees and Working Groups of WRAC and RWMG
- Advisory Committees for our Wholesale Operations and Flood Control Zones
- Advisory Groups to the Board of Supervisors
- Morro Bay National Estuary Program Implementation committee,
- Arroyo Grande Creek MOU Group
- Santa Maria Basin Technical Groups
- Tribal Interests
- Others (that exist and may form over time)

It is important to understand their influence and involvement on water resources management efforts within the County, and that they have either contributed to the development of this IRWM Plan, or should be coordinated with in future efforts to better understand the conditions in different water planning areas and the benefits and impacts of proposed water management strategies.

The RWMG works toward bringing interested agencies and stakeholders to the project implementation process at an early stage when their involvement is beneficial and educational for both sides. Additionally, efforts under the purview of the IRWM Plan need to be able to show a direct benefit to the IRWM Plan's Goals and Objectives, and ultimately meet one or more of the Water Management Strategies used in this plan to measure and report success. Depending on the level of engagement with an agency, the outcome is to be recorded for reporting in the IRWM Plan Monitoring and Performance Report.

State and federal agencies have an important regulatory responsibility to the people of the state and country, respectively. Two of the more visible agencies and their responsibilities – the State Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board – are summarized below as well as other agricultural and environmental agencies. These agencies are also discussed in later sections related to specific coordination efforts.

O.1.1 Water Resources Management Responsibilities of Two Primary State Agencies

The State DWR mission statement is “To manage the water resources of California in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the State’s people, and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments.” DWR programs and roles include development and implementation of the California Water Plan, grant program administration, conservation and urban water management planning regulation, groundwater basin and watershed planning/management, State Water Project ownership and operation, and a number of other functions. Excerpts from the California Water Plan are utilized in the Water Management Strategies discussion of this MWR.

The State Water Resources Control Board’s (SWRCB) mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California’s water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations. The various regional Water Boards regulate wastewater discharges to surface water (rivers, ocean, etc.) and to groundwater (via land). The regional Water Boards also regulate storm water discharges from construction, industrial, and municipal activities; discharges from irrigated agriculture; dredge and fill activities; the alteration of any federal water body under the 401 certification program; and a number of other activities with practices that could degrade water quality. Their

programs also address water rights, grant program administration, and guidance to assist with these efforts. From the State Board web site; programs offered by the State and Regional Board include biosolids, dredge/fill (401) wetlands, irrigated lands, land disposal (landfills, waste piles), waste discharge requirements (non-Subchapter 15), NPDES Surface Water, recycled water, sanitary sewer overflows, stormwater, and timber harvest activities.

O.1.2 Agricultural Organizations

These include, among others, the San Luis Obispo Coastal and Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCDs, University of California Davis Cooperative Extension, San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau, San Luis Obispo Cattlemen’s Association, Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Central Coast Vineyard Team and entities representing particular crop types – each have a variety of roles which may include conservation and water quality efforts, data collection, special studies, policy review, and overall stakeholder review of issues.

O.1.3 Environmental Organizations

These include, among others, Central Coast Salmon Enhancement, Sierra Club, Morro Bay National Estuary Program and Coast Keepers - each have a variety of roles, which may include conservation and water quality efforts, data collection, special studies, policy review, and overall stakeholder review of issues.

O.1.4 Pre-Project Coordination Efforts

The pre-project coordination effort takes the concept of early engagement with interested agencies and stakeholders to the point where the same agencies are involved in the project development and scoping phase. Early agency contact and awareness of the concept, project, or program provides improved consistency in the regulatory and environmental challenges of each.

O.1.5 Minimizing Conflict through Coordination Efforts

Achieving the proper timing in coordination is not always possible due to constraints, conflicts, and timing of precursor efforts (e.g., local agency decisions, formation of interest groups or management agencies, etc.) taking place in the region. Other efforts in coordination where the RWMG is aware of the need for coordination, but the timing to engage with certain agencies or interest groups is later instead of sooner. In these cases, the IRWM Plan’s existing outreach program is the best means of keeping agencies and interest groups informed throughout the

planning process leading up to the decision of implementation; typically occurring upon funding of the project or program.

