

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 21 – 22, 2022**

Prepared on March 25, 2022

**ITEM NUMBER:** 11

**SUBJECT:** **CENTRAL COAST AMBIENT MONITORING PROGRAM -  
GROUNDWATER ASSESSMENT AND PROTECTION  
FUNDS STATUS AND HISTORY**

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**ACTION:** Information/Discussion

**SUMMARY**

This informational item provides an update of the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program - Groundwater Assessment and Protection (CCAMP-GAP).

The Central Coast Region is a groundwater dependent region with nearly ninety percent of the population relying on groundwater for drinking water and other uses. Some areas of the region are entirely dependent on groundwater. Regional groundwater monitoring data are essential to evaluate water quality and associated beneficial uses to inform the public about the safety of their drinking water. These data inform actions of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board), local agencies, and other entities to protect groundwater quality and public health and to evaluate the effectiveness of those actions.

To address this need, the Central Coast Water Board established CCAMP-GAP on May 3, 2012 via [Resolution No. R3-2012-0024](#)<sup>1</sup> as the groundwater monitoring component of the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program<sup>2</sup> (CCAMP). The purpose of CCAMP-GAP is to develop and implement regional groundwater monitoring programs and to

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/gap/docs/res\\_r3-2012-0024\\_final.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/gap/docs/res_r3-2012-0024_final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> CCAMP was established in 1998 and is supported by an endowment separate from CCAMP-GAP. CCAMP is the Central Coast Water Board's regional surface water monitoring program, providing long-term trend data for surface water quality in all our major Central Coast Watersheds. CCAMP also monitors water quality and waste loading to the marine environment (and Marine Protected Areas) from all the Central Coast Region's major coastal rivers and streams. CCAMP is implemented in coordination with the State Water Board's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP).

support the implementation of groundwater related projects with the intent of evaluating, restoring, and protecting the beneficial uses of groundwater. CCAMP-GAP projects are managed by the [Bay Foundation of Morro Bay](#)<sup>3</sup> (Bay Foundation), in coordination with the Central Coast Water Board to help determine funding priorities and to provide project related technical support.

CCAMP-GAP is primarily funded by a private endowment, that generates investment earnings, in conjunction with an operational account to facilitate project expenditures. Currently, CCAMP-GAP's endowment and operational account balances<sup>4</sup> are approximately \$3 million<sup>5</sup> and \$147,000<sup>6</sup>, respectively. Within the operational account, \$56,000 in unencumbered funds are available for expenditure. Since inception, CCAMP-GAP has received approximately \$5.1 million in income from various sources as noted below and expended approximately \$2 million to support the program and several high priority groundwater projects. Of the \$2 million, CCAMP-GAP has provided approximately \$1.7 million in funding for nine separate projects with prioritization toward water quality-related public health issues, assisting underrepresented communities to identify and address drinking water impacts, establishing and expanding environmental justice capacity, bolstering sustainable groundwater management efforts, providing free drinking water well testing, and supporting regional groundwater quality monitoring.

*This summary is also available in Spanish and interested persons may also request that the entire staff report be translated into Spanish, dependent upon available resources.*

## DISCUSSION

### CCAMP-GAP Funds Status and History

Following the establishment of CCAMP-GAP in 2012, the Central Coast Water Board entered into the CCAMP-GAP Fund Grant Agreement (Grant Agreement)<sup>7</sup> with the Bay Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 1989 that also supports the Morro Bay National Estuary Program. The Grant Agreement defines roles and responsibilities, specifies the scope of work and deliverables, and established both an endowment and an operational account, collectively referred to as the CCAMP-GAP funds. Table 1 provides a summary of current<sup>8</sup> CCAMP-GAP funds account balances.

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<sup>3</sup> The Bay Foundation of Morro Bay, based in Morro Bay, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. <https://bayfoundationmb.org/>

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this staff report, funds have been rounded to two or three significant digits.

<sup>5</sup> The endowment account balance, per the Bay Foundation's financial report for November 2021, is \$2,985,500.

<sup>6</sup> The operational account balance, per the Bay Foundation's financial report for November 2021, is \$146,617.

<sup>7</sup> The Central Coast Water Board entered into the Grant Agreement with the Bay Foundation on December 3, 2012. The term of the Grant Agreement is December 3, 2012 to January 1, 2025.

<sup>8</sup> All totals are current as of the Bay Foundation's financial report for November 2021.

