

Merced Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Grant Proposal

Attachment 1: Authorization and Eligibility Requirements



Attachment 1 consists of the following items:

- ✓ **Authorizing Documentation**
Resolution adopted by the applicant's governing body designating an authorized representative to submit the application and execute an agreement with the State of California for an IRWM Implementation Grant.
- ✓ **Eligible Applicant Documentation**
Written statement containing information related to applicant's status as a local public agency, its authority to enter into a grant agreement with the State of California and agreements among partner agencies that ensure performance of the proposal and tracking of funds.
- ✓ **GWMP Compliance**
Identification of projects in the proposal that involve any groundwater projects or other projects that directly affect groundwater levels or quality and the agencies that will implement such projects.
- ✓ **Progress on Meeting Current IRWM Plan Standards**
Overview of Selected IRWM Plan Standards Table to demonstrate that the region will adopt and IRWM Plan that meets the IRWM Plan Standards.
- ✓ **Project Consistency with an IRWM Plan**
Description of how the proposed projects are consistent with an IRWM Plan that will be adopted prior to the award contract date.

Authorizing Documentation

Resolution 2013-03 was adopted by the Merced Irrigation District (MID) Board of Directors on February 19, 2013 and authorizes Merced Irrigation District (MID) to submit this *Merced IRWM Proposition 84 Implementation Grant Proposal* and execute an agreement with the State of California for IRWM implementation activities (see Appendix 1-1).

Eligible Applicant Documentation

This proposal is being submitted by MID on behalf of the following agencies and non-profit organizations:

- County of Merced – Black Rascal Flood Control Project
- Planada Community Services District – Planada Community Services District Water Conservation Project
- Merced Irrigation District – El Nido Area Recharge Project



- East Merced Resources Conservation District – Merced River Education and Enhancement Program: Lower Merced River Stewardship Project
- UC Merced – Merced River Education and Enhancement Project: Merced Region Climate Change Program
- Merced Irrigation District – Merced River Education and Enhancement Program: Lower Merced River Recreational Boating Public Access

Merced Irrigation District is a Special District and therefore qualifies as an eligible “local public agency” as defined in Appendix B of the 2012 Guidelines, and has legal authority to enter into a grant with the State of California. Merced Irrigation District has successfully implemented many projects funded by Department of Water Resources grant programs. A letter from MID explaining the agency’s eligibility is included in Appendix 1-2.

MID will have overall responsibility for executing and administering the Proposition 84 grant agreement; however, prior to execution of a contract with DWR, MID will execute agreements with each of the project proponents to ensure performance of the proposal and tracking of funds.

GWMP Compliance

Two the projects in the proposal – Planada Community Services District Water Conservation Project and El Nido Area Recharge Project – directly affect groundwater levels or quality:

- Planada Community Services District Water Conservation Project – This project will be implemented by Planada Community Services District. It will employ water conservation measures that will reduce pumping from the groundwater basin, which has effects on both groundwater levels and quality.
- El Nido Area Recharge Project – This project will be implemented by MID. The project is designed to improve groundwater recharge in the El Nido area through in-lieu and direct groundwater recharge in an effort to increase groundwater levels. It will also improve groundwater quality, as the quality of the surface water is superior to existing groundwater.

The project proponents for these two projects have completed the Certification for Groundwater Management Plan Compliance form indicating their participation or consent to be subject to the *Merced Groundwater Basin Groundwater Management Plan 2008 Update*, which meets the requirements of CWC§10753.7. Original copies of these certifications are included as part of Attachment 11 and reproductions are included in Appendix 1-3.



The Black Rascal Flood Control Project will complete environmental documentation and preliminary design for a detention basin on the Black Rascal watershed. This detention basin will be used primarily for flood control but will also be used as a regulating reservoir during MID's irrigation season. Eventual implementation of the preferred alternative will indirectly address groundwater levels by providing additional surface water deliveries to agricultural users. Because the project does not directly affect the groundwater basin, it does not require GWMP compliance in accordance with IRWM Program Guidelines. Similarly, the Merced River Education and Enhancement Program will include outreach to landowners focused on reducing water quality impacts associated with agricultural drainage. While implementation of the management practices described through this education program may result in improved water quality of agricultural drainage, these benefits would result from actions implemented outside of the project scope. As such, the project does not require GWMP compliance in accordance with IRWM Program Guidelines.

