

## 9 ATTACHMENT 6 – Program Preferences

*Submit a discussion on how the Proposal assists in meeting the Program Preference(s) described in Section II.F of the 2015 IRWM Guidelines. The discussion must identify the specific Program Preference(s) and the project that will meet the listed preference(s); also discuss the level of certainty that the Proposal will meet the Program Preference(s) and the breadth and magnitude to which the Program Preference(s) will be met. In particular, describe any issues related to the Human Right to Water Policy and the IRWM's effort to address the goal of the Human Right to Water Policy. For those proposals that include projects that assist in meeting the Human Right to Water goals, please describe how the proposed project(s) accomplishes this. In addition, if applicable, describe the critical water supply and or water quality needs of the DACs you have identified. This attachment will be used to score question #5 and, in the event of a tie, will also be used to score the Program Preferences tie-breaker criterion. Discussion must be limited to not more than one page per project using a minimum 10-point type font.*

Projects included in this Proposal match several Statewide Priorities and help address the Human Right to Water Policy for members within the Kaweah River Basin IRWM Region.

### 9.1 Conjunctive Exchange Program

The Program is consistent with Program Preferences and Statewide Priorities such as: CALFED Bay-Delta Objectives, Drought Preparedness, Use and Reuse Water More Efficiently, and Climate Change Response.

#### 9.1.1 CALFED Bay-Delta Program Objective: Water Supply Reliability

As discussed in Attachment 2, the Program will recharge an average of 8,500 acre-feet per year, making groundwater supplies more reliable in the Kaweah River Basin Region. This Program develops new recharge capacity and more wet-year water supplies historically not available to the region. Increasing the amount of groundwater recharge and the available groundwater recharge capacity is vital to the critically overdrafted Kaweah River Basin Region that relies heavily on the groundwater supply.

#### 9.1.2 Drought Preparedness

The Program helps address drought preparedness within TID and the Kaweah Region by increasing water conservation potential, reducing long-term groundwater overdraft, increasing the reliability of groundwater resources that will be relied on by growers during drought times, and increasing the region's and the District's ability to efficiently manage the groundwater basin. This program will increase the amount of surface water intentionally recharged by TID and thereby increase groundwater reliability. Surface water is only seasonally available to TID growers, making groundwater the only reliable source of water in the District. Therefore, TID is a conjunctive use district (conjunctively using surface and groundwater resources) and this Program will expand the District's conjunctive use efforts to be prepared for drought conditions through increased groundwater recharge and use of wet-year water supply. The increased groundwater supply would benefit districts and municipalities within the Kaweah Region during all year types. This improves the access to water use for all within the region, consistent with goals of the Human Right to Water Policy (HRW).

#### 9.1.3 Use and Reuse Water More Efficiently

This priority category includes projects implementing water use efficiency, conservation, and increased supply reliability. The Program implements all of these aspects by conserving surplus wet-year waters and converting them into a dependable groundwater supply that can be accessed by private wells in TID. Increased conservation comes from capturing of wet-year surface water that would otherwise be lost to non-

beneficial use. Uses that help the Kaweah Region maintain clean, affordable, and accessible water is a benefit to all users.

### **9.1.4 Climate Change Response**

This priority category states that desirable proposals include: advance and expand conjunctive management of multiple water supply sources and use and reuse water more efficiently (previously discussed). TID is a conjunctive use district managing surface water and groundwater supply sources to meet the needs of the local community. This Program aims to effectively manage both the local groundwater and the regional surface water supplies (Friant CVP, Kaweah River) to increase water supply reliability through a diversified supply. As the region experiences higher flows (early year flood events), the Program aims to capitalize on these by achieving more groundwater storage capacity and placing that water into groundwater storage. In dry years when surface water is scarce, landowners within the District can then use the groundwater as a reliable source to meet their needs. Increased groundwater reliability and levels matches directly with the HRW in an area extremely reliant on groundwater as it facilitates clean, affordable, and accessible water to all.

## **9.2 Well Abandonment Project**

The Well Abandonment Project (Project) is consistent with several Program Preferences and Statewide Priorities such as: Regional Project or Program, Address Critical Water Supply/Quality needs of DACs, Protect Surface Water and Groundwater Quality, and Ensure Equitable Distribution of Benefits.

### **9.2.1 Regional Project or Program**

The Project involves the County of Tulare, the Kaweah IRWM Group, and DACs within in the region. The partnership aims to help address a regional water quality issue by leveraging the resources that would not have been helpful otherwise.

### **9.2.2 CALFED Bay-Delta Program Objective: Water Supply Reliability**

As discussed in Attachment 2, the project will destroy approximately 100 abandoned wells in DACs and through the avoided potential risk of groundwater contamination will make groundwater supplies more reliable in the Kaweah River Basin Region.

### **9.2.3 Address Critical Water Supply/Quality Needs of DACs**

This Program Preference category includes projects that address water supply or quality needs of DACs. This Project has the ability to address both issues for DACs in the region. The Project primarily addresses water quality needs by properly abandoning unused wells that could act as conduits for contamination to reach groundwater, the primary water supply for Kaweah DACs. However, water supply issues (i.e. wells going dry) have been encountered due to ongoing drought conditions. Tulare County Ordinances state that unused wells must be properly abandoned prior to connecting with a water system or drilling a new well, which creates problems for disadvantaged communities and residents that cannot afford to perform these tasks even though the need for water is extreme. With proper abandonment through the Project, DACs may connect to a reliable water supply (Cal Water system or new well).

### **9.2.4 Protect Surface Water and Groundwater Quality**

The Project protects groundwater quality for the Kaweah Region. The California Water Code and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) both state that unused or abandoned wells can allow for the contamination to reach groundwater. The contamination can pose serious public health and economic problems. The Project aims to properly abandon 100 unused wells which will reduce the risk of contamination and thereby protect groundwater quality. Protecting groundwater quality will allow access to safe and clean water for beneficial use.

### **9.2.5 Ensure Equitable Distribution of Benefits**

This statewide priority category includes projects that equally distribute funds to all parties, including DACs and California Native American Tribes, of an IRWM Group. This Project directly meets this priority as funding would directly benefit multiple disadvantaged communities and residents that otherwise would not have the ability to fund such a project. The Project protects and potentially improves the quality of groundwater, which is a main supply source for drinking water in the region. Protecting groundwater helps to maintain a reliable source to provide residents safe and clean water.