Table 1: Current CCAMP-GAP Funds Account Balances

Category	Amount
<b>Endowment Account</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3 million<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Operational Account</b>	
Encumbered Funds	\$91,000 <sup>b</sup>
Unencumbered Funds	\$56,000 <sup>c</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$147,000</b>
<b>CCAMP-GAP Funds Total</b>	<b>\$3.1 million</b>

## Notes:

- a) The endowment account total is comprised of Guadalupe Oil Field Settlement Water Quality Project Trust Funds, investment gains, and interest. Within the endowment, \$500,000 is earmarked for the Sustainable Water Resources Basin Plan Amendment project.
- b) Amount remaining in current contract, as of November 2021, between the Bay Foundation and Tetra Tech to implement the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program.
- c) Buffer reserve for Bay Foundation oversight and administration fees, direct costs, and unanticipated expenses associated with CCAMP-GAP implementation.

The CCAMP-GAP funds are used for the administration and implementation of high priority water quality projects. CCAMP-GAP funds are not directed to the Central Coast Water Board or utilized to underwrite staff time. The Bay Foundation implements CCAMP-GAP, including management of the CCAMP-GAP funds in coordination with Wacker Wealth Partners to manage the endowment investment portfolio. The Bay Foundation manages accounts, establishes, and manages contracts/agreements, conducts contract invoicing and reporting, and coordinates with the Central Coast Water Board to help determine funding priorities and to provide project related technical support.

### Endowment and Operational Account

The CCAMP-GAP endowment account is an actively managed investment account with a current balance of approximately \$3 million. The funds in the endowment account are derived from Central Coast Water Board's allocation of judicial settlement monies plus investment earnings and interest. Within this account, \$2.5 million are dedicated to the endowment and \$500,000 is set aside for the [Sustainable Water Resource Management Basin Plan Amendment](#).<sup>9</sup>

The purpose of the CCAMP-GAP endowment is to generate an ongoing annual revenue stream to support the long-term implementation of high priority projects such as free domestic well testing and regional groundwater monitoring and assessment. At the time

<sup>9</sup> Central Coast Water Board staff are evaluating options for the potential reallocation of these funds and will be making a recommendation for the Board's consideration at a later date.

CCAMP-GAP was established, the Central Coast Water Board understood that additional funding would be necessary to implement CCAMP-GAP and agreed with Central Coast Water Board staff's initial goal to increase the endowment to \$5 million over ten years. Recent estimates by Central Coast Water Board staff indicated that a minimum endowment amount of \$6.5 million is needed to sustain annual revenues sufficient to administer CCAMP-GAP and implement priority water quality projects (e.g., Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program and regional groundwater monitoring and assessment projects).

The CCAMP-GAP operational account is a non-investment cash account managed by the Bay Foundation with a current balance of approximately \$147,000.<sup>10</sup> This includes \$91,000 in encumbered funds and \$56,000 in unencumbered funds. Encumbered funds are those obligated to invoice payments for CCAMP-GAP's active projects. At this time, CCAMP-GAP has one active project, the [Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program](#).<sup>11</sup> Unencumbered funds are not obligated to a specific project and are available to cover administrative fees and other expenses.

### CCAMP-GAP Funds History

Since its inception, CCAMP-GAP has received approximately \$5.1 million in income and paid out approximately \$2 million in expenses. Table 2 provides a summary of CCAMP-GAP income and expenses since inception.

Table 2: CCAMP-GAP Funds Income and Expenses Since Inception

<b>Category</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Enforcement Settlement Funds	\$2.1 million
Investment Gains / Interest	\$1.6 million
Third-Party Supplemental Environmental Project Funds	\$1.4 million <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5.1 million</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Project Expenditures	\$1.7 million
Administration / Management Fees	\$240,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2 million</b>
<b>Net Income (Income – Expenses)</b>	<b>\$3.1 million<sup>b</sup></b>

Notes:

- a) Third-Party Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Funds were derived from enforcement action penalties, the majority of which were Settlement Agreements and Stipulations for Entry of an Administrative Civil Liability Order. As part of the settlements the dischargers elected to direct a portion of the penalties to CCAMP-GAP, a designated third-party SEP.

<sup>10</sup> The operational account earns interest at a modest rate. This stated balance intentionally omits the \$5.9 million in Diablo Canyon PG&E Settlement Funds that is currently held in this account pending the Central Coast Water Board's direction with respect to how to allocate these funds.

<sup>11</sup> [www.centralcoastwelltesting.org](http://www.centralcoastwelltesting.org)

- b) Net Income reflects the current total balance of CCAMP-GAP funds as shown in Table 1: Current CCAMP-GAP Funds Account Balances.

The \$5.1 million in income was derived from \$2.1 million in Central Coast Water Board approved allocation of judicial settlement monies, \$1.6 million in investment gains and interest, and \$1.4 million in third-party Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) funds. The \$2.1 million in judicial settlement monies and \$1.4 million in third-party SEP funds arose from enforcement actions that commenced prior to the adoption of the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) current [Enforcement Policy](#)<sup>12</sup> and current [SEP Policy](#), respectively.<sup>13</sup> The \$1.4 million in third-party SEP funds were deposited in the CCAMP-GAP operational account and have been fully expended toward the projects described below. The \$2 million in CCAMP-GAP expenses include approximately \$1.7 million in expenditures for the projects described below and \$240,000 in administrative and management fees.