Progress on Meeting Current IRWM Plan Standards

The Merced Region is in the process of developing its first Merced IRWM Plan (MIRWMP). The adopted MIRWMP will meet the IRWM Plan Standards contained in Appendix C of the 2012 Guidelines.

Table 1-1 provides responses to the required Overview of Selected IRWM Plan Standards, Specific Standard Questions. Because the region is in the process of developing its first MIRWMP, questions related to changes between the current IRWM Plan and the Updated IRWM Plan are not applicable. Information related to the region's efforts in addressing the applicable IRWM Plan Standards are provided in the responses, presented in Table 1-1.



Table 1-1 Overview of Selected IRWM Plan Standards

Standard	Responses to Specific Standard Questions
Governance	<p>As with the rest of the MIRWMP, the governance structure is still in draft form at this time and subject to change. However, due to the inclusive and balanced nature of the currently-proposed governance structure, it is not anticipated that it will be substantially altered from the current draft.</p> <p>The Merced IRWM planning effort is being led by an interim Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) comprised of the City of Merced, County of Merced, and MID. The RWMG is advised by a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), which represents varying water management interests in the region.</p> <p>The proposed long-term governance structure consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A RWMG, including the City of Merced, County of Merced, MID, City of Livingston, and City of Atwater that is responsible for overall direction, funding and approval for the IRWM planning process. • A Policy Committee, comprised of representatives from each of the RWMG governing bodies, tasked with maintaining communication with the RWMG governing bodies and evaluating potential future changes to the governance structure. • A Management Committee comprised of staff from each RWMG agency, responsible for managing the day-to-day business of the IRWM planning program. • A RAC that reviews regional water management issues and needs, plans, projects and work products from the planning process • Workgroups that are comprised of RAC members and / or area experts from throughout the region assembled to address and advise the RAC on specific IRWM planning issues on an as-needed basis.
Region Description	<p>The boundaries of the Merced Region as originally proposed by the Merced Area Groundwater Pool Interests (MAGPI) in the Region Acceptance Process (RAP) coincided with the MAGPI boundary, and this was the region described within the RAP application. The RAP application also identified the Dry Creek watershed as an area of interest outside the MAGPI boundary. The Merced Region boundary that was subsequently approved by DWR, and is described in the draft MIRWMP Region Description section, includes the MAGPI boundary plus the Dry Creek watershed.</p> <p>The Region Description, currently in draft form, builds upon the description that was provided in the RAP. Drawing from a wide variety of local water plans and studies as well as special technical studies developed in parallel with MIRWMP development, the MIRWMP Region Description establishes a planning baseline for water resources management throughout the region.</p>



Standard	Responses to Specific Standard Questions
Objectives	<p>The RAC identified twelve high priority objectives that address regional water management issues in the Merced Region, and through a prioritization process, identified three of these objectives as the highest priority objectives. The RAC also identified performance measures associated with each objective that will serve as benchmarks for measuring the region’s progress towards achieving each objective. The objectives and performance measures have been reviewed with stakeholders outside of the RAC through a series of public workshops, and the language of the objectives and performance measures incorporated comments received at these workshops.</p> <p>The objectives and performance measures are described in the Objectives section of the MIRWMP, which is currently in draft form. The objectives are not expected to change from the current draft objectives.</p>
Resource Management Strategies	<p>The RWMG and RAC considered each of the resource management strategies (RMS) from the <i>California Water Plan, Update 2009</i> for inclusion in the MIRWMP. Through their review of the RMS, the RWMG and RAC determined that not all are appropriate for meeting the Region’s IRWM plan objectives. The RMS determined to be inappropriate for the Region included: conveyance-Delta, desalination, precipitation enhancement, surface storage-CALFED, fog collection, dewvaporation or atmospheric pressure desalination, and waterbag transport/storage technology.</p> <p>The process for reviewing RMS and determining appropriate RMS for the Merced region is described in the Resource Management Strategies section of the MIRWMP, which is currently in draft form. The Resource Management Strategies being considered for implementation in the region are not expected to change substantially from those identified in the current draft section.</p>