O.2 ACTIVITY COORDINATION STRATEGY WITH ADJACENT REGIONS

As shown in **Figure O-1**, San Luis Obispo County is surrounded on three sides by active IRWM regions, including Monterey County to the north, Santa Barbara County to the south, and Kern and Kings counties to the east and northeast. The regions have regularly scheduled meetings and/or ad hoc meetings, depending on the subject matter. The RWMG is typically represented by the District in coordinating activities with neighboring IRWM regions and stakeholders.



Figure O-1. Regions Adjacent to San Luis Obispo County

Intra-Regional coordination occurred as early as 2005 within the funding area and included intra-regional conference calls and meetings to discuss water issues on a large hydrological scale as well as programmatic concerns and water issues. In 2009, a series of meetings and conference calls occurred between SLO and Santa Barbara County Regions. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the successes and challenges Regions were having, to share resources and to talk about collaboration on potential projects in shared watersheds and groundwater basins. In 2010, the SLO County IRWM participated in a Central Coast Funding Area meeting that included all the Central Coast IRWM Regions as well as DWR. Regional Representatives attended and discussed funding for Prop 84 Round 1 and potential projects that Regions had. Subsequently, the Funding Area representatives had conference calls at semi-regular intervals to discuss IRWM Program developments, project progress and to share ideas on collaboration. SLO County is engaged with the Santa Barbara IRWM. SLO IRWM representatives are on Santa Barbara IRWM Region's stakeholder list and receive updates about IRWM programs and developments in their region and a Santa Barbara IRWM representative is also on the SLO Stakeholder list. San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura IRWM Regions coordinated on the nexus between IRWM & Water Planning & Land Use Issues. There was an Interregional Presentation to the Channel Counties AEP (Association of Environmental Planners) Board. See **Section C – Region Description** for other interregional coordination activities.

O.3 COORDINATION WITH STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

Each of the projects and plan components in the IRWM Plan includes a significant amount of coordination with federal and State agencies. It is critical to the success of this IRWM Plan effort that the appropriate federal and State regulatory and jurisdictional agencies be actively involved as project implementation moves forward. Traditionally, participation of these agencies occurs on a project-specific basis, depending on the requirements and needs of each effort. In the integrated planning process however, the role of these agencies is now identified proactively, well prior to project design or implementation, and the potential involvement of each agency is determined and the agency notified of the relationship with the project.

The first form of involvement is to help coordinate and/or communicate the IRWM Plan to other stakeholders within the region. Another form of involvement is to assist in implementation of the IRWM Plan through facilitation or active project involvement. The final form of involvement is through granting of necessary regulatory approvals. In many cases, a given agency can become involved in IRWM Plan implementation in all three interactive forms of involvement.

This section describes the State and federal agencies active in the San Luis Obispo County region and identifies opportunities for their involvement and assistance in IRWM Plan implementation through coordination, communication, project implementation, and regulatory approval.

Table O-1 identifies State and federal agencies that are central to implementing the IRWM Plan. The table describes the jurisdictional authority or interest of each agency as well as coordination efforts either completed or planned. Coordination and involvement of these agencies with the IRWM Plan effort is imperative to the successful implementation of the plan.

