

FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

A STATE OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCY

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INTERIM EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Jeff Palmer



Fiscal Year 2025-2026

PROPOSED BUDGET REPORT

Adopted by the Board July 23, 2025

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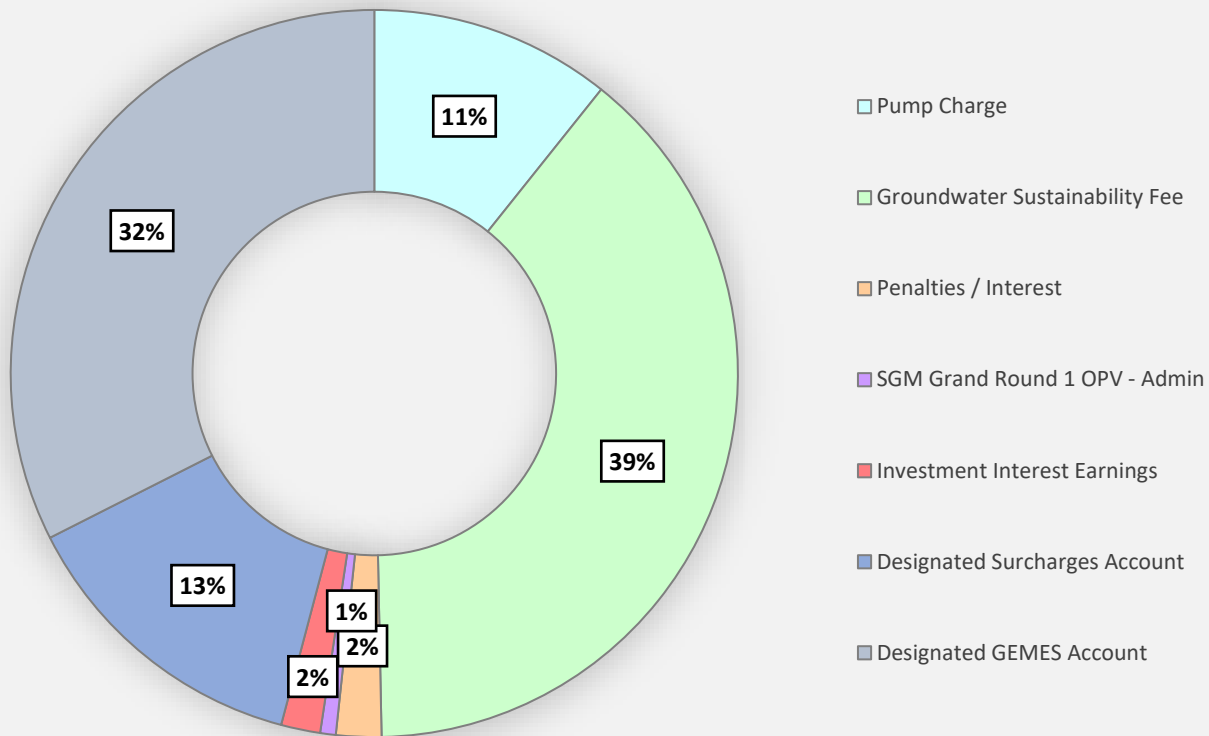
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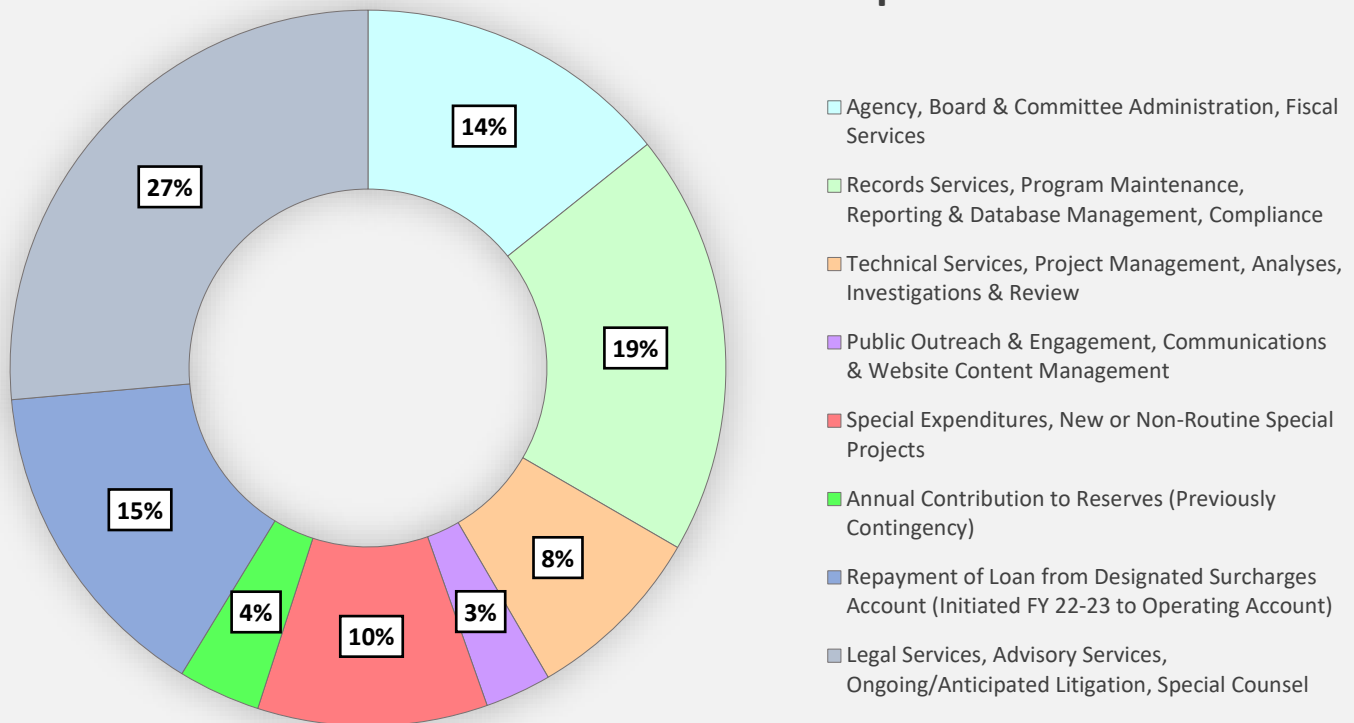
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Where the Funds Come From



i FY 25-26 Revenues.

Where the Funds Are Spent



ii FY 25-26 Expenditures. Includes Estimated Designated GEMES Account Expenditures for Legal Services.

II. FY 2025-26 BUDGET AT A GLANCE

A. Executive Officer's Transmittal Letter

Welcome to the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Proposed Budget Report, a work-in-progress aimed at increasing clarity and transparency in the Agency's funding and expenses. This second annual Proposed Report is designed to be read online, as hyperlinks are included for reference. It is the staff's goal to effect continuous improvement to this format with each budget cycle. The development of a new format for presenting this information is a recent initiative requested by the FCGMA Fiscal Committee, and future iterations will be improved with feedback from our Board of Directors and our stakeholders, bolstered by annual Board and Committee strategy development. Over the years, Proposed Reports will become effective at clearly communicating the Agency's funding needs and work priorities.

