

Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration

Project Title: 2012 Critical Year Groundwater Well Program

Project Location: Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District's service area within Glenn and Colusa Counties

Project Description: GCID has received a "critical water year" notification from the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) that the natural inflow to Shasta Reservoir is projected to fall short of the 3.2 million acre-feet during the 2011-2012 hydrologic year which is required for a normal water supply. If these dry conditions continue, it is likely that GCID will receive a 25% reduction (206,250 acre-feet) in Sacramento River Settlement Contract surface water supplies during the April 1 through October 31, 2012 irrigation season. This reduction in water supplies will have a direct negative effect on crop production and the landowners in GCID, including land irrigated for habitat and wildlife purposes. To alleviate any potential adverse effects of this shortage, GCID will implement its water shortage year allocation rules and regulations, implement extensive conservation measures, limit irrigation practices, and maximize the recapture and reuse of water supplies.

In addition, GCID will institute a groundwater pumping program (Program), i.e., the proposed project, to meet a portion of the water supply reduction utilizing GCID's five existing groundwater wells, as shown in Figure 2. This Program will make groundwater available for distribution to landowners within GCID who do not have sufficient allocations to irrigate their crops. GCID's five groundwater wells will produce a total of approximately 12,000 acre-feet of groundwater during the April 1 to October 31 water season to supplement this shortage. This is significantly less than the 180,000 acre-feet of surface water GCID recharges to the aquifer system, through its earth-lined distribution system and deep percolation of irrigation supplies, on an annual basis during non-critical water years. Thus, any groundwater pumped this year will be recharged during the next year in which GCID receives a 100% USBR allocation, which has occurred every year for the past eighteen years. As a comparison, a total of approximately 12,000 acre-feet would be pumped for this Program, while the total groundwater pumped in Glenn County is approximately 224,500 acre-feet on an annual basis. The groundwater from this Program will primarily be used to supplement surface water supplies for the irrigation of 10,235 acres of permanent crops within GCID. Without the additional groundwater supply, these permanent crops could potentially be damaged or lost due to water stress during this irrigation season.

Of the five GCID groundwater wells, well No. 1,2,3, and 4 have casing perforations from approximately 700 feet below ground surface elevation (bgse) to 1,200 feet (bgse). This zone of perforated casing indicates that these wells will be producing from the Lower Tuscan Formation. Average yields from wells within this aquifer range from 2,500

to 3,500 gallons per minute. Well No. 5 has casing perforations from approximately 190 feet (bgse) to 710 (bgse). This zone of perforated casing indicates that this well will be producing from the Tehama Formation. Average yields from wells within this aquifer range from 2,500 to 3,500 gallons per minute. All wells used in support of the program are powered by electricity.

Similar groundwater pumping occurred in 2011 with no identified impacts. During the 2012 Program, GCID will monitor groundwater elevations on an ongoing basis in the five GCID groundwater wells, and groundwater elevations in the DWR dedicated monitoring wells and other monitoring wells in the vicinity. This data will provide for tracking changes in groundwater elevation and provide valuable information for ongoing groundwater modeling and research efforts.

Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines adopted by GCID, an *Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration* on the above named project has been prepared and is available for review at GCID's main office located at 344 East Laurel Street, Willows, California, or at www.gcid.net. under *Programs and Studies, Groundwater Programs*.

Final adoption of the Negative Declaration will be considered at the April 19, 2012, GCID Board of Directors meeting, which begins at 9:00 a.m. at 344 East Laurel Street, Willows, California.

Any comments on this action must be submitted in writing no later than April 18, 2012 or verbally during said Board meeting.

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