Standard	Responses to Specific Standard Questions
Integration	<p>The RWMG is committed to integration in both the planning process and project formulation and implementation and recognizes that integration is a fundamental component of IRWM planning. Several types of integration being implemented in the region are described below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder/Institutional Integration – The formation of the RAC and ongoing public outreach efforts have enabled diverse groups of stakeholders to participate in all levels of the IRWM planning effort. The RAC, which represents a broad cross-section of stakeholders in the Merced Region, provides input to the RWMG on a monthly basis through regularly-scheduled meetings. Following adoption of the MIRWMP, a reformulated RAC will continue to provide input to the RWMG. • Resource Integration – Resource integration has been encouraged through the MIRWMP project prioritization process, which prioritizes projects that include multiple RMSs and involve multiple project sponsors. • Project Implementation Integration – The Merced IRWM planning process has led to project implementation integration. Following the formal Call for Projects, the RAC formed a workgroup to review the proposed projects and identify opportunities for coordination implementation. The Merced River Education and Enhancement Program, which is included in this proposal, is a prime example of project integration. In addition, the MIRWMP project database is designed to allow public access and easy tracking of MIRWMP projects, and encourages collaboration and integration among project proponents. <p>Stakeholder / Institutional Integration will be described in the Stakeholder Involvement section, which has not been drafted. Resource Integration is discussed in the draft Resource Management Strategies section. Project Implementation Integration is discussed in the Project Review Process section, which is currently in draft form.</p>
Project Review Process	<p>The MIRWMP project prioritization process includes a criterion that scores projects on their ability to assist the region in adapting to effects of climate change (i.e. addressing regional vulnerabilities) or mitigating effects (e.g. reducing greenhouse gas emissions). The RAC included this criterion specifically to address the following two review factors from the 2012 Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of the project in adapting to the effects of climate change • Contribution of the project in reducing GHG emissions as compared to project alternatives <p>This and other criteria used for project prioritization are discussed in the Project Review Process section, which is currently in draft form.</p>



Standard	Responses to Specific Standard Questions
Technical Analysis	<p>Five major data gaps were identified at the outset of the Merced IRWM planning process. Each of these data gaps is being addressed through a specific technical study being completed in parallel with the MIRWMP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Conservation – This study evaluates the stresses and forces that play a role in water supply and demand in the basin and identifies opportunities for enhanced water conservation. • Flood Management – This study identifies measures to mitigate flooding risk through implementation of integrated multi-benefit flood management programs and develops a vision for a “FloodSafe” region. • Groundwater Recharge – This study compiles a series of relevant data layers using GIS modeling techniques to identify and ranks potential sites based on projected suitability for groundwater recharge. • Salt and Nutrient – This study summarizes existing groundwater quality throughout the region, identifies water quality data gaps, and lays the foundation for developing a regional Salt and Nutrient Management Plan in the future. • Climate Change – This study identifies the region’s climate change vulnerabilities and the key indicators of potential vulnerability. It also prioritizes vulnerable resources and presents a plan for addressing climate change. <p>The Technical Studies, currently in draft form, will be provided as appendices to the MIRWMP, and relevant information from each study will be incorporated throughout the MIRWMP document. In addition, the Technical Analysis section will identify additional data gaps to be filled and monitoring needed to address these gaps.</p>
Relation to Local Water Use Planning	<p>The MIRWMP is being developed based on the most recent local water use planning information available in the region, consistent with those in use at the local level. This is described in the Relation to Local Water Planning section of the MIRWMP, currently in draft form.</p>
Relation to Local Land Use Planning	<p>The MIRWMP is being developed based on the most recent local land use planning information available in the region, consistent with those used at the local level. This is described in the Relation to Local Land Use Planning section of the MIRWMP, currently in draft form.</p>



