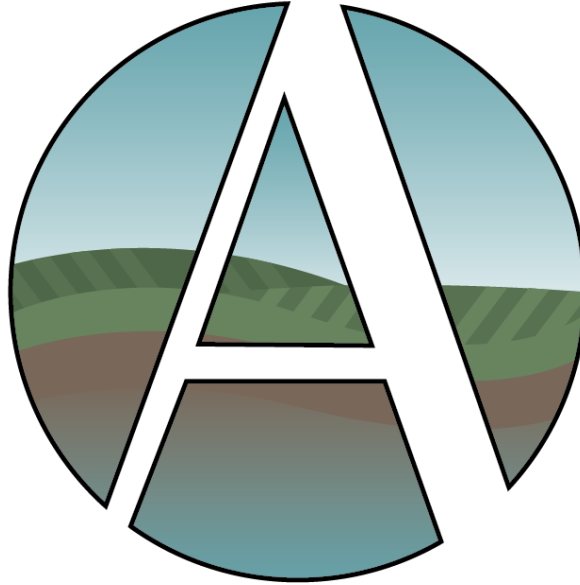




AQUATERRA WATER BANK

**Environmental Impact Report
Public Scoping Meeting**

September 18, 2024 | Kerman Senior Center

Welcome and Introductions



Sponsor – McMullin Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MAGSA)

- Matt Hurley – MAGSA General Manager and Project Director
- Cristel Tufenkjian – MAGSA Deputy General Manager

Tetra Tech

- David Munro – Senior Ecologist, PWS
- Sujoy Roy, Ph.D. – Principal Hydrologic Engineer

Blue Chair Communications

- Ashley Goldsmith – Outreach Support

Scoping Meeting Agenda



- CEQA Overview/EIR Scoping Session
 - What is an EIR?
 - The CEQA Process
 - Key Environmental Issues
- MAGSA Overview
- Project Background and Overview
- Public Participation Opportunities
- Public Scoping Comment Period

Purpose of a Scoping Meeting

- Inform the community and resource agencies about the proposed project
- Solicit input regarding issues the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should address
- Inform the community about future opportunities for input on the proposed project

CEQA & EIR Overview

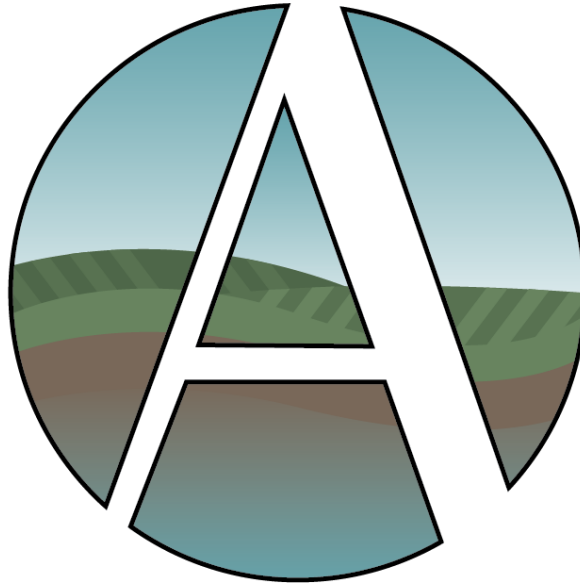


- The **California Environmental Quality Act** (CEQA) requires that public agencies disclose impacts of projects that have a physical effect on the environment.
- The **Environmental Impact Report** (EIR) is an informational document that:
 - Discloses information regarding the effects a proposed project could have on the environment
 - Identifies mitigation measures
 - Describes feasible alternatives to the proposed project
 - Must be certified prior to project approval

Environmental Issues to be Analyzed



- Aesthetics/Visual Resources
- Agricultural Land
- Air Quality
- Archaeological/Historic Resources
- Biological Resources
- Drainage/Absorption
- Economics/Jobs
- Flood Plains/Flooding
- Geologic/Seismic Hazards
- Fire
- Land Use
- Minerals
- Noise
- Population/Housing Balance
- Public Services/Facilities
- Recreation/Parks
- Schools/Universities
- Sewer Capacity
- Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading
- Solid Waste
- Toxic/Hazardous Materials
- Traffic/Circulation
- Water Quality
- Water Supply/Groundwater
- Wetland/Riparian Resources



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Matt Hurley, MAGSA General Manager