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Table O-1. Federal and State Agencies

Agency	Jurisdiction/Interest	Coordination/Interaction
Federal		
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Protection, preservation, and enhancement of waters of the U.S.	Potential technical resource on the Flood Management Plan and Wetland and Vernal Pool Mapping Project; potential federal sponsor of the Zones 1/1A and 9 Flood Projects; and manage Salinas Dam and Reservoir. Potential grants for Los Osos Wastewater Project.
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	Protection, preservation, and enhancement of fisheries, endangered species and habitat	Participation through Morro Bay Estuary Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan and permitting authority for projects discharging to Morro Bay.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Protection, preservation, and enhancement of fisheries, endangered species and habitat	Permitting authority for projects discharging to creeks or impacting fisheries
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)	Manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner.	Potential funding source for the Desalination Study and the Morro Bay Desalination Facility Upgrade
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Responsible for protecting human health and the environment. Develops and enforces regulations, provides funding assistance, and performs environmental research and education. Manages Superfund program and cleanup of contaminated sites.	Permitting authority over the Reclaimed Mines project. 30-year extended funding for SRF program.
United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	Manage natural resource conservation programs that provide environmental, societal, financial, and technical benefits. Provide assistance to private landowners and managers. (Non-regulatory agency)	Potential technical resource for the Agriculture and Open Space Element and potential funding source for soil erosion projects.
United States Bureau of Land Management	Administers America's public lands	Manages the region's Carizzo Plain Natural Area and potential technical resource on the Agriculture and Open Element and Conservation Element Projects

Table O-1. Federal and State Agencies, Continued

Agency	Jurisdiction/Interest	Coordination/Interaction
United States Army	Primary responsibility for land-based U.S. military operations.	Camp Roberts is managed by the California National Guard
United States Forest Service	Manages the national forests.	Manages the Los Padres National Forest and potential technical resource on the Agriculture and Open Element and Conservation Element Projects
United States Geologic Society	A scientific agency of the United States government. The scientists of the USGS study the landscape of the United States, its natural resources, and the natural hazards that threaten it.	Potential technical resource for IRWMP implementation and prepared the IRWMP reference document - Hydrogeology, Water Quality, Water Budgets, and Simulated Responses to Hydrologic Changes in Santa Rosa and San Simeon Creek Ground-Water Basins, USGS Report 98-4061
State		
California State Water Resources Control Board	Preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations	Planned collaboration on SWAMP and GAMA, permitting and financing coordination. Existing permitting coordination, Low-Interest loan on the Los Osos Project, and IRWM grants
California Department of Water Resources	Manages the water resources of California in cooperation with other agencies to benefit the State's people, and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments. Operates and maintains the State Water Project, including the California Aqueduct; provides dam safety and flood control services, assists local water districts in water management and conservation activities, promotes recreational opportunities, and plans for future statewide water needs.	Coordination through Proposition 50 Planning Grant
Central Coast RWQCB	Protection and management of surface water and groundwater.	Regulatory oversight of the TMDL and CCAMP programs and permitting agency for all IRWMP implementation projects that could impact surface water and groundwater

Table O-1. Federal and State Agencies. Continued

Agency	Jurisdiction/Interest	Coordination/Interaction
California Coastal Commission	Protection, preservation, and management of the California Coast and resources.	Regulatory oversight of Coastal Zone development issues and permitting agency for all IRWMP implementation projects located within the Coastal Zone, including the Los Osos Wastewater Project
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Protection, preservation, and enhancement of endangered species and habitat.	Permitting of IRWMP implementation projects potentially impacting streambeds, including Zone 1/1A and 9 Flood Control Projects
California Department of Parks & Recreation	Protection, preservation, and management of the State's parks.	Potential technical resource on the Agriculture and Open Element and Conservation Element Projects and management of regional State Parks (Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreation Area, Pismo Beach, Montana de Oro, Morro Strand, and San Simeon State Parks)
California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation	Management of the State's correctional facilities.	Management of the region's State correctional facilities (California Men's Colony and El Paso de Robles); agency responsible for implementation of the IRWMP Project - California Men's Colony wastewater treatment plant; and partner in the Whale Rock Project
California Department of Mental Health	Management of the State's Mental Health facilities.	Management of the region's mental health facility – Atascadero State Hospital
California State Universities	Management of the State's University System.	Management of the region's State university - California Polytechnic State University); technical resource for water use and water resource planning; prepared the Water Uses and Alternatives for San Luis Obispo County, City and Regional Planning Department; and partner in the Whale Rock Project
California National Guard		Manages Camp Roberts and Camp San Luis Obispo