### CCAMP-GAP Projects

Since its inception, CCAMP-GAP has provided \$1.7 million in funding for water quality projects. CCAMP-GAP funded projects substantially align with the mission and priorities defined by the State Water Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards), as well as the State Water Board's SEP Policy. Therefore, CCAMP-GAP funding priorities are focused on projects that 1) address the human right to water and Central Coast Water Board [Resolution R3-2017-0004](#)<sup>14</sup>, 2) address environmental justice issues, 3) provide water quality benefits to underrepresented communities, 4) implement climate change mitigation or climate change adaptation strategies, 5) develop or implement activities to achieve sustainable water supplies, or 6) implement water quality monitoring and assessment projects.

### Active Projects

CCAMP-GAP currently supports one active project, the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program (Program).<sup>15</sup> The Program provides free well testing for domestic wells and small water systems throughout the Central Coast Region. Data generated through this Program are publicly available and allow participants to make informed decisions about their drinking water. For more details, a Program status update is provided as part of the Racial Equity / Annual Environmental Justice Update agenda

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<sup>12</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/enforcement/water\\_quality\\_enforcement.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/enforcement/water_quality_enforcement.html)

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/seps/20180503\\_sep\\_policy\\_amd.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/seps/20180503_sep_policy_amd.pdf). This SEP Policy now requires State Water Board approval of third-party administered SEPs as described in the June 28-29, 2018 Board Meeting Item No. 18. Enforcement staff continue to work on a proposed Resolution for consideration before the State Water Board to allow settling parties to suspend a portion of their penalty monies by applying those penalties to the CCAMP-GAP's Central Coast Domestic Drinking Water Well Testing Program.

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/r3\\_hr2w\\_res.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/r3_hr2w_res.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> The Program is implemented through a \$348,717 contract between the Bay Foundation and Tetra Tech. As of November 2021, project expenditures for the free well testing program totaled \$257,717, with \$91,000 remaining in available contract funds.

item. The status update includes a summary of the most recent well testing results. Additionally, Central Coast Water Board staff provided previous updates at public meetings in [2020](#) and [2021](#).<sup>16</sup>

### Completed Projects

Since inception, CCAMP-GAP has supported a total of nine projects. Of these nine projects, eight are now complete. In June 2018, Central Coast Water Board staff provided an update on the status of CCAMP-GAP supported projects as part of the overall [Update on Supplemental Environmental Projects](#).<sup>17</sup> Table 3 provides a summary of the six CCAMP-GAP supported projects completed since June 2018.

Table 3. Summary of CCAMP-GAP Supported Projects Completed Since June 2018.

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Project Summary</b>
City of El Paso de Robles	\$255,000	6/30/2021	Addressed data gaps identified in the Paso Robles Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) by installing a network of monitoring wells and stream gages on the Salinas River and its major tributaries within the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin.
Lawrence Livermore Groundwater Age-Dating Study	\$238,981	11/30/2020	Improved understanding of the sources and fate of nitrate in Central Coast groundwater.
Community Water Center	\$722,612	9/30/2020	Established and expanded environmental justice service capacity, provided support, and community engagement related to drinking water quality threats to human health in underrepresented communities on the central coast. Support to establish regional office in Watsonville.

<sup>16</sup>[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2020/01\\_jan/attachments/item5\\_stfrpt.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2020/01_jan/attachments/item5_stfrpt.pdf)

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2021/01\\_jan\\_28/item7\\_att2.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2021/01_jan_28/item7_att2.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2018/june/item18/item18\\_stfrpt.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2018/june/item18/item18_stfrpt.pdf)

USGS Groundwater Study	\$50,000	9/30/2018	Program Priority Basin Project Shallow Aquifer Assessment for the Monterey-Salinas Study Unit, coordinated effort between the USGS and the State Water Board's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment (GAMA) Program.
Environmental Justice Coalition for Water	\$18,770	9/30/2018	Conducted focused community outreach in Monterey County with the specific purpose to increase community participation in domestic drinking water well testing programs and opportunities to receive safe drinking water replacement water.
Fruit Growers Laboratory, Inc.	\$57,224	7/19/2018	Provided analytical services for a pilot project to test approximately 190 domestic drinking water wells in San Luis Obispo County
Total	\$1,342,587 <sup>a</sup>		

## Notes:

- a) The \$1.7 million in total project expenditures listed in Table 2 includes \$1,342,587 in projects completed since June 2018 described in Table 3, \$61,999 in completed projects reported in June 2018, and \$257,717 for the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program.