McMullin Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MAGSA)

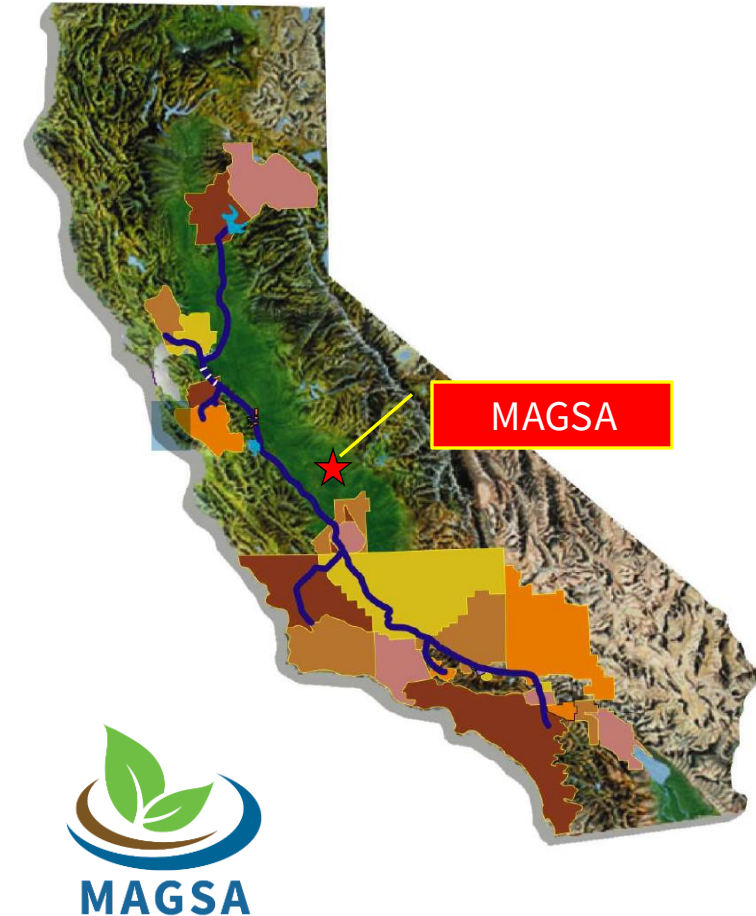
Formed in response to the passing of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