The Proposed Budget Report does not present different scenarios for the Board to choose from. It is designed to present Agency staff's recommended assumptions, based on conversations with the Fiscal Committee, that may be changed by Board direction, and to highlight considerations for the Board to discuss during budget adoption.

The draft budget assumes a fully staffed Agency with a full-time Executive Officer and is intended to allocate funding and staff resources to maintain high levels of service, while investing in enhancements to Agency services and infrastructure to continue the preservation and management of groundwater resources within our jurisdiction for the common benefit of all users.

1. *At A Glance – Agency Operations*

Expenditures are forecasted to be higher than revenues in FY 2024-25 due to the adjudication of the Oxnard and Pleasant Valley Basins and due to repayment of the loan to the Operating Account from the Designated Surcharges Account; the loan was

approved by the FCGMA Board during adoption of the FY 2022-23 Budget, to be repaid in FY 2024-25. During adoption of the FY 2024-25 Budget, the Board postponed repayment to FY 2025-26. The Fiscal Committee recommends repaying the loan during FY 2025-26.

<i>Operating Account</i>	2023-24 Year-End Actuals	2024-25 Year-End Actuals	2025-26 Draft Budget
Revenues	\$4,026,499	\$7,338,358	\$4,035,502
Expenditures	\$2,945,916	\$6,645,681	\$5,520,137
Net Operating Results	\$1,080,583	\$692,677	(\$1,484,635)
Fund Balance, 6/30	\$2,685,396	\$2,563,241	\$3,255,918

A. Main Agency Initiatives, Challenges and Uncertainties for FY 2025-26

There are several time-sensitive priorities and challenges or uncertainties that are top of mind, including:

1. Implementing the LPV Adjudication Judgment

The Adjudication Judgment for the LPV Basin (Judgment)¹ appointed the FCGMA as Watermaster to implement the Judgment in the Basin. As Watermaster, FCGMA is responsible for implementing the GSP for the LPV Basin in a manner that will achieve the sustainability goals mandated by SGMA. The Judgment requires the Watermaster to take certain Basin Management Actions and includes deadlines and important dates to implement many of these Basin Management Actions. While this requires significant commitment of staff time, none of the LPV Watermaster efforts are included in the

¹ <https://fcgma.org/las-posas-valley-watermaster/lpv-adjudication-judgment/>

Agency's draft FY 2025-26 Budget². Therefore, even though full staffing is assumed in the Draft FY 2025-26 Budget, The Draft FY 25-26 Work Plan appears to budget fewer hours, due to a separation of LPV Watermaster budgeting; staff time required to implement LPV Watermaster tasks is not included in the Agency's draft FY 2025-26 Budget.

2. Ongoing Litigation

The OPV Adjudication has begun to create significant demands on staff time. The discovery process requires prompt responses and depositions require preparation and availability. In addition, the amount of Public Records Act requests and owner inquiries related to the OPV Adjudication have far surpassed the volume and scope of other information requests for the calendar year. More information on contract spending and legal expenses can be found later in this report in the Expenditures section.

3. Onboarding a Full Time, Dedicated Executive Officer

Reporting directly to the FCGMA Board of Directors, the new full-time Executive Officer (EO) is likely to join the Agency in the early months of FY 2025-26. Staff and Board alike are excited to help this individual get up to speed and acclimated with Agency's mission, and we remind our stakeholders that effective onboarding of a new leader takes time. Read more about the EO in the section "How the Agency is Staffed."

These and other considerations highlighted throughout this Proposed Budget Report are summarized in the section, "[Recommendations and Considerations](#)."

² LPV Adjudication Judgment, Exh A, Section 2.7.4: "Watermaster Accounts" <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Judgment-w-Exhibits.cleaned.pdf>

2. Overview of the Proposed Budget Report

Following this transmittal letter the Budget Report provides a profile of the Agency and how we are structured (and why), with a deep dive into how we are staffed, including insights from the recent Staffing Analysis Report, recommendations regarding Board Compensation, County Staffing Contract renewal considerations, proposed new Agency roles, and an update on the status of vacancies and recruitment.

The Report then discusses the Agency's current financial management processes, providing insights into the procedures, Agency tasks, and Board priorities that help inform the draft budget. The Financial Management section includes an overview of the FCGMA audit schedule.

The main focus of the Report follows in the section titled "Explanation of Budget," which begins with a overview of the accounts Agency funds are held in, how revenue from different fees is allocated to those accounts and which expenses are paid from them, recommendations regarding some of these fees, and ending with a detailed look at the Operating Account which funds main Agency endeavors.

From there, readers will be brought to our "Recommendations and Considerations" section, where all recommendations contextualized within this report are gathered into an overview for Fiscal Committee and Board discussion. Readers may navigate back to the Table of Contents and click through to any section. The footer on every page of this report features a link to return to the Table of Contents.

Respectfully,



Jeff Palmer

Acting Interim Executive Officer

The following FCGMA Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget materials, linked below, appear as they will be presented to the Board of Directors on July 23, 2025.

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Operating Account Budget:

<https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12A-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA-Operating-Account-Budget.pdf>

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Designated Accounts Budget:

https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12B-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA_Designated-Accounts-Budget.pdf

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Statement of Financial Position:

<https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12C-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA-Statement-of-Financial-Position.pdf>

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Work Plan:

<https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12D-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA-Work-Plan.pdf>

III. AGENCY PROFILE

A. About FCGMA

The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) manages and protects both confined and unconfined aquifers within several groundwater basins underlying the southern portion of Ventura County. All lands lying above the deep Fox Canyon aquifer account for more than half of the water needs for 450,000 residents in the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, and Moorpark, plus the unincorporated communities of Saticoy, El Rio, Somis, Moorpark Home Acres, Nyeland Acres, Leisure Village, Point Mugu and Montalvo. The FCGMA is an independent special district, separate from the County of Ventura or any city government. It was created by California Legislature to oversee Ventura County's vital groundwater resources, per the adoption of Assembly Bill No. 2995 Chapter 1023³, which was approved by the Governor and filed with the Secretary of State in September 1982. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)⁴ identified the Agency as the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the basins within its jurisdiction. The Agency also acts as watermaster for the Las Posas Valley Basin⁵.