Standard	Responses to Specific Standard Questions
Stakeholder Involvement	<p>The Merced Region’s successful stakeholder involvement process has included targeted outreach to the multiple disadvantaged communities of the Merced Region. Public workshops have been moved throughout the region, targeting disadvantaged community venues, and all RAC meetings are publically noticed and open to the public. The workshops have been advertised through multiple outlets including public service announcements, newspaper advertisements, web postings and e-mail distribution lists, and personal invitations. In addition, a new, user-friendly MIRWMP webpage was developed and has been kept up-to-date with all project-related documents, materials, announcements, and updates.</p> <p>Stakeholder involvement will remain a priority for ongoing IRWM planning and implementation. The RWMG will continue to host public workshops at critical junctures in the program (e.g. plan updates, calls for projects), and news and events related to the program will continue to be posted on the Merced IRWMP website (www.mercedirwmp.org) as well as the RWMG partner agencies’ websites. Additionally, following adoption of the MIRWMP, the RAC will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to provide guidance on upcoming IRWM planning and funding activities; these meetings will continue to be publically noticed and open to any interested parties.</p> <p>Stakeholder Involvement will be described in the Stakeholder Involvement section of the MIRWMP, which has not yet been developed.</p>
Coordination	<p>The RWMG is coordinating its efforts on multiple levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination within the Merced Region – Through the IRWM planning process, the RWMG developed a MIRWMP website, www.mercedirwmp.org. Stakeholder and public meetings, meeting materials and documents developed through the planning process are posted on the website. The RWMG also implemented an online project database that is designed to foster collaboration between project proponents. • Adjacent Planning Efforts – Through the RAP application, the Merced Region demonstrated how water management within its boundaries is distinctly different than its neighboring regions. However, the RWMG recognizes that coordination with neighboring regions is still necessary and the region could benefit from additional coordination with adjacent RWMGs. RWMG and RAC members have coordinated with adjacent IRWM Planning efforts throughout development of the MIRWMP, and will continue to do so following adoption. • Coordination with Agencies – Local agencies important to the implementation of projects (e.g. the County of Merced) are engaged in the planning process. Coordination with State and federal agencies has mainly occurred on a local, project-specific basis. The Merced Region has identified the need for a streamlined permitting process for environmental enhancement projects which requires improved coordination with State and federal agencies at the regional level. <p>Coordination will be described in the Coordination section of the MIRWMP, which has not yet been developed.</p>



Standard	Responses to Specific Standard Questions
Climate Change	<p>The MIRWMP contains a climate change vulnerability assessment that is equivalent to the qualitative check list assessment in the Climate Change Handbook for Regional Water Planning. The Merced Region’s vulnerabilities to anticipated climate changes were prioritized as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Supply/Water Quality 2. Flood Management 3. Hydropower 4. Water Demand 5. Ecosystem and Habitat <p>The <i>Climate Change Impacts on Merced County and Proposed Adaptations and Mitigation Strategies</i> study that was conducted as part of the IRWM planning process includes a plan for further data gathering. The plan provides a list of websites with statewide, national and international data that should be reviewed as part of future plan updates to ensure that the MIRWMP adequately addresses prioritized climate change vulnerabilities.</p> <p>The <i>Climate Change Impacts on Merced County and Proposed Adaptations and Mitigation Strategies</i> study will be included with the MIRWMP as an appendix, and salient information will be included in the Climate Change chapter and throughout the MIRWMP.</p>

Project Consistency with an IRWM Plan

The projects included in this proposal were all prioritized as part of the MIRWMP project prioritization process. The prioritization process is a two-step process, which consists of an initial screening and then project scoring. The screening step assesses whether a project submitted for inclusion in the MIRWMP provides a benefit to the Merced Region and whether it meets one or more of the MIRWMP objectives. Each of the projects in this proposal passed the screening phase and was assessed through the prioritization process developed by the RAC and detailed in the draft Project Review Process section of the MIRWMP.

The MIRWMP project list is designed to be a living document, meaning that it is always open for new project submissions and updates. When the MIRWMP is adopted, the project database which houses the project list will be adopted as the MIRWMP project list. Given this stipulation, the MIRWMP will not require re-adoption following changes to the project list. The project database, which provides stakeholders with access to project information based on username/login functionality, can be accessed at <http://irwm.rmewater.com/merced>.