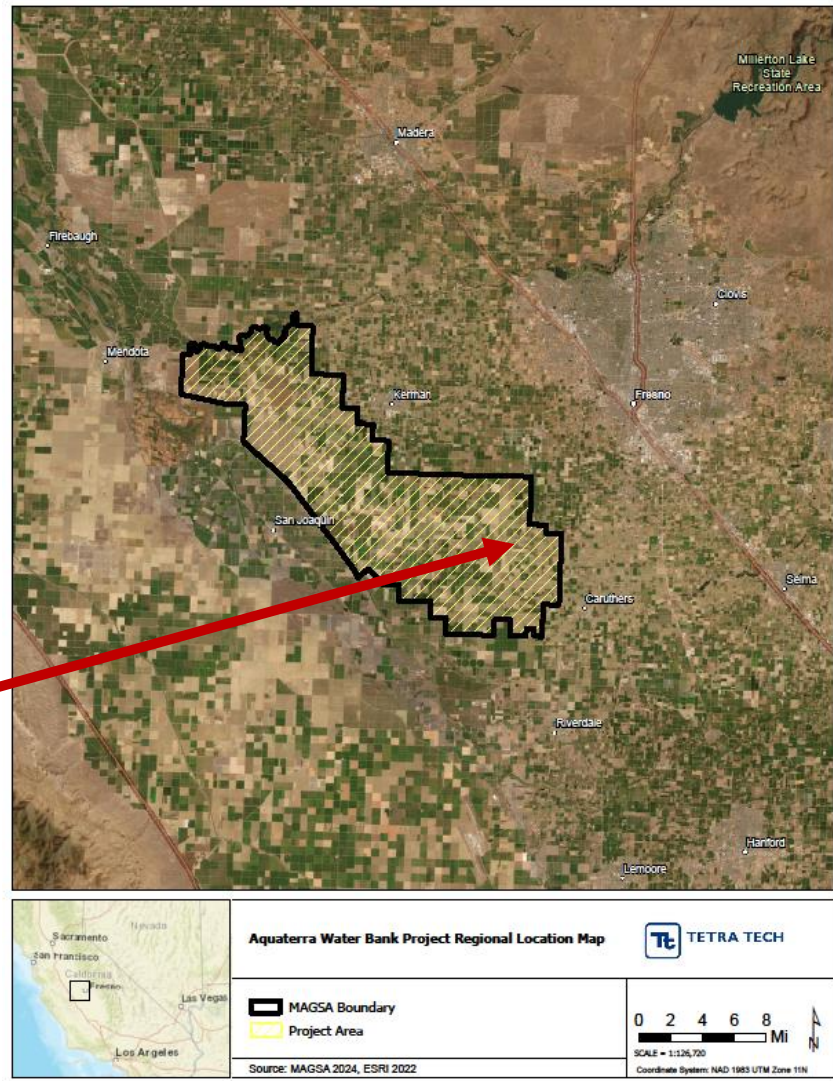
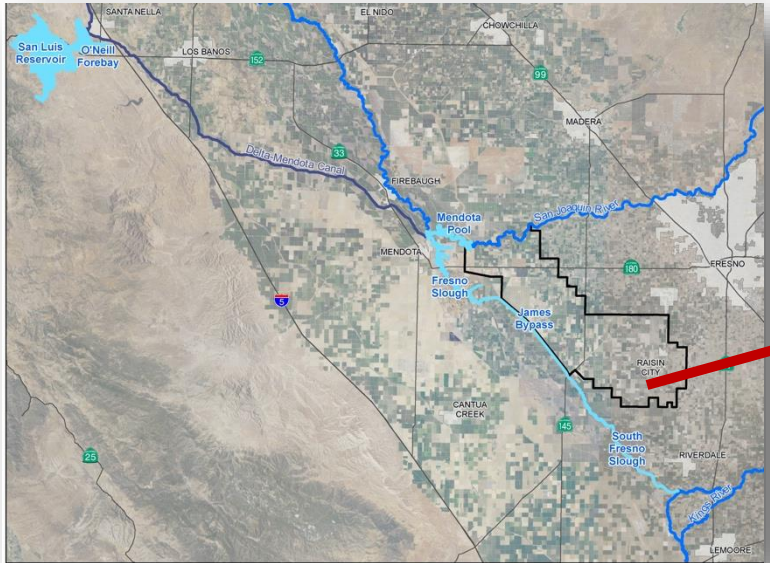
Located in Fresno County, encompassing 120,635 acres

- 83% permanent and field crops
- 1.2% rural residential
- Two ecological reserves

MAGSA last developed area of Kings Subbasin

- No Kings River water rights for surface irrigation
- Agriculture developed based exclusively on groundwater
- Pumping cone of depression has created large amounts of available storage space