B. Mission Statement

The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency is dedicated to the preservation and management of groundwater resources within its jurisdiction for the common benefit of all users.⁶

³ <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/AB-2995-FCGMA-Enabling-Legislation.pdf>

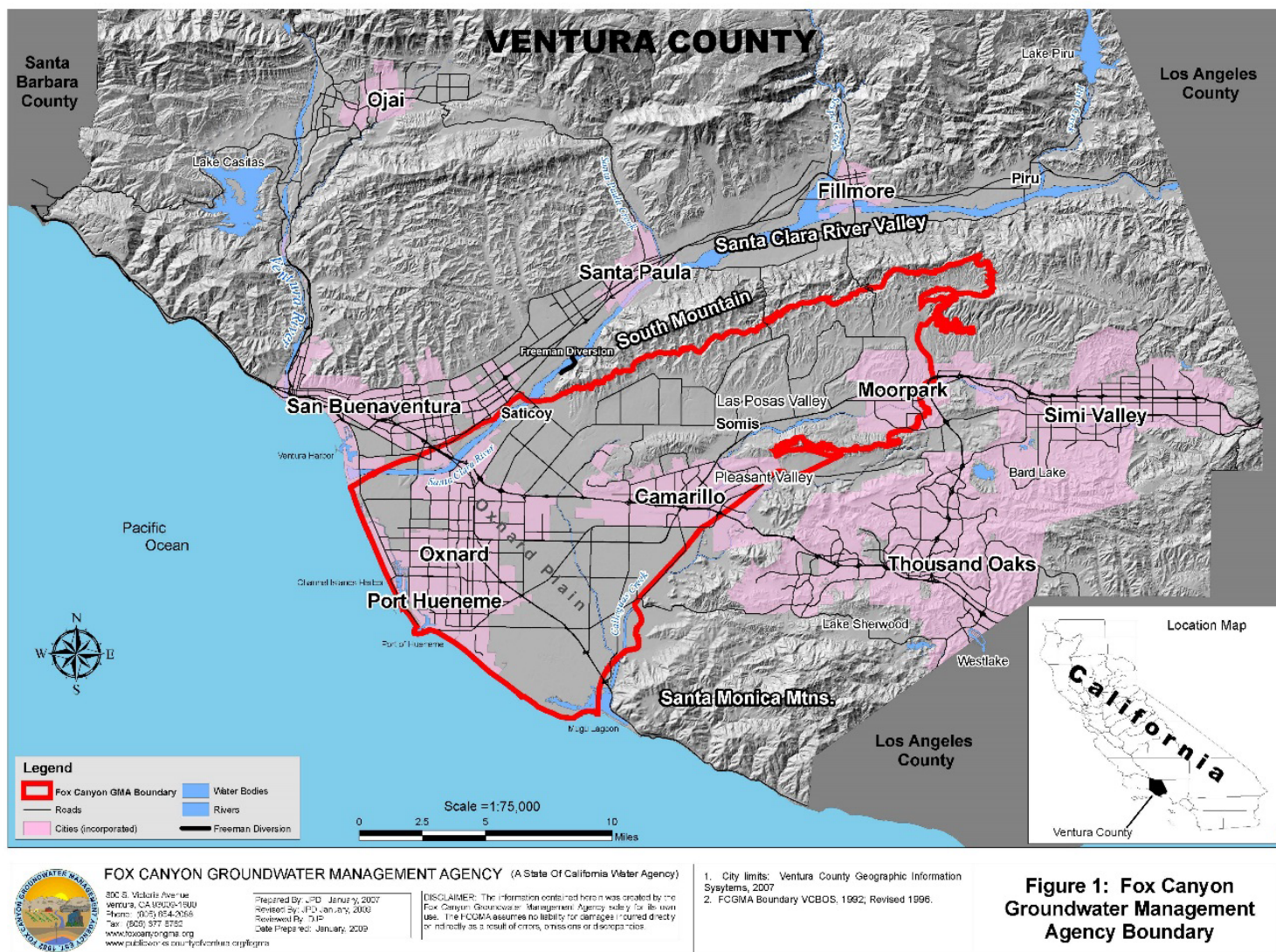
⁴ SGMA: <https://water.ca.gov/programs/groundwater-management/sgma-groundwater-management#>

⁵ <https://fcgma.org/las-posas-valley-watermaster/>

⁶ The above mission statement was revised and approved by the Board of Directors on March 22, 2023.

C. Boundary of the Agency

The FCGMA boundary encompasses 183 square miles and includes land from the Oxnard coastline to Happy Camp Canyon east of Moorpark.



*iii FIGURE 1 – FCGMA Boundary Map

Within this boundary are all, or parts of, five (5) incorporated cities, including Moorpark, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, and Ventura. Also within the Agency boundary are several water companies of various sizes. Although imported water is vital to almost everyone in southern Ventura County, and surface water diversions supplement a

valuable percentage of irrigation needs, groundwater still supplies the main source of water (about 67%) used by approximately 350,000 people and hundreds of farms within the FCGMA boundaries.

D. Organizational Structure

1. Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships

As expressly stated in the FCGMA enabling legislation⁷, and as echoed in our mission statement, the goals and objectives of FCGMA include the planning, management, preservation, and regulation of the use of groundwater for the common benefit of water users within FCGMA territory. These goals are primarily achieved through the development, implementation, and enforcement of groundwater management plans and policies that are designed to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater within FCGMA's territory.

In accordance with the enabling legislation, FCGMA has not historically involved itself in activities normally undertaken by member agencies, including construction, operation, and maintenance of capital facilities. Many of these facilities such as dams, spreading grounds, pipelines, flood control structures, and water distribution facilities are operated by member agencies both within and outside the FCGMA boundary, with the goals of the FCGMA in mind, and to aid or assist FCGMA groundwater management efforts. Within its mandate, via tactics such as mitigation planning or compliance reviews, the Agency aims to support projects that help to further sustainability goals identified in our Groundwater Sustainability Plans.

The Agency's governing Board of Directors, Agency staff, member agencies, and individual stakeholders all share stewardship for the successful operation of the Agency

⁷ <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/AB-2995-FCGMA-Enabling-Legislation.pdf>

and for the groundwater it manages. These roles and responsibilities are summarized below.

A. Board of Directors

The Board has the responsibility for establishing and revising policy through the adoption of laws, ordinances, and resolutions that support FCGMA's mission statement, goals, and objectives. All Agency rules must also be in conformance with State laws. The Board is responsible for providing the means and resources necessary for the Executive Officer and staff to administer FCGMA's policies.

B. Agency Staff

Under Board direction, Staff takes responsibility for initiating, preparing, and securing the appropriate reviews and approval for agenda items, including ensuring all necessary staff members, Board committees, and stakeholders have been involved and informed where appropriate; authoring agenda items; working with Agency Counsel on legal aspects of the item, including providing all background information to allow Counsel to prepare appropriate documentation, including contracts; coordinating with the Clerk to schedule agenda items, and to ensure sufficient time to adhere to public hearing notice requirements and/or reading of ordinances; and prepare presentations for the Board's information.

Staff are responsible for administering the policies adopted by the Board. Under the leadership and direction of the Executive Officer, FCGMA staff does not make policy decisions; staff provides technical studies, policy analysis and logistical support to the Board of Directors to assist the Board in adopting, monitoring, and evaluating meaningful and effective policies. The FCGMA Executive Officer and Agency Groundwater Manager are responsible for directing staff, implementing policies adopted by the Board, and ensuring that Board directives are carried out effectively. The Executive Officer also serves as the Agency's primary spokesperson with regards

to stakeholders and the public, but all staff interact with stakeholders to assist with reporting, facilitate engagement, respond to inquiries, and provide technical project reviews.