O.3.1 State and Federal Agencies Approvals

Most of the IRWM implementation projects will require some State and/or federal regulatory approval or oversight. Participation by these regulatory agencies at an early stage helps to streamline the process. Several actions can be taken to streamline regulatory and permitting processes for the IRWM projects. These may include preliminary consultations with regulatory agencies and joint workshops between the appropriate regulatory representatives and the project sponsors. Such coordination facilitates the permitting and regulatory decision process by identifying action items to be addressed by project sponsors. Such involvement by federal, State, and local agencies assist the IRWMP implementation to be more efficient.

Table O-2 lists the State and federal permits and approvals that will be required for the high-ranking implementation projects. Several of the project sponsors are already working with the appropriate regulatory agencies and working through the permitting process. As demonstrated in the table, these water-related projects must satisfy significant regulatory permitting requirements. The two flood projects, Zone 1/1A and Zone 9 Projects, and the Los Osos Wastewater Project have the most numerous permits required from both federal and State agencies. These projects could benefit the most from early consultations with regulatory agencies. Such coordination would facilitate the permitting and regulatory decision process by identifying action items to be addressed by project sponsors and will assist the implementation of high priority IRWMP projects.

O.4 PROJECT COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES

Table O-3 identifies areas where federal and state agency (or other agencies) may be able to assist in communication or cooperation, or implementation of projects and programs, or where state or federal regulatory decisions are required before implementing the projects or programs. As discussed above, agency coordination should take place at all levels in the initial phases of each project to establish the role of each agency and heighten the awareness of the project's purpose, benefits, and potential impacts. A conservative schedule of meetings with the respective agencies should be incorporated into the overall project schedule during initial planning, design, and final project completion. Local contact information for each agency can be obtained on-line or provided by the District.

Table O-2. Potential Permits and/or Approvals for IRWMP Implementation Projects

Agency/Organization	Permit or Approval	Action Requiring Permit/Consultation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Federal Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit	Impacts to wetlands and/or waters of the United States
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; National Marine Fisheries Service	Consultation and Coordination under Federal Endangered Species Act; Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Permit	Construction where federally listed species may be present, operations of some facilities
California Coastal Commission	Coastal Development Permits	Projects within California Coastal Zone
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement	Substantial alteration of bed, bank or channel of a river, stream or lake
California Department of Health Services	Title 22 Report Approval	Recycled Water treatment and delivery, Wellhead treatment; Desalination
California OSHA Mining and Tunneling Unit	Mining and Tunneling Permit	Trenches or excavations deeper than 5 feet
Caltrans	Encroachment Permits	Construction under California State Highways
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	401 Certification or Waiver; Low Threat Discharge Permit; Title 22 Report Approval; Report of Waste Discharge	Potential for water quality impairment from sediment discharge to waterways during construction, dewatering, and disposal at construction sites; consultation with DHS on Title 22 Report, water recycling, desalination
State Water Resources Control Board	NPDES General Construction Stormwater Permit; water rights permitting.	Construction and grading of areas greater than 1 acre and authorization to divert surface waters.

