



## MID recognizes National Groundwater Awareness Week

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The Merced Irrigation District Board of Directors has passed a resolution recognizing the first full week of March as National Groundwater Awareness Week.

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 February 7, 2023 meeting.

“Groundwater remains a leading resource and policy issue in our community,” said MID General Manager John Sweigard. “MID will continue to do its part to manage and protect our local groundwater.”

The majority of MID’s water rights are associated with the water it stores in Lake McClure on the Merced River. However, the District has a direct interest in the health and well-being of local groundwater. As a conjunctively managed district, each year MID recharges the local groundwater with a portion of the water it diverts from Lake McClure using porous, unlined canals and groundwater recharge basins. MID and its in-District customers can then use that “developed water supply” at later times.

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.

Since then, 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, MIUGSA 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 Subbasin and Turner Island GSAs – is working to implement a local Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Merced Groundwater Subbasin. That plan was developed by all three local sustainability agencies.

This year, the MID Board of Directors committed to ensuring a portion of its “Developed Water” – MID water placed in the ground for later use – can be used by MID growers to help comply with the requirements of SGMA.

“Groundwater will continue to be a crucial and central tenant to our way of life in this region,” said Hicham Eltal, MID Deputy General Manager of Water Rights and Supply. “MID remains committed to protecting this resource for current and future generations.”

To learn more, visit online at: [www.MIDGroundwater.org](http://www.MIDGroundwater.org) and [www.MercedGroundwater.org](http://www.MercedGroundwater.org).

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