FCGMA also contracts with consultants who perform as staff, whether due to understaffing or specific needs of a special project. Current contracts are discussed further in section “Expenditures – Personnel.”

C. Member Agencies and Stakeholders

“Member Agencies” refers to entities that are purveying water within Agency boundaries. Currently, there are five cities: (Camarillo, Moorpark, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, and Ventura), two major wholesalers (Calleguas Municipal and United Water Conservation District), and seven mutual water companies (1) Alta Mutual Water Company, (2) Pleasant Valley County Water District, (3) Berylwood Mutual Water Company, (4) Calleguas Municipal Water District, (5) Camrosa Water District, (6) Zone Mutual Water Company, and (7) Del Norte Mutual Water Company who are purveying water either partially or totally within the territory of the FCGMA. Under many circumstances, these member agencies also serve as de facto representatives for individual property owners, well operators, and other stakeholders that their agencies serve within FCGMA boundaries. They are also FCGMA stakeholders.

Well owners and operators play a key role in that they are responsible for “self-reporting” groundwater extractions to the FCGMA accurately and in a timely manner (e.g. twice per Water Year, reporting on or near March 31, and September 30, annually). It is critical that this group provide meaningful feedback to the staff and Board by accurately self-reporting groundwater use on a timely basis and by providing the fees, data, and feedback necessary to enable the FCGMA to manage groundwater resources and to pay for expenses incurred in doing so.

2. About the FCGMA Board of Directors

FCGMA is governed by five Board Members. They represent the (1) County of Ventura, (2) the United Water Conservation District, (3) the seven water districts within the Agency (Alta Mutual Water Company, Pleasant Valley County Water District, Berylwood Mutual Water Company, Calleguas Municipal Water District, Camrosa Water District, Zone Mutual Water Company, and Del Norte Mutual Water Company), (4) the five incorporated cities within the Agency (Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, Port Hueneme, and Moorpark), and (5) the farmers. All Board Members are appointed by their respective organizations or groups. Agricultural representatives are appointed jointly by the Ventura County Farm Bureau (VCFB) and the Ventura County Agricultural Association (VCAA).

Each Board Member has an Alternate, and all members serve a two-year term. In 2007, the Board offset the terms of the City Council and the Agricultural representatives from the remaining three representatives by one year to ensure continuity of Agency operations and to prevent a complete turnover of all FCGMA Directors at the same time. City and Farm representatives are elected in even-numbered years; with UWCD, County, and Water District representatives elected in odd-numbered years.

Representative	Term Expirations	Current Board Member	Current Alternate	Term Expires
Farmers Representative	Even Years	Michael Craviotto	David Borchard	02-28-2026
Five Cities Representative	Even Years	Tony Trembley	Bert Perello	02-28-2026
United Water Conservation District	Even Years	Lynn Maulhardt	Keith Ford	02-28-2027
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	Odd Years	Kelly Long (Vice Chair)	Vianey Lopez	02-28-2027
Seven Water Districts	Odd Years	Eugene F. West (Chair)	Reddy Pakala	02-28-2027

A. Board of Director Compensation

Board members and Alternates currently serve on a volunteer basis, and no salaried compensation is currently provided for participation or attendance at FCGMA meetings or events. Board members and officers may attend seminars, conferences, or training sessions at Agency expense, and in so doing, will be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses incurred in accordance with applicable sections of the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Financial Management Chapter VII (c)-1 (reimbursement of employees' business expenses)⁸ that the FCGMA has relied upon in lieu of officially adopting a separate policy document.

As unpaid volunteers, FCGMA Board Members are not required to provide any service beyond official monthly Board meetings or special Board sessions. While Board Members are not currently paid by the Agency, the Agency does provide for their insurance, as detailed later in this report under Expenditures.

Since the Agency was created in 1983, the FCGMA Board of Directors has not been compensated for its service, attending meetings and related activities, or related travel. The FCGMA Act, Water Code section 121-102 et seq., does not authorize or prohibit the Agency from compensating its directors. Other statutes may authorize the compensation of local public agencies subject to certain limits and requirements. Additional research and direction would be necessary to determine whether, and to what extent, the FCGMA Board may be compensated.

During its June 13, 2025, special meeting⁹, the Board discussed the topic of compensation and directed Agency staff and counsel to research and prepare a presentation and materials to authorize the compensation of the Board of Directors for consideration at a future meeting. In the event that Board compensation is approved and

⁸ Internal document available upon request.

⁹ See Item 14 at <https://ventura.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=21217>.

formally adopted, staff recommend an estimate of Board Compensation be added as a line item to the budget for ongoing reporting.

B. FCGMA Committees

In 2012, the Board approved the formation of three committees: Executive, Fiscal, and Operations. Committee assignments are discussed and approved by the Board annually, alongside new Board member appointments, typically during the February or March Regular Board meeting.

Regarding the role of Committee members:

- a. All Committee members are advisory to the Board and shall serve to communicate the needs, programs, and proposals of the communities they represent.
- b. As distinct from the staff, an Advisory Committee's role shall not be considered technical in nature, unless specifically set up in such a manner.
- c. As distinct from the Board of Directors, an Advisory Committee's role shall not be considered legislative in nature.
- d. The Agency's technical staff shall inform the Committee of major needs, programs, and proposals.
- e. Committee members are encouraged to comment while discussing related agenda items heard during meetings of the Board of Directors to offer their insights, counsel, and opinions on their committee's behalf relating to Agency needs.

Member	Committee Appointment	Appointment Expires
Michael Craviotto	Operations	02-28-2026
Tony Trembley	Fiscal	02-28-2026
Lynn Maulhardt	Operations	02-28-2026
Kelly Long (Vice-Chair)	Executive	02-28-2026
Eugene F. West (Chair)	Executive, Fiscal	02-28-2026

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board and meets when directed by the Board to discuss issues including, but not limited to:

- Strategic planning
- Prioritization of Work Plan items
- Regional coordination to increase water supply
- Recommendations regarding extraction allocation systems

Fiscal Committee

The Fiscal Committee is composed of two directors, typically the Chair and Cities' representative, and meets when directed by the Board to discuss issues including, but not limited to:

- Budget development and tracking
- Pursuit of grants
- Development of replenishment fees
- Development of fiscal policy

Operations Committee

The Operations Committee is composed of two directors, typically the County of Ventura or Agricultural and United Water Conservation District representatives, and meets when directed by the Board to discuss issues including, but not limited to:

- Performance of self-reporting and meter calibration
- Software enhancements
- Project selection: Identification of projects to increase water supply
- Water Market development

3. How the Agency is Staffed

Per our founding legislation, [Assembly Bill No. 2995](#), Ch. 1023, Sec. 408¹⁰: “The agency may contract with the county or United for staff and other services and may hire such other contractors and consultants as it considers appropriate.” On January 22, 2025, the State of California’s Office of the Attorney General published [Opinion No. 24-101](#)¹¹, asserting that “The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency was created by the Legislature, as reflected in Water Code Appendix sections 121-102 to 121-1105... The statutory scheme establishes the Agency’s power to contract for staff services, and it limits that power to contracting with the two agencies specified in the statute, which are the County of Ventura and the United Water Conservation District.”