Table O-3. Project Coordination with Federal and State Agencies

Project No.	Project Code	Projects	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; National Marine Fisheries Service	California Coastal Commission	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Department of Health Services	California OSHA Mining and Tunneling Unit	Caltrans	Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	State Water Resources Control Board
1	MLTP_ECO1	Livestock & Land Program									
2	MLTP_WMT2	LID Pilot Program									
3	NCNT_ECO1	North County Fertilizer Regions_ Precision Agriculture									
4	NCNT_ECO2	Attiyeh Ranch Conservation Easement									
5	NCNT_GWM1	Upper Salinas River Basin Water Conservation/Conjunctive Use									
6	NCNT_WMT1	Community Based Social Marketing									
7	NCNT_WMT2	Improving On Farm Water Management Through Demonstration, R & O of Precision Agricultural BMPs									
8	NCNT_WSP1	City of Paso Robles Lake Nacimiento Water Treatment Plant Construction									
9	NCNT_WSP2	San Miguel Critical Water System Improvements									
10	NCST_GWM1	8th Street Upper Aquifer Well and Nitrate Removal Facility									
11	NCST_FLD1	Los Padres CCC Center - Stormwater LID Treatment									
12	SCNT_FLD2	Oceano Drainage Improvement Project - Hwy 1 & 13th Street									
13	SCNT_WMT1	Lopez Water Treatment Plant Membrane Rack Addition									
14	SCNT_WSP2	Recycle Water Distribution System Expansion									
15	SCNT_WSP4	Pismo Beach Recycled Water									

In 2008, the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District produced a Regional Permit Program utilizing funds provided by Proposition 50 (Planning Grant Agreement No. 4600004505). The Regional Permit Program (RPP) sets out an approach to managing the multitude of Federal, State, and local regulatory permits required for carrying out IRWM projects. The RPP consists of two parts: an Environmental Management System (EMS), and a Regional Permit Plan. The EMS is an internal organization mechanism for managing individual local implementing agencies. Through the implementation of accepted environmental standards, the local agency can maintain a high level of environmental responsibility. The system defines how information is managed and communicated both internally and externally. The EMS tells the agency how to behave. This behavior sets the stage for improving the efficiency of project development, regulatory permitting, project implementation, and project operation.

The Regional Permit Plan begins with an orderly establishment of uniform conditions for projects in order to reduce processing time and increase consistency and effectiveness. It progresses towards a self-monitored permit using internet access for permitting agencies to monitor the compliance by the Department. Eventually, and this would likely require special legislation, the Plan would provide for approved agencies to issue its own “permits”, subject to auditing by the agencies normally entrusted with the permitting authority.

In summary, the RPP envisions a regulatory compliance approach that requires the local agency to meet an acceptable environmental performance standard and, in turn, environmental regulatory agencies move to an oversight/monitoring role, through individual permits authorizing the RPP, or through inter-agency permits/agreements that place a single agency in the oversight role. If the RPP approach were to be implemented by State and Federal agencies, it would greatly assist in the efficient implementation of more IRWM Plan projects.

O.5 WATER SERVICE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AND OTHER COORDINATION EFFORTS

This section discusses the various cooperative agreements and other inter-agency coordination efforts related to water supply throughout the IRWM region. A brief overview of these agreements and efforts is provided, listed in order by WPA:

- WPA 3, 4 and 6 - Whale Rock Reservoir Water Supply
- WPA 4 - City of Morro Bay/Whale Rock Commission
- WPA 4 – Chorro Valley Water System

- WPA 5 – Los Osos Interlocutory Stipulated Judgment (ISJ)
- WPA 6 – Santa Margarita Lake/Salinas Reservoir
- WPA 6 and 7 - Lopez Lake Zone 3 Water Supply Project
- WPA 7 – Groundwater Management Agreement/Northern Cities Management Area
- WPA 7 – Nipomo Mesa Management Area (NMMA)
- WPA 4, 6, 13 and 14 - Nacimiento Water Supply Project
- WPA 13 and 14 - Paso Robles Groundwater Management Plan and Basin Agreement

O.5.1 WPA 3, 4 and 6 – Whale Rock Reservoir Water Supply

Whale Rock Reservoir is located on Old Creek Road approximately one-half mile east of the community of Cayucos. The project was planned, designed, and constructed under the supervision of the State Department of Water Resources. Construction took place between October 1958 and April 1961. The reservoir is jointly owned by the City of San Luis Obispo, the California Men's Colony (CMC), and Cal Poly. These three agencies, with the addition of a representative from the DWR, form the Whale Rock Commission, which is responsible for operational policy and administration of the reservoir and related facilities. Day-to-day operation is provided by the City of San Luis Obispo.