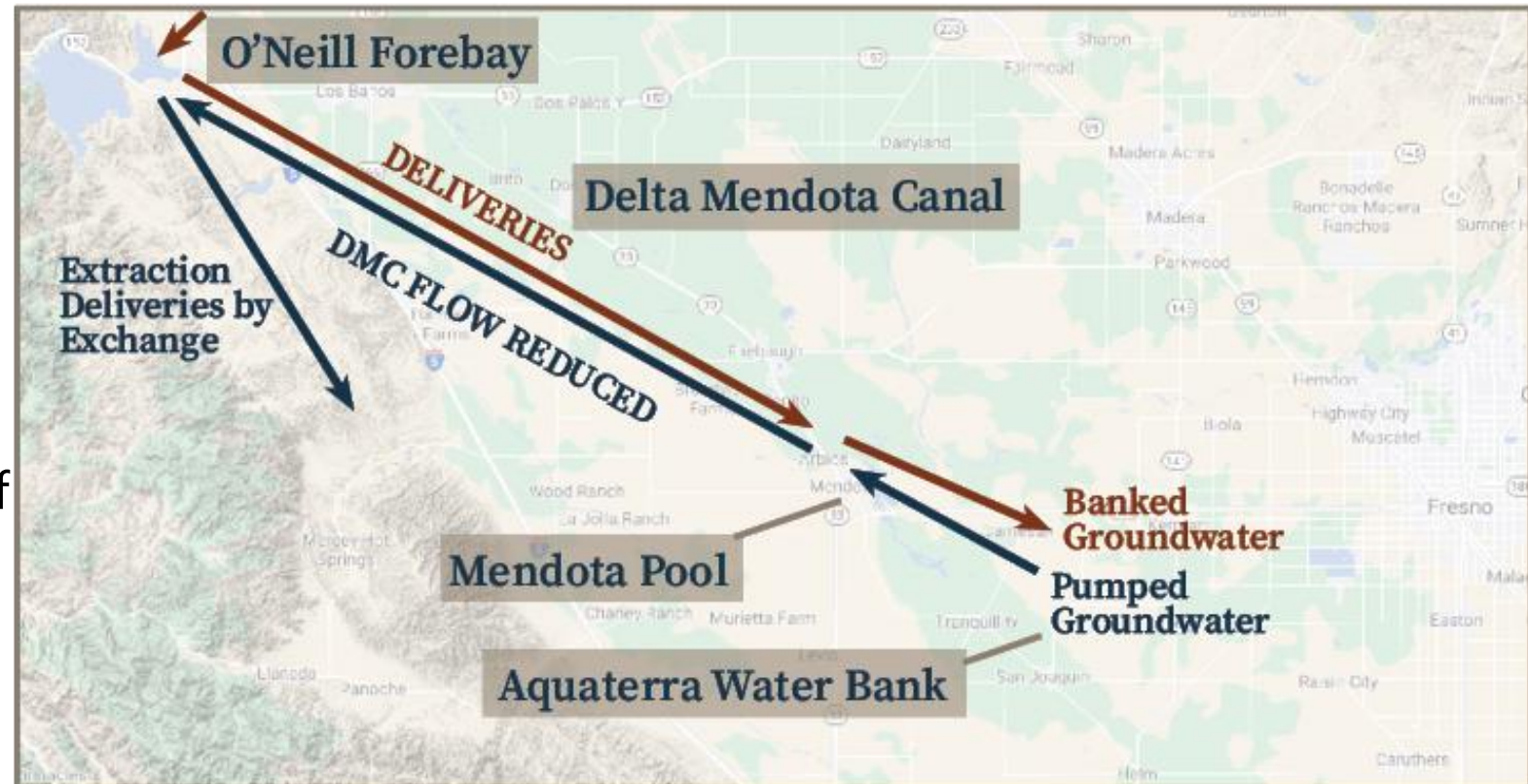
How a Water Bank Works



- Like financial banking, groundwater banks use deposits and withdrawals.
- A water bank uses the empty space in aquifers for customers to “deposit” water during wet periods for withdrawal during dry years.
- There are two basic methods for putting water into water bank storage:
 - Direct recharge: adding surface water supplies either by using recharge ponds to percolate water into the aquifer or on-farm recharge practices
 - In-lieu agreements: surface supplies are provided to users for use in lieu of groundwater pumping, and the amount of water that otherwise would have been pumped becomes the banked water.
- Stored groundwater is later recovered from the aquifer when needed through recovery wells.

Project Overview

- 800,000 acre-feet groundwater storage capacity
- 208,000 acre-feet annual recharge capacity
- 770 cfs of conveyance & spreading
- 480 cfs of recovery (extraction)
- Scheduled extraction capability of 146,000 acre-feet per year
- Two conveyance facilities for recharge & recovery



