

\$35 MILLION TO IMPROVE GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY EKI SUPPORTED TWO OF THE FOUR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

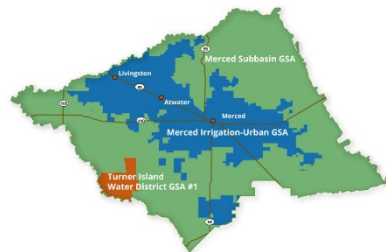
June 16, 2023: The California Department of Conservation’s [Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program](#) (MLRP) awarded \$35 million to regions that are adapting land use to improve sustainability of groundwater basins. Across Santa Cruz, Merced, Stanislaus, Kings, San Benito, Monterey, and Fresno counties, four regional organizations will receive grants to increase regional capacity to repurpose agricultural land, thereby reducing reliance on groundwater and increasing groundwater sustainability.

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/index/Pages/News/CA-Awards-35M-Four-Regions-Improve-Groundwater-Sustainability.aspx>

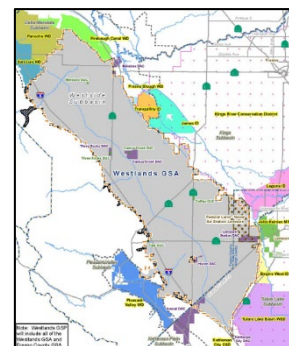
The MLRP received 10 applications totaling nearly \$85 million in requested funds this year that were more than double the \$40 million available for the program.

EKI assisted two of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) - **Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency** and the **Westlands Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency** with their successful grant applications.

Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency will use grant funding to develop and implement a Multibenefit Land Repurposing plan as part of its strategic approach to address groundwater overdraft in the Merced Subbasin. Two main elements of the MLRP plan will be the development of long-term land repurposing projects to promote groundwater sustainability in specific “hot spot” areas where groundwater sustainability indicators show the greatest need for reduction in groundwater pumping, and land repurposing in support of establishment of a wildlife habitat corridor between the Sierra Nevada foothills and the Merced National Wildlife Refuge. The GSA will work closely with its multiple partners and collaborators to identify, prioritize, permit, and implement projects; engage and inform stakeholders and communities in the basin; and build local capacity to ensure long-term success of the program. (Grant Amount Awarded: \$8.89 million)



Westlands Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency, along with 10 committed partners and collaborators, will expand land repurposing efforts in the Westside Subbasin. The Subbasin-wide land repurposing program will provide guidance on the best-suited repurposing strategies and locations, provide a platform for community involvement, and ultimately reduce reliance on groundwater. Implementation projects will focus on creation of multi-benefit recharge areas, transitioning irrigated land to dryland farming or non-irrigated rangeland in subsidence prone areas, facilitating renewable energy projects, creating or restoring wildlife habitat, and/or purchasing land and easements to support repurposing. (Grant Amount Awarded: \$8.89 million)



Our grant specialist Kristyn Lindhart (klindhart@ekiconsult.com) and the dedicated EKI Team can support your organization to secure grant dollars under future funding programs.