Several agreements establish policy for the operation of the Whale Rock system and actions of the member agencies. These agreements cover aspects such as distribution of capital costs for the project construction, operations and apportionment of operations costs, downstream water rights, fish and wildlife protection, and other items.

In April 1996, the downstream water rights agreement was amended and replaced with a new agreement, establishing water entitlements for adjacent and downstream water users. The downstream water users (Cayucos Area Water Organization or CAWO) affected by this agreement consist of three public water purveyors and the cemetery, plus two other rural/agricultural users, all in the Cayucos area. These agencies are the Paso Robles Beach Water Association, Morro Rock Mutual Water Company, County Service Area 10A, and Cayucos-Morro Bay Cemetery District.

O.5.2 WPA 4 - City of Morro Bay/Whale Rock Commission

A mutual aid agreement exists between the Whale Rock Commission and the City of Morro Bay, dated 2000, relative to water resources in the event of an emergency. The SWP shuts down for annual maintenance activities each fall/winter during which the City has used its alternative supplies. In 2008, the SWP shutdown took place also when groundwater quality issues were limiting the City's use of well water. The shortfall was made up for through this agreement with

CMC to provide Morro Bay with water during that period. Treated Whale Rock water from CMC water treatment plant is conveyed to Morro Bay via the Chorro Valley Pipeline.

O.5.3 WPA 4 - Chorro Valley Water System

The Chorro Valley Water System includes these entities: CMC, Camp San Luis Obispo, Cuesta College, and San Luis Obispo County Operations Center/Office of Education. CMC operates a water treatment plant to provide potable water to CMC facilities and wheels water to Camp San Luis Obispo, Cuesta College, County Operations Center (which includes Fleet Services, Water Quality Lab, Juvenile Detention Center, County Jail, Office of Emergency Services), and County Office of Education. These entities have several inter- entity agreements relating to entitlements to their shared water supplies, which include Whale Rock Water, Chorro Reservoir, and State Water. Camp San Luis Obispo also has first rights to one on-site well (County Well No. 1).

O.5.4 WPA 5 – Los Osos Interlocutory Stipulated Judgment (ISJ)

The following three water purveyors serve the community of Los Osos:

- Los Osos Community Services District (Los Osos CSD)
- S & T Mutual Water Company (S&T MWC)
- Golden State Water Company (GSWC)

These three water agencies and overlying water users utilize the same groundwater basin in the Los Osos Valley. The three local water purveyors, along with the County of San Luis Obispo, are currently preparing a Basin Management Plan under a court-approved Interlocutory Stipulated Judgment (ISJ).

O.5.5 WPA 6 – Santa Margarita Lake/Salinas Reservoir

The Salinas Dam was built in 1941 by the War Department to supply water to Camp San Luis Obispo and, secondarily, to meet the water needs of the City of San Luis Obispo. The Salinas Reservoir (Santa Margarita Lake) captures water from a 112 square mile watershed and can currently store up to 23,843 acre-feet (AF). In 1947, the Salinas Dam and delivery system was transferred from the regular Army to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Since 1965, the District has operated this water supply for the City under a lease from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Water from the reservoir is pumped through the Cuesta Tunnel (a one mile long tunnel through the mountains of the Cuesta Ridge) and then flows by gravity to the City's Water Treatment Plant on Stenner Creek Road.

