



Board Agenda Item 56

DATE: October 21, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Amendment No. I to Agreement with Luhdorff and Scalmanini Consulting Engineers, Inc.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute Amendment I to Agreement No. 24-133 with Luhdorff and Scalmanini Consulting Engineers, Inc. for consulting services related to Sustainable Groundwater Management Act compliance, effective upon execution with no change to the term of March 1, 2023, through February 28, 2028, and increasing the maximum compensation by \$200,000 to a total of \$499,840.

Approval of the recommended action will increase the maximum compensation to allow Luhdorff and Scalmanini Consulting Engineers, Inc. (LSCE) to continue to provide Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation services for Fresno County Management Areas A and B (FCMAB). This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If your Board does not approve the recommended action, it would likely result in increased costs and delay implementation of the approved GSP as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The maximum cost of the recommended amendment is \$499,840. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in the County Administrative Office's Org 2540 FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget and will be included subsequent budgets to cover the tasks expected to be completed in the future.

DISCUSSION:

SGMA provides for the establishment of local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to manage groundwater sustainability within groundwater subbasins defined by the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Each GSA was required to develop and implement, a GSP to ensure a sustainable yield of groundwater, without causing undesirable results. Failure to comply with that requirement could result in the State asserting its power to manage local groundwater resources.

The County is the GSA for two areas designated as FCMAB in the Delta-Mendota Groundwater Subbasin (Subbasin) as approved by the Board on May 2, 2017, to provide sustainable groundwater management and to serve as the exclusive GSA in those portions of the Subbasin.

Originally six GSPs were developed to cover the Subbasin and submitted for approval by the required date of January 31, 2020. After an approximately two-year review, DWR determined that the coordinated GSP in the Subbasin were incomplete and required that the GSPs be revised to address certain actions by July 20, 2022. The amended GSPs were re-submitted in a timely manner; however, the revised GSPs were deemed inadequate under SGMA by DWR on March 2, 2023. Due to DWR's inadequate determination of the GSP, it is understood that under SGMA, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) could have intervened and exercised jurisdiction over the affected subbasin.

In lieu of the possible intervention by the SWRCB, the GSAs agreed to adopt one GSP for the Subbasin instead of the multiple plans that were previously submitted. The efforts to address the deficiencies and develop the single GSP were led by EKI Environment and Water, Inc (EKI). LSCE's role is to provide technical support to EKI, necessary to address the identified deficiencies and to continue with GSP implementation on behalf of FCMAB. LSCE has an understanding of the geology and hydrogeology (conceptual model) of FCMAB, as well as surrounding areas that will be utilized in the single GSP efforts on behalf of the County, which includes information and data used to develop a comprehensive hydrogeologic conceptual model in the vicinity of FCMAB. The County's portion of the single GSP was approved by your Board on September 10, 2024, and re-submitted for review by the State. GSP implementation is ongoing while we wait for a determination of adequacy by SWRCB.

The Department of Public Works and Planning (Department) previously negotiated a contract with LSCE at fair and reasonable costs, which was approved by the Board on March 19, 2024. The agreement is intended to cover the period necessary to address any deficiencies in the GSP, if any, that are identified by SWRCB in its assessment of the GSP, and GSP implementation. LSCE has been reimbursed \$267,812.19, leaving an agreement balance of \$32,027.71.

The recommended amendment will increase maximum compensation to allow the County to continue to utilize LSCE to provide technical support for the implementation of the Pumping Reduction Plan (PRP), applicable to all production wells and required pursuant to Section 16.1.1 of the GSP. Section 16.1.1 requires the PRP to include the following six required components:

1. Monitoring and Data Collection Plan
2. Overdraft Mitigation Plan
3. Groundwater Level Minimum Threshold Avoidance Plan
4. Water Quality Minimum Threshold Exceedance Plan
5. Subsidence Avoidance Plan
6. Groundwater Allocation Backstop

As part of the PRP, each GSA was required to commit to adopting a Monitoring and Data Collection Plan that includes policies for mandatory well registration, metering, groundwater pumping measurement and reporting at all non de minimis wells by October 2024. Implementation of the Monitoring and Data Collection Plan began in January 2025, and complete implementation of meters, registration, monitoring and reporting requirements must begin no later than January 1, 2026, to maintain compliance with the requirements of the PRP as required by SGMA.

The recommended increase to the amendment will also allow for services to assist with a long-term SGMA Assessment Project (Project), aimed at supporting the development of a long-term funding source for the implementation of SGMA within the Subbasin. LSCE will work with the FCMAB to establish an assessment in accordance with SGMA legislation and Proposition 218 protocols, with the Project goal of establishing a sustainable long-term FCMAB SGMA Fee.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #6, September 10, 2024
BAI #51, March 19, 2024

BAI #14, July 12, 2022
BAI #5, January 7, 2020
BAI #45, August 2018
BAI #11, May 2, 2017

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Amendment I to Service Agreement

CAO ANALYST:

Maria Valencia