FCGMA contracts with the County of Ventura to provide staff to support the FCGMA¹². As such, the Agency is staffed by County of Ventura (County) employees pursuant to this agreement executed in April 1983 and amended in September 1998. Per to this contract, the County provides staff, overhead, and resources to support the Agency’s groundwater management activities, policies, and programs; administrative and financial functions and services; and legal representation. The FCGMA Board has expressed interest in reviewing and revising the staffing agreement and has recently retained the services of Light Gabler LLP to represent their negotiations of such. Staff recommend the budget for Light Gabler’s services be added to the draft FY 2025-26 Budget as a line item to track expenses throughout the process.

The FY 2025-26 Draft Budget presents a “highest cost scenario” for staff planning purposes. Unlike the development of previous Agency budgets, the FY 2024-25 Budget assumed funding along with the funding of a full-time Executive Officer. These assumptions are carried over to the proposed draft FY 2025-26 Budget. Previous budgets

¹⁰ AB 2995: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/AB-2995-FCGMA-Enabling-Legislation.pdf>

¹¹ No. 24-101: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CA-Attorney-General-FCGMA-Staffing-Opinion-24-101.pdf>

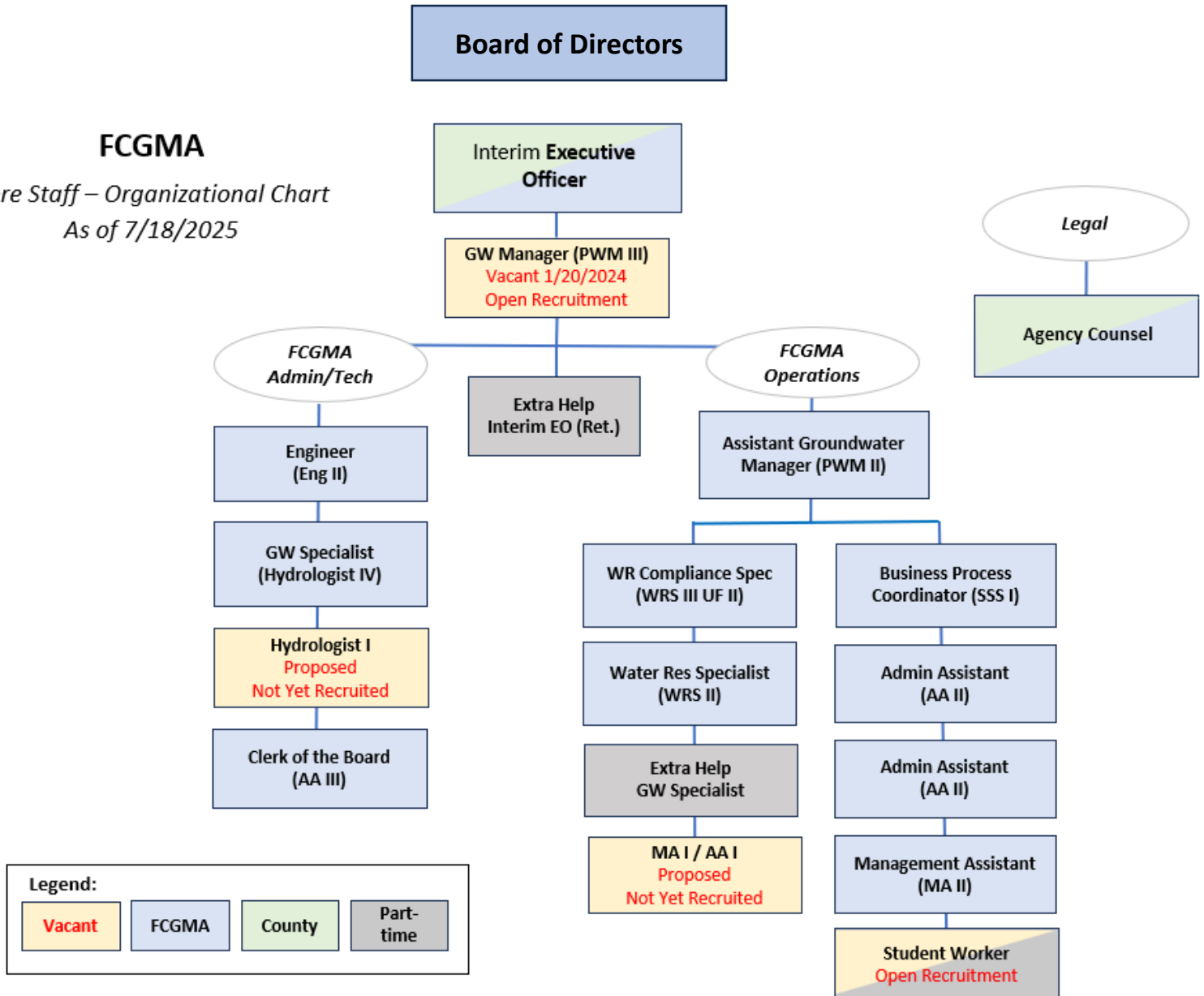
¹² 1983 Staffing Services Contract, Amended 1998: <https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/GMA-County-Contract-1983.pdf>

estimated when existing vacancies would be filled, or positions vacated, and the Executive Officer position was previously set at a fixed cost of 25% of the Public Works Agency Director's fully burdened rate.

Of the Agency's main or "core" staff, we currently have 10 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, and 3 part-time staff, including Agency Counsel. The organizational chart below displays current staffing levels, including the current status of the Executive Officer position as a part-time County role.

A. Agency Organizational Chart – Main Staff

FCGMA Core Staff – Organizational Chart As of 7/18/2025



B. *About the Executive Officer*

Jeff Palmer, Acting Interim Executive Officer

As empowered by the FCGMA Board, the Executive Officer (EO) provides administrative leadership, research, and advisory services to the Agency, and acts as the main liaison between the Board, the public, and government agencies. The EO is charged by Board resolution with carrying out the duties, performing the functions and exercising the executive powers enumerated in the Agency's Ordinance code. The Board decides the cadence for which items will be presented to the Board or a committee of the Board. Following consultation and direction from the Board and the Chair of the Board, the EO oversees agenda development and presentation; the role of the Executive Officer in the agenda process is to ensure agenda materials contain a thorough policy analysis (and if applicable, financial), a review of alternatives, and that they contain an appropriate recommendation to enable the Board to make informed and reasonable decisions. The Executive Officer also serves as the budget administrator and chief of staff.

The Agency does not currently have a full-time Executive Officer. The position is temporarily filled by an Acting Interim Executive Officer with other responsibilities within the County. Jeff Palmer, our current Interim EO, also serves the County as Assistant Director of Public Works.