O.5.6 WPA 7 – Groundwater Management Agreement/Northern Cities Management Area

The Northern Cities (including the cities of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, and Pismo Beach, and the Oceano Community Services District) have a long history of cooperatively managing the groundwater underlying the Northern Cities area. The 1983 “Gentlemen’s Agreement,” as amended, was reaffirmed in a 2002 Agreement Regarding the Management of the Arroyo Grande Groundwater Basin (“2002 Groundwater Management Agreement”). The 2002 Groundwater Management Agreement was incorporated into the 2005 Stipulation, which was ultimately affirmed by the Court within the 2008 Judgment.

The 2002 Groundwater Management Agreement established a safe yield for the Arroyo Grande Groundwater Basin of 9,500 AFY. The safe yield included subdivisions for agricultural irrigation (5,300 AFY), subsurface flow to the ocean (200 AFY) and urban uses (4,000 AFY). It also provided that urban groundwater allocations can be increased when land within the incorporated boundaries is converted from agricultural uses to urban uses, referred to as an agricultural conversion credit, or “ag credit.” Accordingly, the Cities of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach have increased their groundwater allocations through the conversion of agricultural uses to urban uses within their service areas.

In addition to the monitoring and reporting requirements described in the Stipulation, representatives from the NCMA frequently meet and coordinate with representatives from the Nipomo Mesa Management Area and the Santa Maria Valley Management Area (SMVMA) through the SMVMA’s Technical Subcommittee.

O.5.7 WPA 6 and 7 – Lopez Lake Zone 3 Water Supply Project

The District completed the Lopez Dam in 1968 to provide a reliable water supply for agricultural and municipal needs as well as flood protection for coastal communities. Allocations for Lopez water are based on a percentage of the safe yield of the reservoir, 8,730 AFY. Of that amount, 4,530 AFY are for pipeline deliveries and 4,200 AFY are reserved for downstream releases. The dam, terminal reservoir, treatment and conveyance facilities are a part of Flood Control Zone 3.

There are two reports under development that relate to Zone 3 operations and water supply management. The Arroyo Grande Habitat Conservation Plan addresses downstream releases and coordination of reservoir storage operations with ecosystem needs and water rights. Additionally, a study is being conducted to consider the feasibility of modifying the dam to augment capacity of the reservoir.

The agencies that contract for Lopez water in Zone 3 include the communities of Oceano, Grover Beach, Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande, and County Service Area (CSA) 12 (including the Avila Beach area).

O.5.8 WPA 7 – Nipomo Mesa Management Area

The Nipomo Mesa Management Area (NMMA) is part of the Santa Maria Valley groundwater basin adjudicated area. Basin groundwater users in the NMMA include Golden State Water Company, Rural Water Company, Woodlands, ConocoPhillips, Nipomo Community Services District, Lucia Mar Unified School District, small public water systems (serving residential, industrial and nursery/greenhouse operations), and commercial, agricultural and residential overlying users.

The Nipomo Mesa area is currently in a certified Level of Severity III for water supply (resource capacity has been met or exceeded), as defined by San Luis Obispo County. The County's Level of Severity III led to the preparation of a water conservation ordinance (SLO County Code, Title 8 Chapter 8.92 became effective September 25, 2008).

The NMMA Technical Group has established a groundwater monitoring plan that uses coastal and inland key wells to assess the condition of the basin. The 2008 Annual Report indicates that a potentially severe water shortage condition exists. This condition calls for voluntary actions under a response plan, with recommendations to draft a Well Management Plan and a conceptual plan to identify specific actions to be taken (NMMA Technical Group, 2009). Efforts to better understand groundwater conditions in the NMMA continue, and in addition to the monitoring and reporting requirements described in the Stipulation, representatives from the NMMA frequently meet and coordinate with representatives from the Northern Cities Management Area and the SMVMA through the SMVMA's Technical Subcommittee.

O.5.9 WPA 4, 6, 13 and 14 - Nacimiento Water Supply Project

The Nacimiento Dam was constructed in 1957 by Monterey County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (now known as the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA)). The dam and reservoir continue to be operated by MCWRA. The lake has a capacity of 377,900 acre feet and a surface area of 5,727 acres. Water is collected from a 324 square mile watershed that is comprised of grazing lands and rugged wilderness.