Merced Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Grant Proposal



Appendix 1-1

Authorizing Documentation

MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 2013-03

AUTHORIZATION TO PURSUE AND EXECUTE DOCUMENTS RELATED TO MERCED INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

WHEREAS, the Merced Irrigation District ("MID") is one of three agencies enabled by SB 1672 to initiate an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan ("IRWMP"); and

WHEREAS, a partnership of three agencies comprised of MID, Merced County, and the City of Merced were authorized by the Merced Area Group Interests ("MAGPI") to form the Merced Water Group ("Merced Group") for the Merced IRWMP; and

WHEREAS, the Merced IRWMP Region ("Merced Region") is comprised of the hydrologic area that includes the entire Merced Groundwater Basin area in addition to the watershed area north of the Merced River watershed and contiguous to the Merced Groundwater Basin; and

WHEREAS, the MID Board of Directors (the "Board") accepted the Merced Group nomination to be the leading agency representing the Merced Region, and also authorized staff to enter into contract for facilitating the IRWMP grant with RMC (see MID Resolution No. 2011-30); and

WHEREAS, the Merced Region received approval from DWR for its region designation, and later applied for and received a grant to prepare a Regional Water Management Plan, funded by the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 ("Prop 84"); and

WHEREAS, the Board approved members of the Regional Advisory Committee ("RAC") authorized with the help of stakeholders to identify and prioritize Merced Region goals and projects; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the multi-benefits of the Merced IRWMP and supports such projects for local and statewide resource benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Merced Region has identified projects that qualify for Prop 84 grant funding, and intends to submit a competitive implementation grant proposal for \$2.9 M to fund those projects; and

WHEREAS, Merced Region will compete with a number of regions for a total of \$8.3 M for this funding cycle; and

WHEREAS, the grant application will cost a maximum of \$100,000 to be paid by the projects' proponents on a pro-rata basis, including MID pro-rata cost share will be approximately \$45,000; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the facts contained in the recitals above are true and correct, and the Board so finds and determines.

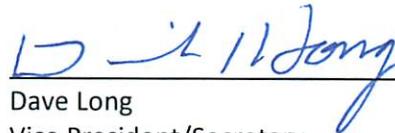
FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Directors of the Merced Irrigation District, hereby authorizes the General Manager or his designee to pursue, prepare, execute and submit necessary documents to the California Department of Water Resources with the intent of obtaining an IRWMP implementation grant on behalf of the Merced Region, and the General Manager or his designee is further authorized to and to take such additional actions as may be necessary or convenient to carry out and implement the intent of this Resolution such as executing necessary agreements with the California Department of Water Resources to prepare, submit, and manage funds for the implementation of the proposed projects if the IRWMP grant applications are successful.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 19th day of February 2013, by the Board of Directors of the Merced Irrigation District, by the following vote:

Ayes:	Directors: Pellissier, Long, Gonzalves, Koehn, Pimentel
Noes:	Directors:
Abstain:	Directors:
Absent:	Directors:



Tim Pellissier
President
Merced Irrigation District



Dave Long
Vice President/Secretary
Merced Irrigation District

Merced Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Grant Proposal



Appendix 1-2

Eligible Applicant Documentation



March 22, 2013

California Department of Water Resources
Division of Integrated Regional Water Management
Financial Assistance Branch
1416 9th Street, Room 338
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Zaffar Eusuff

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Merced Region, Merced Irrigation District (MID) is pleased to submit the Merced Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Implementation Grant Application for Round 2 of the IRWM Implementation Grants funded by Proposition 84.

This letter certifies that MID is a special district and is therefore qualified as a local public agency, as defined in Appendix B of the 2012 IRWM Grant Program Guidelines.

MID was formed in 1919 pursuant to the Irrigation District Law contained in the California Water Code §§20500 et. seq., and under the same provisions has the legal authority to enter into a grant agreement with the State as California. MID has successfully implemented many projects funded by the Department of Water Resources.

Prior to execution of a contract with DWR, MID will execute agreements with each of the project proponents to ensure performance of the proposal and tracking of funds

Thank you for your consideration of the Merced Region IRWM Implementation Grant Application. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (209) 722-5761.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hicham Eltal".

Hicham Eltal

Deputy General Manager, Water Supply/Rights

Merced Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Grant Proposal



Appendix 1-3 GWMP Compliance

