

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GCID Board Approves Development of Comprehensive Water Resource Plan

WILLOWS, CA - The Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District (GCID) Board of Directors unanimously voted at their regular board meeting today to pursue a Water Resource Plan (WRP). The Water Resource Plan process will result in a guiding strategy and policy document to inform decisions on how to carry out the District's mission and meet objectives.

In addition to approving the development of a WRP, the Board also voted to suspend the environmental review process for the Groundwater Supplemental Supply Project and corresponding Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

"The District has been successful in carrying out its mission and serving the landowners but in light of recent challenges and changes – years of drought, new board members, and changing regulatory environment – the timing seemed opportune to comprehensively reassess how the District approaches its operations through the WRP process," said Board President Don Bransford. "The WRP will ensure the District continues to provide reliable water supplies to the lands we serve and to protect those water resources, now and in the future."

As part of the development of the WRP, the District will focus its attention on identifying opportunities for improving water supply reliability and water management, both at the District and regional level. The intent of the WRP will be to address the following key issues:

- Protect GCID's water rights and supplies
- Keep GCID financially sound and develop affordable ways to finance improvements
- Address federal, state, and local water challenges
- Manage groundwater resources for the benefit of agricultural and environmental interests (Sustainable Groundwater Management Act)
- Protect and enhance the region's agricultural economic base
- Support and provide environmental benefits (salmon restoration, waterfowl and giant garter snake habitat)
- Improve/modernize system to meet changing long-term customer needs

The WRP will focus on the District's existing resources and anticipated needs within the context of local, regional, and statewide demands and policies. District landowners and water users will be participating and contributing in the process, as well as regional stakeholders and the public.

"The development of the WRP will allow for strategic and policy improvements that will assist the District in supporting the local and regional economy, while continuing to meet the District's mission," said GCID General Manager Thad Bettner.

Interested Parties

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Other benefits of developing a WRP include consolidating water management planning efforts and developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) as the District seeks to become a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). GCID has been involved in a variety of regional and local water management plans; the WRP will serve to be a single collective document that will incorporate past and present planning activities toward improving water management.

The WRP will also provide a basis of information, data, and modeling that can be incorporated into a District or regional GSP. GCID will work collaboratively with other Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, within the same groundwater basin, to develop the plan.

Comments on the Groundwater Supplemental Supply Project from the EIR process, as well as changing circumstances with regard to external factors in GCID's water supply, were taken into consideration when the Board made the decision to pursue the WRP.

The Board determined that even more vital than the Groundwater Supplemental Supply Project, at this time, was the need to pull together a comprehensive plan that assesses and addresses a multitude of potential projects and issues, providing clear guidance on what makes the most sense for the long term viability of the District. The environmental review process has been suspended pending the WRP process and guidance provided by that process on the project.

The WRP will be developed through a comprehensive process and will include opportunities for GCID water users, regional stakeholders, and the public to provide input. "We encourage all GCID water users, regional stakeholders and the public to participate as the process moves forward - addressing the region's water issues must be a collective effort," concluded Bransford.

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