In 1959, the District secured the rights to 17,500 AFY from Lake Nacimiento, with 1,750 AFY reserved for lakeside users and the Heritage Ranch Community Services District (CSD). After a long series of studies and negotiations, the Nacimiento Water Project (NWP) was initiated. The

NWP is the single largest project that the District has ever undertaken. The total project cost, including design, construction, construction management, environmental permitting, and right-of-way, is approximately \$176 million. Raw water deliveries recently began in 2010, with the City of San Luis Obispo taking first water deliveries at the Stenner Creek WTP.

Current NWP subscribers have contracted for a total of 9,655 AFY of the available 15,750 AFY, and include:

- WPA 4, CSA 10A (via exchange)
- WPA 6, City of San Luis Obispo
- WPA 13, Templeton CSD, Atascadero MWC
- WPA 14, City of Paso Robles

Heritage Ranch CSD's allocation of Nacimiento Reservoir water of 1,100 AFY is part of the 1,750 AFY reserved for County residents in the Lake Nacimiento area. It is sufficient to provide water for build-out demand, but the configuration of the delivery system (drawing from the river downstream of the Nacimiento Dam) leaves the Heritage Ranch CSD vulnerable to a cut off of its water supply in an extreme drought. Heritage Ranch CSD, under mandate by California Department of Public Health, is currently in the process of developing an emergency water supply project.

The County of San Luis Obispo and County of Monterey are currently in the process of reviewing water rights and operational issues of Nacimiento Dam under such drought conditions when the lake levels reach dead pool elevation (elevation at which water no longer can be released by gravity through the dam).

O.5.10 WPA 13 and 14 - Paso Robles Groundwater Management Plan and Basin Agreement

Paso Robles Groundwater Management Plan

The Paso Robles Basin Regional Groundwater Management Plan (Groundwater Management Plan) was prepared coincident with other ongoing studies to develop a stakeholder-driven voluntary plan to provide a framework for future groundwater management activities. This project was funded by a grant from the Local Groundwater Assistance Act of 2000 (California Water Code Section 10795 et seq.) to provide grants to public agencies to conduct groundwater studies or to carry out groundwater monitoring and management activities.

The purpose of the Groundwater Management Plan is to develop a common understanding of the groundwater issues and management opportunities in the Paso Robles Basin and identify and support projects such as conjunctive use, recycled wastewater, and demand management, which will improve groundwater management. Following development of the Groundwater Management Plan, the goal is to implement the activities identified in the plan to achieve the Basin Management Objectives that are identified in the plan.

The effects of these groundwater management activities are expected to result in changed groundwater conditions, which are monitored and reported to the agencies, interested parties, and stakeholders.

Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Agreement

The Agreement was entered into on August 19, 2005 by the District, several overlying landowners who have organized as the Paso Robles Imperiled Overlying Rights (PRIOR) group, and the City of Paso Robles and County Service Area No. 16 (collectively referred to as Municipal Users). Since 2005, additional overlying landowners and the San Miguel Community Services District, as a Municipal User, have also signed the Agreement. The Agreement requires the District to declare the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin to be in a state of overdraft, when appropriate, at which point a period of time is conferred to allow overlying landowners sufficient time to react to such a declaration. In the Agreement, the District serves as the technical advisor to both the Landowners and Municipal Users.

The Agreement recognizes the need for monitoring and appropriate management of the existing basin supplies and also recognizes that bringing additional water resources to the basin could delay or avoid entirely the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin becoming overdrafted in the future. The Agreement also recognizes signatories' desire to preserve their respective groundwater rights, notwithstanding implementation of any management measures, thereby providing the framework for cooperation among the Landowners and Municipal Users to participate in the development of a groundwater management plan.

