



North San Joaquin Water
Conservation District

Strategic Plan Report Card

December 2023



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This Report Card provides information about progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the North San Joaquin Water Conservation District's first-ever Strategic Plan, adopted by the Board of Directors in 2021 to help achieve groundwater sustainability in the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin and build community trust in the District's operations.



Action Status

The strategic plan contains 7 goals, 18 objectives, and 78 actions.

DONE - District achieved objective

DONE

25

IN PROGRESS - District making progress on objective

**IN
PROGRESS**

37

UPDATE - District plans to make progress on objective

UPDATE

16

TOTAL

78

Goal #1: Ensure Fiscal Sustainability



Objective #1: Establish a sufficient District-wide revenue source to fund the next 10 years of the District's planning, capital and operations expenses for all activities that benefit the District as a whole

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Complete Strategic Plan process and associated 10-year financing strategy

DONE

Adopted the Strategic Plan in December 2021

#2

Develop plan to impose groundwater charges or land-based assessments to fund 10-year financing strategy

DONE

Developed the plan to impose the groundwater charge in 2022

#3

Legal process to impose groundwater charge or land-based assessments

DONE

Adopted a groundwater charge in June 2022, which passed a majority written protest

#4

Establish and update assessment roll and collect funds

DONE

The Board implemented a groundwater charge, not an assessment, so updated the property tax roll and started collecting funds in early 2023

Goal #1: Ensure Fiscal Sustainability



Objective #2: Establish an additional revenue source from landowners who want to use surface water from the North System or South System to cover a fair share of the cost of capital facilities that deliver surface water

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Identify landowners willing to form a North System Improvement District

IN PROGRESS

Identified landowners willing to form a North System Improvement District and working on land-based assessments

#2

Define scope and budget for North System Improvement District

UPDATE

Plan to start this work in 2024

#3

Establish and fund North System Improvement District

UPDATE

Will complete this work in 2025

#4

Add land to South System Improvement District No. 3

IN PROGRESS

Completed 30% design of the Handel Lateral and will present surface water delivery options to landowners in 2024

Goal #1: Ensure Fiscal Sustainability



Objective #3: Actively seek grant funding

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Develop three-year grant strategy for District projects

UPDATE

Will complete a Master Plan in by 2025, followed by a three-year grant strategy to match priority projects with state and federal funding

#2

Submit grant applications annually

IN PROGRESS

Submitted six grant applications totaling \$18.3 million since 2022 and secured \$12.8 million

#3

Update grant strategy as needed

UPDATE

Will complete the Master Plan before completing or updating the grant strategy

Goal #2: Improve Communication and Transparency



Objective #1: Develop and maintain a strategic plan

ACTION

STATUS

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|---|
| #1 | Develop Strategic Plan | DONE | Developed the Strategic Plan with landowner input in 2020 and 2021 |
| #2 | Hold Strategic Plan landowner workshop | IN PROGRESS | Held a Strategic Plan landowner workshop in 2023 and scheduled a second workshop for 2024 |
| #3 | Adopt Strategic Plan | DONE | Adopted the Strategic Plan in December 2021 |
| #4 | Update Strategic Plan | IN PROGRESS | Will update the Strategic Plan every 3-5 years |

Goal #2: Improve Communication and Transparency



Objective #2: Improve communication and education for landowners and residents in the District

ACTION

STATUS

- #1** Maintain website **IN PROGRESS** Completed website update in 2023; website updated regularly
- #2** Complete regular newsletters **IN PROGRESS** Newsletter sent twice per year
- #3** Partner with other organization for water issues workshops **IN PROGRESS** Hosting workshops related to SWEEP grant opportunity for on-farm irrigation efficiency improvements in February 2024

Goal #3: Sustainably Manage Groundwater to Maintain Local Control



Objective #1: Fund District's proportional share of subbasin wide management activities through the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority

ACTION

STATUS

#1 Fund share of Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Sustainable Groundwater Management Act activities

IN PROGRESS

Funded share of Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority activities with groundwater charge revenue

#2 Improve measurements or estimates of District groundwater pumping

IN PROGRESS

Implemented remote metering systems for a portion of the South System, Cal Fed, and Tracy Lakes; will rebuild North System, including remote metering, in 2024

Goal #3: Sustainably Manage Groundwater to Maintain Local Control



Objective #2: Actively participate in the coordination of subbasin groundwater management activities and coordinate with adjacent subbasins on groundwater and management as required by law

ACTION

STATUS

#1

To be determined as adjacent subbasins complete their plans

IN PROGRESS

Partnered with local water districts to present a dry well mitigation program to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority; will partner with adjacent subbasins as needed

Goal #4: Protect the Mokelumne River Water Right



Objective #1: Fully operate the District's existing direct recharge projects

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Fund recharge activities for Cal Fed system

IN PROGRESS

Operating the Cal Fed System for groundwater recharge annually when water is available