Discussion on creating a new full-time Executive Officer position has been ongoing at the Executive Committee and at the full Board level since December 2024, when the Board adopted Resolution 2024-06¹³ defining the function of the position. In March 2025, the Board authorized engaging Peckham and McKinney Recruitment Services¹⁴. The Agency is now on track to employ its first full-time, dedicated Executive Officer thanks to the Board's national recruitment search and evaluation of candidates, upon the April 2025 retirement of the Agency's previous Interim Executive Officer, Arne Anselm. Officially

¹³ Resolution 2024-06: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Resolution-2024-06.pdf>

¹⁴ See Item 14: <https://ventura.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=20595>

hiring, then onboarding the EO and setting expectations with regards to Board review and protocols, will be an Agency-wide effort in the first months of FY 2025-26. The full-time EO will report directly to the Board.

C. Status of Vacancies and Recruitment and Retention Efforts

Hiring, training, and maintaining a fully staffed Agency remains a challenge, but the Agency has made great progress on filling its roster over the previous Fiscal Year. Per [AB 2561](#)¹⁵, a new requirement as of this year, of our current 12 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, we currently have 2 vacancies: the Groundwater Manager, a position vacated in January 2024, remains vacant and is currently undergoing recruitment as of the time of this report's writing; the Executive Officer position, a newly classified FTE role, is the other vacancy. The EO role has been recruited, and hiring is pending as of the time of this report's writing.

A staff recommendation included in the draft FY 2025-26 Budget proposes funding 2 additional roles: additional staff support in the form of an entry-level hydrologist and a management or administrative assistant to help offset the tasks our Agency must accomplish to be effective, and to provide support for Board-recommended priorities such as Monitoring Network improvement planning, systematically clearing processing backlogs associated with temporary variances or civil penalty waiver requests, developing a stakeholder outreach plan to educate and discuss rampdown considerations with stakeholders, and more.

Regarding retention and hiring efforts in the Agency's future, staff requests Board feedback to "identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may lead to obstacles in the hiring process," as described in AB 2561, as needed. Perhaps this element could be addressed for future attention during negotiations to renew the Agency Staffing Contract with the County.

¹⁵ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB2561

D. Staffing Needs Analysis Report

Time required to effectively complete regular Agency tasks, and a multitude of special projects or new programs that have not been developed into routine operations, are discussed in depth in the recently completed [Agency Staffing Needs Analysis Report](#)¹⁶, compiled and presented to the Board by consultant Hallmark Group on February 12, 2025.

In FY 2024-25, Hallmark Group was contracted to analyze the Agency's staffing needs to accomplish its work, tasks, and responsibilities. Over several months in 2024, Hallmark Group held multiple interviews with Agency staff to understand responsibilities and staffing requirements. Agency staff supplied time estimates for tasks that were included within the work plan or within the task level shown in the Agency Work Task and Prioritization matrix (see also the section "Agency Priorities"). Using their understanding of public agency staffing and requirements imposed on groundwater sustainability agencies by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, Hallmark Group performed a qualitative assessment during staff interviews to develop appropriate task assumptions and reviewed this assessment against the final draft staff hours. Many additional activities were identified during the analysis, which were not identified in the original FCGMA Work Task and Prioritization sheet. These include, but are not limited to, supervision and personnel issues, process improvement, training, consultant management, strategic planning, grant proposals, stakeholder outreach, website management, and financial management of payments. Hallmark Group made an effort to identify and quantify the staff needs for these additional tasks. Hours tracked by staff for billing the Agency was found lacking as a dependable source of data since overtime is not paid to salaried staff and is not tracked in the accounting system.

¹⁶ Agency Staffing Analysis Report: https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/20250212_Agency-Staffing-Analysis-Report_Hallmark-Group.pdf

The estimates include some administrative tasks that, at the time of the report, were performed by consultants due to insufficient staffing levels, but they do not include consultants hired for their special expertise, such as groundwater modelers and hydrogeologists for writing the recently submitted periodic evaluations, or outside counsel for litigation. Fiscal services provided by the County are also not included in the estimates, which range from nuanced financial reporting to accounts receivable, audit support, and general accounting.

Key findings from the analysis:

- Currently, staff is only able to perform a subset of the required tasks for the administration of FCGMA, and the full-time equivalent (FTE) of this task subset is approximately 15 employees.
- The estimated level of staffing to perform all the required tasks (unimitated tasks and the additional identified tasks) necessary to accomplish the Agency's work is approximately 20 FTEs.
- Using FY 2024-25 employee rates that include employee benefits and overhead, the estimated staff costs to perform all required FCGMA tasks was reported at \$5.7 million.

For context, at one point in 2024, the Agency was down to five staff members. The final Staffing Needs Analysis Report was presented to the FCGMA Board of Directors on February 12, 2025. As of the Staffing Needs Analysis Report's presentation date, the Agency had ten full-time positions filled.

E. Highlights from New Hires in FY 2024-25

Water Resources Specialist

Until December 2025, the Agency contracted with Rincon Associates to assist with AMI data input/data management, track data deliverables from AMI vendors, and import the

monthly data. In 2018, the FCGMA Board adopted an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Ordinance, whose purpose and intent are to: a) provide for broader and simultaneous measurement and reporting of groundwater extractions; b) improve the Agency's ability to monitor and manage groundwater use; c) facilitate implementation of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan; and d) promote sustainable groundwater management within the Agency. Due to the Agency's increased workload and current staffing levels, the Interim Executive Officer exercised the authority granted by the Board via Resolution 2018-02 to enter professional services contracts up to \$25,000 to supplement staff. An additional \$53,977.88 was approved at the July 27, 2024, Board meeting. The Agency has since onboarded a Water Resources Specialist to assume these duties, and the Specialist has brought a data-oriented acumen to the role that allows her to optimize its function across the Agency's work focus areas, such as groundwater extraction reporting, Ordinance compliance, and research. Bringing these services in-house also saves on overall costs when contract administration and consultant management tasks are factored in.

Engineer

After Board discussion on the Agency's need for project review and analysis, the Engineer position, an Agency liaison with other agencies proposing or reporting on projects, was proposed during adoption of the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget¹⁷. As described in the Board materials for the Budget adoption: "the engineer would manage the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) [analysis] of water-supply and infrastructure projects, both the Agency's and other agencies' projects needed to achieve sustainable groundwater management, as well as provide technical support to other Agency programs such as the AMI and flowmeter programs."¹⁸ The Engineer does not manage projects for other agencies with authority but serves in liaison capacity to other agencies only.

¹⁷ June 22, 2022, meeting, Item 2: <https://ventura.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=15484>

¹⁸ Ibid.

The Engineer, onboarded in winter 2024, also serves as an independent analysis of projects proposed by other agencies to confirm benefits or additional yield, for the Agency's benefit in project evaluation, and to review project compliance as required by existing Board resolution; for example, Resolution 2016-04¹⁹ concerning the North Pleasant Valley Basin Desalter Project, or Resolution 2013-02²⁰ and Resolution 2023-02²¹, both concerning the City of Oxnard's Groundwater Recovery Enhancement and Treatment (GREAT) program.

