



Water Storage Investment Program: Kern Fan Groundwater Storage Project Update

Introduction

The California Water Commission (Commission) administers the Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) to fund the public benefits associated with water storage projects using funds from the Proposition 1 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1). Currently, six projects have a WSIP maximum conditional eligibility determination (MCED), which is the amount of Proposition 1 funding potentially available to a given project.

Commission staff provided an update on the WSIP projects at the November 2023 meeting. During that meeting, Commissioners asked that representatives from the Groundwater Banking Joint Powers Association (GWJPA), the project proponent for the Kern Fan Groundwater Storage Project (Kern Fan Project), provide an update at an upcoming meeting. The Kern Fan Project is a groundwater storage project and will be operated to provide emergency water supply benefits and ecosystem benefits including storing water for pulse flows on the Feather River as well as intermittent wetland habitat onsite. The project is located in Kern County, west of Bakersfield.

Background

Through the WSIP, the Commission will invest nearly \$2.6 billion in the public benefits of water storage projects, consistent with the requirements of Proposition 1, Chapter 8. In July 2018, the Commission made MCED decisions that set the amount of Proposition 1 funding potentially available to each project. One project received a final award at the June 2023 Commission meeting. The six remaining WSIP applicants successfully met the feasibility deadline and are working to complete the remaining statutory requirements. These include obtaining permits and completing environmental documents, executing contracts for the administration of public benefits, and completing contracts for non-public benefit cost share. Once these requirements are complete, each WSIP applicant will return to the Commission for a final award hearing.

This agenda item implements Goal Four of the Commission’s Strategic Plan, which calls on the Commission to carry out its statutory responsibilities for WSIP.

Meeting Overview

At the meeting, representatives from the GWJPA will provide a status of the project.

This is an informational item.

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Meeting Date: April 17, 2024

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Contact

Amy Young

Program Manager

California Water Commission

(916) 882-2399