#2

Fund recharge activities for Tracy Lakes

IN PROGRESS

Operating Tracy Lakes for groundwater recharge annually when water is available

#3

Fund recharge activities for North System projects

IN PROGRESS

Constructed Reynolds and Lakso groundwater recharge facilities in 2023; operating annually when water is available

Goal #4: Protect the Mokelumne River Water Right



Objective #2: Fully operate the District's surface water irrigation delivery systems

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Expand South System Improvement District No. 3 to include 4,000 acres using surface water for irrigation when available

IN PROGRESS

Working with landowners

#2

Conduct public outreach meetings and complete public hearings to create North System Improvement District

UPDATE

Planned for 2024-25

#3

Add 1,000 acres to the North System Improvement District to use surface water for irrigation when available

UPDATE

Planned for 2025

Goal #4: Protect the Mokelumne River Water Right



Objective #3: Participate in regulatory and legal proceedings to protect the water right

ACTION

STATUS

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------|--|
| #1 | Participate in State Water Resource Control Board proceedings which impact the District's water right | IN PROGRESS | Participating in Board proceedings which impact District's water right, such as the update to the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan |
| #2 | Participate in any litigation which impacts the District's water right | IN PROGRESS | Successfully upheld District's water right against a legal challenge in 2023 |
| #3 | Monitor state legal and regulatory proceedings which may impact the water right | IN PROGRESS | Reviewing and commenting on activities which impact the District's water right as needed |

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #1: Achieve full operability of the South System to maximize delivery of surface water for irrigation and groundwater recharge

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Complete new South Pump Station with one pump, VFD, meter

DONE

Completed in 2018

#2

Automate South Pump Station and include SCADA system

DONE

Completed in 2022

#3

Add second pump to South Pump Station

IN PROGRESS

Awarded contract in late 2023; expect 2024 completion

#4

Rebuild Brandt/Tretheway valve box and add meters

DONE

Completed in 2020; repaired meter malfunction in 2023

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #1: Achieve full operability of the South System to maximize delivery of surface water for irrigation and groundwater recharge

ACTION

STATUS

#5

Rebuild Handel valve box and add meters

DONE

Completed in 2023

#6

Rebuild Manor Lane valve box and add meters

UPDATE

Applied for federal grant in late 2023; waiting for result

#7

Rebuild Pixley discharge and add meters

IN PROGRESS

Completed updated discharge facility 2023; installing meters in 2024

#8

Add pipeline and second pump off Pixley Pump Station

DONE

Completed in 2021



Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water

Objective #1: Achieve full operability of the South System to maximize delivery of surface water for irrigation and groundwater recharge

ACTION

STATUS

#9

New pipeline from Handel to Pixley discharge

DONE

Completed in 2023

#10

Repair/replace or slip-line portions of concrete pipeline as needed to improve efficiency of operation

IN PROGRESS

Repair not feasible, so full replacement of portions scheduled for 2024; applied for grant for additional work

#11

Evaluate and add facilities to create sufficient pressure for landowner turnouts off pipeline

IN PROGRESS

Completed some check structures and adding more check structures in 2024 and 2025, as well as Handel Lateral Project

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #1: Achieve full operability of the South System to maximize delivery of surface water for irrigation and groundwater recharge

ACTION

STATUS

#12

Employ SCADA system for landowner scheduling and diversions

UPDATE

Evaluating timing as landowners added to system

#13

Implement landowner and District training for SCADA system

UPDATE

Evaluating timing as landowners added to system

#14

Fully operate South System

IN PROGRESS

Operated at 20 percent of planned capacity in 2023; could operate at 50 percent in 2024 if water is available and landowners participate

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #2: Achieve full operability of the North System to maximize delivery of surface water for irrigation and groundwater recharge

ACTION

STATUS

- #1** Meet with North System landowners to develop needs assessment **IN PROGRESS** Held meetings in 2023; will continue in 2024
- #2** Complete engineering evaluation of North System pump station and pipeline **DONE** Completed in 2023; facilities declared unsalvageable (except steel force main)
- #3** Complete project design and cost estimate for North System improvements **IN PROGRESS** Issued Statement of Qualifications in 2023; expect completion by 2025
- #4** Complete project design and cost estimate for North System improvements **IN PROGRESS** Issued Statement of Qualifications in 2023; expect completion by 2025

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #2: Achieve full operability of the North System to maximize delivery of surface water for irrigation and groundwater recharge

ACTION

STATUS

#5

Solicit competitive bids for North System improvements

IN PROGRESS

Selected design/build approach; issued Statement of Qualifications, remaining improvements pending

#6

Complete North System improvements

IN PROGRESS

Installed temporary improvements and awarded contract for Phase 1b pipeline improvements in 2023 and expect completion of Phase 1b in 2024; remaining improvements subject to design-build timeline and funding

#7

Fully operate North System

IN PROGRESS

Operated at 10% of capacity in 2023; could operate at 20 percent in 2024

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #3: Build new direct recharge facilities to directly recharge surface water