Project Purpose & Need



Purpose

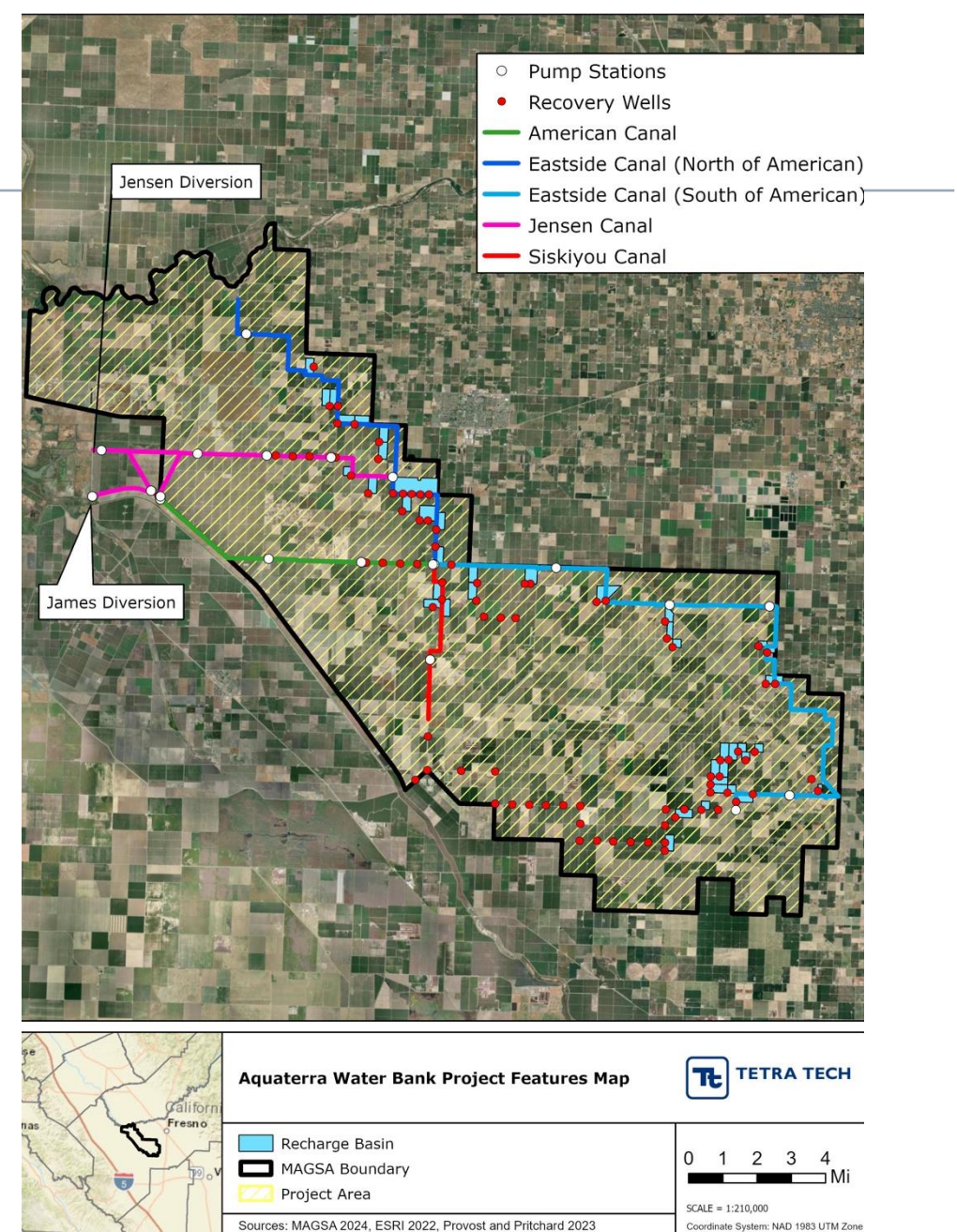
- Bank flood water and available contract water in wetter years and recover water in normal or dry years

Need

- Improve water supply reliability
- Provide a dry-year water supply to prevent fallowing or crop loss
- Provide flexibility to local agencies complying with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

Proposed Features

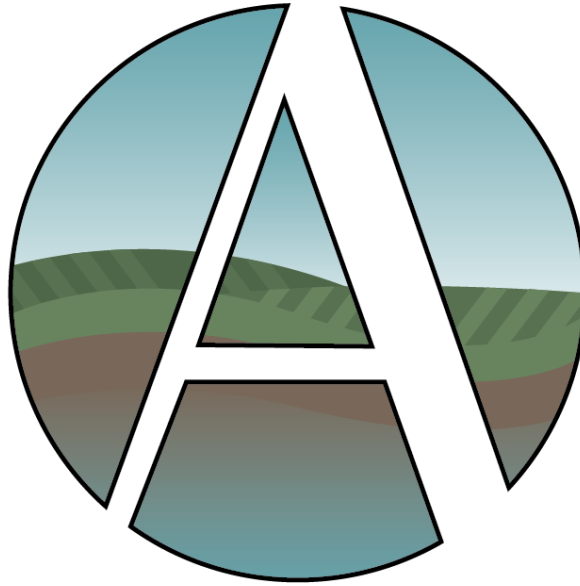
- 4,000 acres of recharge basins
- 90 recovery wells
- 3 new pump stations in Mendota Pool
- 65 miles of bidirectional conveyance canals
- 25 pumping plants with capacity between 300 and 500 cfs
- Creation of Operational Model to guide water import, export, and monitoring



Bureau of Reclamation's Federal Action



Acknowledgement of the proposed groundwater bank to allow banking of Central Valley Project water as authorized by the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (Title XXXIV, Public Law 102-575, October 1992), and as authorized by certain federal contracts.



