



October 21, 2022

Dear MID Grower:

As you know, groundwater represents a significant water supply for much of the San Joaquin Valley, including Merced County and land within Merced Irrigation District. Without access to groundwater, many small family farms across the Valley, and within MID, would likely not be able to survive.

Like our surface water supplies, groundwater reserves are limited. The overuse of groundwater has resulted in a number of negative consequences, mainly dropping groundwater levels and decreased future water availability. The cumulative decline in groundwater reserves across California was a crucial factor leading to enactment of the state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in 2014.

SGMA required the creation of groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs), which are charged with developing long-term plans to manage local groundwater resources sustainably. As a grower within MID, your land is within the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA).

There is no doubt that sustainably managing groundwater will be demanding. Despite the challenges we will all face together in the next several years, MID growers are well positioned to adapt and thrive. That's because in addition to surface water supplies and their natural yield groundwater, MID growers can now benefit tremendously from MID's "Developed Water Supply." Generally, you can think of developed water as MID surface water in the ground, placed there by MID for use now and into the future as MID designates.

At its meeting on August 16, 2022, MID's Board of Directors took action to make this Developed Water Supply directly available to MID's growers for use within the District boundaries. With this supply now formally designated, all MID

growers will now have at least three tools, or “buckets of water,” to meet their farm-water needs. These tools, or “buckets” include:

1. MID surface water supplies, primarily from Lake McClure. Each year, MID’s Board determines surface water availability based on a variety of factors, including existing water storage and projected rainfall/snowfall.
2. Natural groundwater, allocated by MIUGSA. You should be aware that MIUGSA has allocated 3.3 acre feet per acre over the next three years, beginning in April 2023 and ending in December 2025. Growers can manage and use that allocation using their own discretion, using their own private well. It can be used all in one year or spread over the course of three years.
3. MID Developed Water Supply located in the local groundwater basin. Currently, MID adds and manages more than 121,000 acre feet of Developed Water every year in the local groundwater basin, in addition to reserves accumulated over the last several years. This Developed Water Supply is being made available to MID’s growers for use within the District boundaries to help them comply with SGMA. It can be used in conjunction with your own natural yield groundwater and with MID surface water supplies. MID is currently developing procedures to allow Growers to voluntarily subscribe to Developed Water.

We understand this may seem confusing. MID will be hosting several in-person workshops this November to provide information about SGMA, MID’s Developed Water Supply and options to comply with the State’s groundwater law that may impact your groundwater supply beginning in 2023. **It is vitally important you attend the meeting for your distribution area.** Please see attached invitational Overview of MID’s “Developed Water Supply” Program flyer for workshop details. For further information regarding SGMA, please feel free to visit MercedGroundwater.org (MIUGSA) or MercedSGMA.org.