

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – OFFICE OF RESEARCH, PLANNING & PERFORMANCE
AND DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
MARCH 15, 2016**

ITEM 3

SUBJECT

CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR DESIGNEE TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO DEVELOP INTEGRATED HYDROLOGIC SURFACE WATER-GROUNDWATER MODELS FOR THE RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED

DISCUSSION

The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations. Under its charge to protect water quality and allocate surface water rights, the State Water Board watches over all of California's waters, including both surface water and groundwater.

The State Water Board is involved in various efforts related to the interaction of surface water and groundwater throughout California, including its work related to the [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act](#) (SGMA) and the [California Water Action Plan](#). Under SGMA, the State Water Board is working on coordinated implementation efforts with the Department of Water Resources. State Water Board staff has been meeting with potential groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) and others to support local efforts to develop plans and programs to sustainably manage groundwater resources. Through these outreach efforts with Sonoma County Water Agency, State Water Board staff identified an effort that could prove mutually beneficial to support local groundwater management efforts and serve as an example for other GSAs. Specifically, the State Water Board and Sonoma County Water Agency propose to jointly fund an effort to develop surface water-groundwater interaction models and associated tools for the Russian River watershed. This effort would support related work under the California Water Action Plan. Specifically, under Action 4 of the California Water Action Plan, the State Water Board is working collaboratively with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enhance streamflows in at least five stream systems statewide, one of which is Mark West Creek – a tributary to the Russian River. The development or refinement of a surface water-groundwater interaction model for Mark West Creek is one need identified as part of the California Water Action Plan effort.

Per [Resolution No. 2015-0022](#), the Executive Director is authorized to execute contracts and amendments with public and private entities that individually involve no more than \$750,000 or three years duration. This item will authorize the Executive Director or designee to enter into a contract with the United States Geological Survey for up to \$1.2 million to provide services in developing integrated hydrologic surface water-groundwater models for the Russian River watershed. This contract will support various State Water Board efforts related to groundwater sustainability and instream flows, and the Water Boards' general water rights and water quality authorities. A contract term of five years is needed to support this joint modeling effort.

POLICY ISSUE

Should the State Water Board authorize the Executive Director or designee to enter into a contract for up to \$1.2 million with the United State Geological Survey, for a term of five years, to provide services in developing integrated hydrologic surface water-groundwater models and associated tools for the Russian River watershed.

FISCAL IMPACT

This activity is budgeted with existing resources, and no additional fiscal demands will occur as a result of approving this item.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

This contract would support the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's instream flow work and related efforts.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the State Water Board adopt the proposed Resolution.

<p>State Water Board action on this item will assist the Water Boards in reaching Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan Update: 2008-2012: Comprehensively address water quality, and describe the connections between water quality, water quantity, and climate change, throughout California's water planning processes.</p>
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DRAFT

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 2016-

AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR DESIGNEE TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY TO PROVIDE SERVICES IN DEVELOPING INTEGRATED HYDROLOGIC SURFACE WATER-GROUNDWATER MODELS FOR THE RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED

WHEREAS:

1. The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations. The State Water Board is also responsible for the protection of resources, such as fisheries, wildlife, aesthetics, and navigation, which are held in trust for the public;
2. The State Water Board is working on various efforts related to the interaction of surface water and groundwater throughout California, including its work related to the [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act](#) and the [California Water Action Plan](#). These specific efforts in the Russian River watershed share the common goal of sustainable water management for beneficial uses and public trust resources. The State Water Board intends to contract with the United States Geological Survey to develop models and associated tools to assess the combined effects of groundwater pumping and surface water diversions and study the effects of variability in climate, geology, biota, and human activities on water availability and environmental flow in the Russian River watershed. This is a joint effort with the Sonoma County Water Agency. This contract will support State Water Board efforts related to groundwater sustainability and instream flows; and
3. Delegation of this authority to the Executive Director or designee will allow the Executive Director or designee to enter into a contract with the United States Geological Survey for research and technical assistance in developing an integrated hydrologic surface water-groundwater model and associated tools to assess the potential combined effects of surface water and groundwater diversions on water resources in the Russian River watershed.

D R A F T

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The State Water Board authorizes the Executive Director or designee to execute a contract and authorize expenditures of up to \$1.2 million for contract services with the United States Geological Survey, for a term of five years, for the development of modeling resources and associated tools for the Russian River Watershed.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned Clerk to the Board does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on March 15, 2016.

Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board