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Complete engineering evaluations of direct recharge project options (Cal Fed expansion, Lakso, Tecklenburg)

IN PROGRESS

Completed engineering evaluations for the Tecklenburg, Miller, Lakso, and Reynolds recharge projects; retained hydrologist to identify additional projects

#2

Complete project design and cost estimates for direct recharge project options

IN PROGRESS

Completed project design and cost estimates for Tecklenburg, Miller, Lakso, and Reynolds recharge projects

#3

Complete financing plan for direct recharge projects (capital and O&M costs)

IN PROGRESS

Completed financing plan for Tecklenburg, Miller, Lakso, and Reynolds recharge projects

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #3: Build new direct recharge facilities to directly recharge surface water

ACTION

STATUS

#4 Acquire land for direct recharge projects

IN PROGRESS

Acquired Tecklenburg property and leased Miller, Lakso, and Reynolds properties

#5 Solicit competitive bids for direct recharge project #1

DONE

Solicited bids for Lakso project

#6 Complete direct recharge project #1

DONE

Completed Lakso project

Goal #5: Build Facilities to Use Surface Water



Objective #3: Build new direct recharge facilities to directly recharge surface water

ACTION

STATUS

- #7** Operate direct recharge project #1 **DONE** Operated Lakso project
- #8** Solicit competitive bids for direct recharge project #2 **DONE** Solicited bids for Reynolds, Tecklenburg, and Miller projects
- #9** Complete direct recharge project #2 **DONE** Completed Reynolds, Tecklenburg, and Miller projects
- #10** Operate direct recharge project #2 **DONE** Operated Reynolds, Tecklenburg, and Miller projects

Goal #6: Develop Sustainable Governance and Staffing Structure



Objective #1: Evaluate staffing needs

ACTION

#1

Contract with a human resources professional to work with the Board of Directors and General Counsel to conduct an assessment of District operations to determine appropriate staffing and organizational policies

#2

Develop job description, salary range, benefit and recruitment strategy for General Manager and/or Watermaster for operations

STATUS

DONE

In 2022, the Board approved updated policies and procedures and completed an organizational assessment of staffing needs

DONE

The Board developed a position description and hired a General Manager in 2023

Goal #6: Develop Sustainable Governance and Staffing Structure



Objective #2: Fill staffing needs

ACTION

STATUS

- #1** Release request for qualifications for outside engineer **UPDATE** Releasing request for qualifications for all outside contractors in 2025, including engineer
- #2** Work with a professional recruiter to hire a General Manager **DONE** The District worked with a professional recruiter to hire a General Manager in 2023
- #3** Release request for qualifications, interview and hire South System Watermaster **IN PROGRESS** Evaluating need for position, including alternatives
- #4** Work with General Manager to determine additional staffing needs (e.g. outside legal counsel, support staff) **UPDATE** Ongoing

Goal #6: Develop Sustainable Governance and Staffing Structure



Objective #3: Finalize District policies and procedures

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Develop bylaws

DONE

Determined bylaws not necessary because District governed by Water Code sections 740000 etc seq, empowering California water conservation districts

#2

Develop employee handbook

IN PROGRESS

Completed draft handbook in 2023 and will finalize in 2024

#3

Update Board Policy Manual

UPDATE

The Board will update the Board Policies and Procedures every 3-5 years

Goal #7: Increase the Total Water Supply Available



Objective #1: Complete the Pilot DREAM Project (Recharge, Banking and Recovery) for 1,000 AFA

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Complete delivery of 1,000 AFA to District lands

DONE

Delivered 592 AF in 2023 and 342 AF in 2018-19

#2

Complete DREAM Pilot Project (easements, permits, pipeline, etc.)

DONE

Completed DREAM Pilot Project in 2023

#3

Work with San Joaquin County and East Bay Municipal Utility District to return water under project

IN PROGRESS

Will return water to East Bay Municipal Utility District in 2024

Goal #7: Increase the Total Water Supply Available



Objective #2: Design and permit the full East Bay Municipal Utility District Banking Project to obtain additional water supplies of up to 8,000 AFA

ACTION

STATUS

#1

Work with East Bay Municipal Utility District on project description

IN PROGRESS

Scheduled first meeting with East Bay Municipal Utility District in January 2024

#2

Complete contract with East Bay Municipal Utility District to address financing project

UPDATE

Scheduled for 2024

#3

Complete environmental review and permitting process for project

UPDATE

Contingent on East Bay Municipal Utility District discussions

Goal #7: Increase the Total Water Supply Available



Objective #2: Design and permit the full East Bay Municipal Utility District Banking Project to obtain additional water supplies of up to 8,000 AFA

ACTION

STATUS

- #4** Build facilities for project **UPDATE** Contingent on East Bay Municipal Utility District discussions
- #5** Operate project and use additional water (up to 8,000 AFA) **UPDATE** Contingent on East Bay Municipal Utility District discussions