



MID Recognizes National Groundwater Awareness Week

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The Merced Irrigation District Board of Directors has passed a resolution of support recognizing national Groundwater Awareness Week.

“Groundwater is so important to our growers and our community at large,” said MID General Manager. “For years MID has been a leader studying local groundwater issues and seeking to address regional challenges we face in eastern Merced County.”

The vast majority of Merced Irrigation District’s water rights are associated with the water it stores and releases at Lake McClure. However, the District has a significant interest in the health and well-being of local groundwater. Since its inception, MID has operated as a “conjunctive-use” district: every year the District replenishes local groundwater with portion of the water it diverts from Lake McClure and withdraws it when needed during dryer years when the reservoir has insufficient supplies.

In 1999, the National Groundwater Association (NGWA) established the annual observance of Groundwater Awareness Week to highlight the importance of responsible development, management, and use of groundwater resources. To commemorate this, the NGWA declared the first full week of March, each year, should be known as Groundwater Awareness Week. The MID Board of Directors passed a resolution in support of Groundwater Awareness Week during its March 3 meeting.

MID is currently working to comply with a new state mandate to ensure groundwater basins are being sustainably managed. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (“SGMA”) was passed into law in 2014. It enabled local government to develop local plans to meet the state’s criteria for sustainability.

Accordingly, MID has joined with other local entities in eastern Merced County to establish the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA). In addition to MID, it consists of the cities of Merced, Atwater and Livingston. The agency also includes Winton Water and Sanitary District, Planada Community Services District, and Le Grand Community Services District

MIUGSA, in coordination with the other two Groundwater Sustainability Agencies in the region – the Merced Groundwater and Turner Island GSAs – is working to implement a local Groundwater Sustainability Plan developed along with the local sister sustainability agencies for the Merced Groundwater Subbasin.

The Merced Groundwater Subbasin is relied upon both by cities for domestic use and farmers for irrigation.

“Groundwater is a central tenant to our way of life in this region,” said Hicham Eltal, MID Deputy General Manager of Water Rights and Supply. “We will continue to do all we can to improve and protect this resource for current and future generations.”

To learn more, visit www.MIDGroundwater.org and www.MercedGroundwater.org.

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