### Human Right to Water

California Water Code section 106.3, subdivision (a) states that it is the policy of the State of California “that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitation purposes.” On January 26, 2017, the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R3-2017-0004, which affirms the realization of the human right to water and the protection of human health as the Central Coast Water Board's top priorities. CCAMP-GAP supports projects that are consistent with the human right to water and Resolution No. R3-2017-0004, by directing funding to the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program, the Community Water Center to help facilitate well testing outreach, implementation, and follow-up replacement water solutions for impacted wells, and other projects that prioritize safe drinking water and promote sustainable drinking water solutions, especially for underrepresented communities.

### Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice principles call for the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income in the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of all environmental laws, regulations, and

policies that affect every community's natural resources and the places people live, work, play, and learn. The Central Coast Water Board implements regulatory activities and water quality projects in a manner that ensures the fair treatment of all people, including Underrepresented Communities. Underrepresented Communities include but are not limited to Disadvantaged Communities (DACs), Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDACs), Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs), Tribes, Environmentally Disadvantaged Communities (EnvDACs), and members of Fringe Communities.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the Central Coast Water Board is committed to providing all stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the public process and provide meaningful input to decisions that affect their communities. CCAMP-GAP supports environmental justice and racial equity by prioritizing funding for projects that advance environmental justice issues and funding for community-based organizations and projects that benefit underrepresented communities. In addition, CCAMP GAP attempts to increase language accessibility by providing outreach materials in English and Spanish.

### Climate Change

The Central Coast faces the threat and the effects of climate change for the foreseeable and distant future. To proactively prepare and respond, the Central Coast Water Board has launched the Central Coast Water Board's Climate Action Initiative, which identifies how the Central Coast Water Board's work relates to climate change and prioritizes actions that improve water supply resiliency through water conservation and wastewater reuse and recycling; mitigate for and adapt to sea level rise and increased flooding; improve energy efficiency; and reduce greenhouse gas production. The Climate Action Initiative is consistent with the Governor's Executive Order B-30-15 and the State Water Board's Climate Change [Resolution No. 2017-0012](#).<sup>19</sup> CCAMP-GAP implements the Climate Action Initiative by prioritizing funding for current and future projects that implement climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, such as regional groundwater monitoring, drought resiliency projects, and projects that address climate change hazards and vulnerabilities.

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<sup>18</sup> Disadvantaged Community: a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income (Public Resources Code section 80002(e)); Severely Disadvantaged Community: a community with a median household income of less than 60% of the statewide average. (Public Resources Code section 80002(n)); Economically Distressed Area: a municipality with a population of 20,000 persons or less, a rural county, or a reasonably isolated and divisible segment of a larger municipality where the segment of the population is 20,000 persons or less with an annual median household income that is less than 85% of the statewide median household income and with one or more of the following conditions as determined by the department: (1) financial hardship, (2) unemployment rate at least 2% higher than the statewide average, or (3) low population density. (Water Code section 79702(k)); Tribes: federally recognized Indian Tribes and California State Indian Tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List; EnvDACs: CalEPA designates the top 25 percent scoring census tracts as DACs. Census tracts that score the highest five percent of pollution burden scores but do not have an overall CalEnviroScreen score because of unreliable socioeconomic or health data are also designated as DACs (refer to the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Mapping Tool or Results Excel Sheet); Fringe Community: communities that do not meet the established DAC, SDAC, and EDA definitions but can show that they score in the top 25 percent of either the Pollution Burden or Population Characteristics score using the CalEnviroScreen 3.0.

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/resolutions/2017/rs2017\\_0012.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/2017/rs2017_0012.pdf)



## CONCLUSION

In the nearly ten years since its establishment, CCAMP-GAP has proven to be an effective and efficient program that meets critical high-priority needs through supporting programs and projects that address the Central Coast Water Board's highest priorities, such as identifying, preventing, and correcting water quality-related threats to human health and increasing environmental justice capacity in the region. CCAMP-GAP will continue to prioritize and fund high-priority, collaborative, multi-benefit programs and projects that provide scientific data and information to protect, restore, and enhance groundwater quality and protect human health in the Central Coast Region. Moving forward and as part of this ongoing effort, CCAMP-GAP will:

- Continue to support programs and projects that align with the mission and priorities identified by the State Water Board and Regional Water Boards, State Water Board's SEP Policy, with an emphasis on providing services to underrepresented communities.
- Pursue opportunities to increase the CCAMP-GAP endowment.
- Update the Central Coast Water Board regularly on CCAMP-GAP implementation and progress towards achieving the above objectives.