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**Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Will Benefit Local Communities
*\$6.5 Million in State Funding to Help Support Communities with Substantial Water Challenges***

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY, CA -- The Greater San Joaquin County Regional Water Coordinating Committee (GSJCRWCC), a diverse group of regional water management stakeholders, announced that it adopted a significant update to the 2014 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan covering most of San Joaquin County ([2020 IRWMP Addendum](#)). Over \$6.5 million in state grant funding will be available to the GSJCRWCC region to support water management projects identified in the IRWMP which meet California Department of Water Resources (DWR) requirements.

“The San Joaquin region achieved a huge milestone with the adoption of the 2020 IRWMP Addendum,” said John Holbrook, Chairman of the GSJCRWCC. “This comprehensive plan provides a road map for future water resource management decisions and allows the region to receive critical funding, especially for disadvantaged communities.”

San Joaquin County, along with most of the State, is faced with the critical challenge of increasingly scarce water resources. Limited surface water supplies from major rivers and the overuse of groundwater supplies, combined with the serious impacts of climate change has increased the magnitude of this challenge. Without an integrated water plan in place, the region could face limited water supplies, substandard water quality and a deteriorating natural environment.

The practice of IRWM is rooted in the principle of regional responsibility, recognizing that local and regional water managers and other stakeholders, working together in a cooperative, open, and transparent manner, are best positioned to manage water resources in their regions. Issues including limited groundwater and surface water supplies, drought, flooding, climate change, water quality, environmental degradation, aging infrastructure, economic constraints, recreation, and cultural considerations are addressed through coordinated and integrated actions.

“There were so many regional partners involved in this extraordinary effort who came together in a collaborative spirit to support priorities that will advance water supply reliability, water recycling, water conservation, water quality improvement, stormwater capture, flood management and environmental and habitat protection. It was an enormous undertaking that was indicative of the progress that can occur when diverse partners join forces and collaborate,” said Director of the San Joaquin County Public Works Department, Kris Balaji.

Throughout the IRWM planning process, public participation and transparency were central to plan development. In a series of more than twelve monthly and special public meetings, the GSJCRWCC sought stakeholder input and opportunities to integrate a variety of water management strategies with a special emphasis on disadvantaged communities (DAC). This effort enabled under-represented and disadvantaged community participation in the

IRWMP process and has allowed them to provide recommendations on which DAC projects get funded through the Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program.

One of the two projects approved by the GSJCRWCC and DWR is a new generator for the Rancho San Joaquin Maintenance District, which provides water service to 52 residential properties. The proposed \$400,000 community project will install a new emergency generator at one of the well pumps to provide continued water service during power outages.

Supervisor Tom Patti, Chair of the San Joaquin Board of Supervisors whose district represents the Rancho San Joaquin Maintenance District project said, "San Joaquin County is committed to the delivery of safe and affordable drinking water to all of its residents. The Rancho San Joaquin Maintenance District project is particularly important because there is currently no backup or auxiliary power for the water system and the residents regularly lose drinking water during the duration of a power outage. This critical generator will keep water flowing into the homes of this disadvantaged community and help serve them during a time of great need."

The second project approved by the GSJCRWCC, but still pending DWR review, is a \$1.4 million improvement project to improve water quality, increase fire protection and enhance the stormwater drainage system in the disadvantaged community of Thornton. The area's water system has levels of manganese, which has caused discolored and odorous water. The proposed water construction project will improve water movement within the system and is expected to result in increased water quality and will significantly reduce the need for maintenance crews to flush the system, which will in turn, decrease system operating costs. Additionally, the project will provide fire protection benefits to the community.

"The Thornton water system project will tremendously benefit multiple stakeholders in the community, including residential housing, commercial properties, a Housing Authority of San Joaquin development that provides water to 82 low-income family units and a Head Start preschool," said San Joaquin County Supervisor Chuck Winn. "The project is also making water available to properties previously unable to connect to the system, which could promote economic development. It is the only approach identified to date that will improve system water quality while avoiding significant increases in operating costs, which is an especially important consideration for an economically challenged community like Thornton."

In addition to Supervisor Winn and the Thornton Rural Fire Protection District Chairman Jim Allan, more than 50 individuals from the community signed letters advocating for the much-needed project. Work on the Thornton water and stormwater drainage systems can begin immediately after final review by DWR.

More information about the [2020 IRWMP Addendum](#) and the role of the GSJCRWCC can be found at: www.esjirwm.org.

The GSJCRWCC includes representatives from San Joaquin County, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Stockton Environmental Justice, Central Delta Water Agency, City of Lodi, North San Joaquin Water Conservation District, Reclamation District No. 2074 (Brookside), Stockton East Water District, Delta-Sierra Group (Sierra Club), South Delta Water Agency, South San Joaquin Irrigation District and the City of Stockton. Collaboration among the GSJCRWCC member agencies has strengthened the potential for broad public support for water management activities as well as the ability to leverage critical local, state, and federal dollars in order to fund water management projects.

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