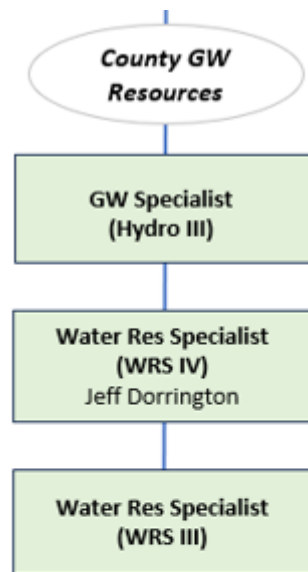
Most importantly, the Engineer is tasked with identifying potential improvements to increase benefits to the basin(s), and to mitigate potential conflicts with other proposed projects. Water agencies will design projects to meet their rate payors' needs, whereas small improvements or recommendations for such may provide benefits to sustainable yield. After analysis by the Engineer and subsequent Board discussion and recommendation, the Agency may be able to fund those improvements in the future.

¹⁹ Resolution 2016-04: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Resolution-2016-04.pdf>

²⁰ Resolution 2013-02: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/resolution-2013-02.pdf>

²¹ Resolution 2023-02: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Resolution-2023-02.pdf>

F. Additional County Support



County Groundwater Resources staff implement the County's GW Ordinance. GW Staff are available to assist FCGMA on an as-needed basis.

In addition to our main staff, the Agency is supported as needed by additional County services from member agencies such as the Public Works Agency (PWA) Groundwater Resources and Central Services departments, and the General Services Agency (GSA).

To provide context: Central Services includes PWA Information Technology (IT) staff, who assist with equipment and software support, database programming and maintenance, website hosting, and Federal accessibility requirements; Fiscal Services staff, who assist with audit management, accounts receivable and accounts payable; and Human Resources (HR) staff, who manage benefits, recruitment efforts, general employee onboarding, workplace safety training, and payroll, among other integral contributions to staff. General Services Agency (GSA) support includes but is not limited to conference room access and coordination, and equipment technicians that set up and troubleshoot the spaces our staff and Board meet in

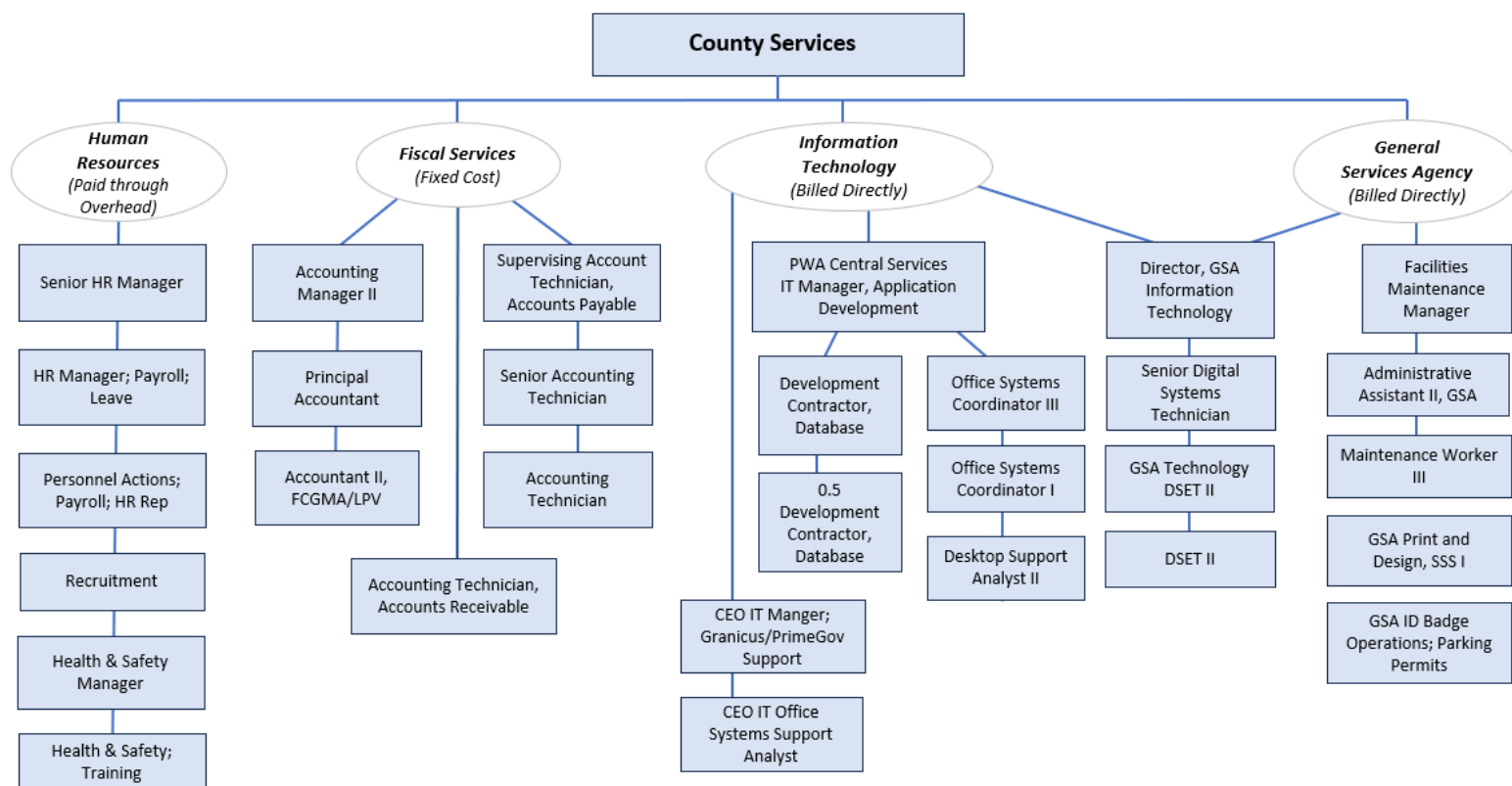
to further our work, and GSA security staff, who administer ID badges and parking permits.

Our Agency is privileged to have the wider resources of the County available to our staff and our duties. You'll notice that services are billed in different ways: fixed cost is lump sum, overhead is a percent, and billed directly is hourly.

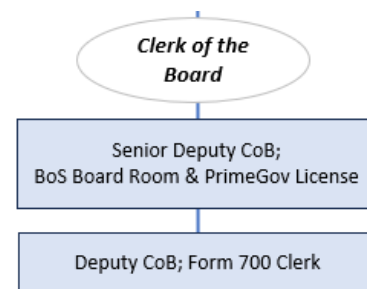
Agency staff work closely with Fiscal Services staff; their accounting technicians process our deposit transmittal reports and make sure payments are deposited swiftly; their Accounts Payable technicians route and pay invoices after we have coded, reviewed, and approved them for payment. FCGMA depends mightily on Fiscal's talented staff,

especially our main Agency accountant, who provides invaluable review and feedback during the development of this report and all budget documents.