CEQA OVERVIEW/ EIR PUBLIC SCOPING SESSION

David Munro, Senior Ecologist, PWS

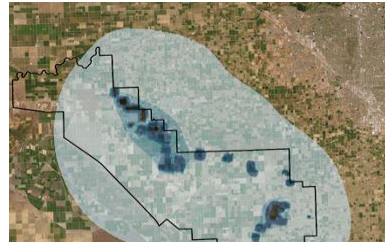
Primary Resources of Concern



Air Quality



Cultural Resources



Groundwater



Land Use



Soils and Ag Lands



Policy and Regulation



Water Quality



Communities

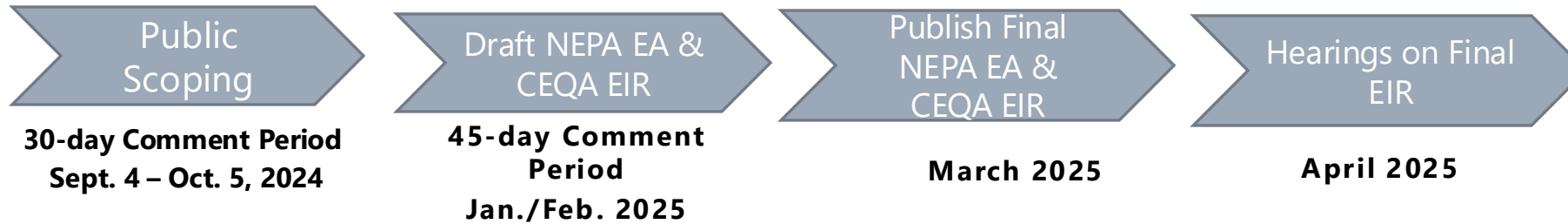
The EIR will consider potential impacts of the following actions:

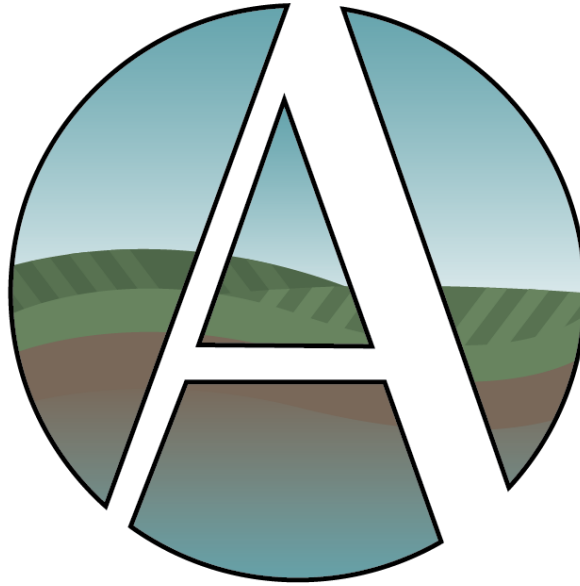
- Construction of conveyance, recharge, extraction, and monitoring features
- Operation of a groundwater bank, including monitoring and adaptive management

Scoping Considerations

- Are there concerns with the possible outcomes?
- What are the most important environmental concerns?
- Is the project controversial?
- What other environmental laws apply?

EIR Schedule and Next Steps





PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES & PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD

David Munro, Senior Ecologist, PWS

How to Submit Comments by October 5th



- Speak at tonight's meeting
- Email MAGSA: aquaterra@mcmullinarea.org
- Mail/hand deliver comments or comment cards to MAGSA's office:
 - McMullin Area GSA, 275 S. Madera Ave., Suite 301, Kerman, CA 93630

Learn More/Stay Connected with MAGSA:



- Visit the Aquaterra website: www.mcmullinarea.org/aquaterra
- Visit the MAGSA website: www.mcmullinarea.org
- Sign up for MAGSA's Interested Persons' email list: www.mcmullinarea.org/email
- Follow MAGSA on social media:
 - X (Twitter) | LinkedIn | YouTube

Contact MAGSA:



Matt Hurley, MAGSA General Manager and Project Director

- Phone: 559-515-3339
- Email: mhurley@mcmullinarea.org