

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles have been formulated to guide the Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's (MSGSA) development of (1) a probable groundwater allocation approach, and (2) a recharge credit framework. Decisions about policies and procedures will utilize these principles to implement the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) projects and management actions to achieve sustainability objectives including increasing groundwater levels, maintaining or improving recent historical water quality parameters, and eliminating subsidence.

- **Strive for Certainty:** support long-term planning and business decisions by minimizing the potential for significant changes to policies and procedures
- **Support Flexibility:** design policies to enable water users to adapt their operations as best functions for their circumstances
- **Allow for Adaptability:** allow for periodic adjustments to reflect changing conditions and improved understanding, while minimizing disruptions to certainty.
- **Promote Equality:** ensure policies maintain consistent opportunities for all water users while recognizing unique hydrogeologic conditions throughout the service area
- **Target Simplicity:** create policies that are easy for users to understand and implement, and for the MSGSA to administer
- **Recognize Spatial Disparity:** allow for variances in policies that reflect differing hydrogeologic and other baseline conditions throughout the MSGSA service area to assure projects and management actions achieve tangible benefits toward GSP sustainability objectives.
- **Protect Domestic Water Availability:** design policies to assure projects and management actions either do not increase, or mitigate, risks to domestic well water supplies
- **Facilitate Economic Stability:** optimize the economic benefits of irrigated agriculture to the citizens of Merced County during the transition to lower groundwater use.