1. County Services – Example Organizational Chart



County services also include the Board of Supervisors' Clerk of the Board (BOS COB), which shares their Granicus/OneMeeting PrimeGov license with FCGMA, saving the Agency approximately \$100,000 annually. Per the Brown Act²², we are required to have our Board agenda materials available online in an open format; PrimeGov allows us to index and archive Board Agenda materials on the PrimeGov platform, which is accessible via a website plug-in on <https://fcgma.org/board-agendas-broadcasts-minutes/>. Thanks to the PrimeGov plug-in



²² https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=54954.2

on our website, the Agency is able to provide a searchable index of meeting materials dating back to 2001. The BOS COB also allows the FCGMA to use the Board of Supervisors' Boardroom and livestreaming capabilities for the Agency's monthly regular Board meetings, and assists with filing forms related to our Conflict of Interest Code²³ (COIC) and its amendments. BOS COB also coordinates annual Form 700 filings for consultants and those filers who are not required by the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to file directly, helping us stay in compliance with the Political Reform Act²⁴. As of January 2025, per SB 1156²⁵, the FCGMA Clerk coordinates annual filings for the Board and the Executive Officer directly with the FPPC.

Personnel expenses are detailed in the Expenditures section of this Budget Report, and additional staffing information is included in the appendices.

G. Consultants and Contractors

We are budgeting for an Agency that will become fully staffed, but the Draft FY 2025-26 Budget also includes funds for consultants; our current staffing level requires us to utilize consultants to act as staff. The Agency currently has 2 active contracts with consultants or contractors currently performing FCGMA work functions which would normally be accomplished by staff when we are employed at full hiring capacity. In comparison, the Agency had 4 active contracts for such work during FY 2024-25. This assertion does not factor in consultants acting as staff for LPV Watermaster, contracts for which are accounted for in a budget separate from FCGMA.

²³ COIC: <https://www.ventura.org/county-executive-office/clerk-of-the-board/conflict-of-interest-code/>

²⁴ Political Reform Act: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayexpandedbranch.xhtml?tocCode=GOV&division=&title=9.&part=&chapter=&article=

²⁵ SB 1156: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB1156

Dudek

Dudek provides specialty technical support for the Agency's compliance with SGMA and also as an extension of staff when needed to meet timely demands. The scope of work under the contract included technical support, GSP annual reports, data gap analysis, basin management scenarios and model coordination, project feasibility studies, Periodic Evaluations of the Basins, and project management. Not included in this draft budget proposal but is in Dudek's contract is work and services in support of the Agency's implementation of the LPV Adjudication, including preparation of technical reports and studies required by the LPV Adjudication Judgment.

Kennedy Jenks Consultants, Inc.

Kennedy Jenks was contracted to assist with preparing an application for Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Round 1 Implementation Grants to implement projects in the Oxnard Subbasin and Pleasant Valley Basin. After the Agency was notified by DWR of grant awards for both basins in a letter dated April 28, 2022. The Board approved a contract with Kennedy Jenks to conduct grant administration services, such as for the DWR SGM Round 1 Implementation Grants awarded to the Agency to implement projects in the Oxnard Subbasin and Pleasant Valley Basin.

The Agency successfully applied for the SGM Grant, bringing \$14.2 million to the basins. While most of this funding has been allocated to subgrantees City of Camarillo, Pleasant Valley County Water District, and United Water Conservation District, the Agency has the responsibility of administering the grant to stay in compliance with requirements. The Agency committed to drilling three deep wells and multiple shallow wells under this grant and, during FY 2024-25, was managing that project; all fieldwork and documents for reimbursement were completed in March 2025.

SGM Grant Round 2 Application: LPV

Consultant expenses for grant application services for the DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 2 for projects in the Las Posas Valley Basin have been estimated at \$150,000 for FY 2025-26.

Consultants and costs are discussed in further detail in the section *Explanation of Budget*.

E. Financial Management Process

Annually, the FCGMA prepares an Operating Budget and Work Plan to guide, direct and fund the Agency's work. Work Plan updates and Budget performance monitoring reports are prepared and submitted to the Fiscal Committee for review and discussion. Reporting and business practice documents are prepared as required for Board or Committee review via agenda materials, which include staff reports, Resolutions, or special presentations. Additionally, the FCGMA prepares a Biennial Audit Report every other year.

1. Preparation and Monitoring

The FCGMA's fiscal year begins July 1st and ends on June 30th of the calendar year. Administrative oversight and reporting of the Agency's financial transactions is performed by Agency management in consultation with the Fiscal Services Section of the Central Services Department of the Public Works Agency, pursuant to the ongoing contractual arrangement between the Agency and the County of Ventura.

The Fiscal Committee has recommended presenting draft annual budget materials early for feedback that can be implemented in advanced drafts; the Fiscal Committee recommends an April or May preliminary draft review. Agency management historically prepares quarterly budget-to-actual performance reports which are presented to the Board for their information, review, and feedback.

The Proposed Budget Report will become part of the Agency's financial management process over time, as recommended by the Fiscal Committee. If in the future the Fiscal Committee requires early budget adoption prior to the start of the Fiscal Year, year-end actuals will not be available for future iterations.

Agency quarterly summaries of the Agency's actual financial transactions for the current Fiscal Year are presented to the Board of Directors generally in accordance with the following Board meeting schedule:

Preliminary Draft Budget and Work Plan:	APRIL/MAY
Revised Draft Budget and Work Plan:	JUNE
Recommended Final Budget and Work Plan:	JULY
Previous Fiscal Year-End Budget Report:	SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
Current FY First Quarter Budget Performance Report:	DECEMBER/JANUARY
Current FY Mid-Year Budget Performance Report:	FEBRUARY/MARCH

Of note is the timeline FY 2025-26 draft budget materials were presented to the Fiscal Committee; after rounds of Committee review and revisions, final versions were presented to the Committee in July for Board discussion later in the month, two months earlier than the previous Fiscal Year.

During its July 2025 meeting, the Fiscal Committee recommended that it begin its budget planning process annually at the end of January or the beginning of February with a Mid-Year Budget Analysis of Actuals; the Committee has the intention to provide recommendations to the Board for a subsequent meeting in the form of a report, to supplement the mid-year budget review usually brought before the Board by Agency staff.

Monthly Balance Reports Presented to the Board

In the interest of transparency, beginning in Fiscal Year 2024-25 per the Fiscal Committee's recommendation, PWA CS Fiscal Services staff began presenting a monthly balance report²⁶ to the Board as part of the regular Board meeting consent Agenda. The balance report shows expenditures by accounting period, beginning with cash balance, revenue totals, and total funds available, followed by expenditures for support, contract charges, legal fees, grant costs, GSA charges, special expenditures, and other expenditures (such as hydrology supplies or dues for the Association of Water Agencies). Significant variances in monthly revenue or expenditures are annotated with a short narrative explanation, helping to contextualize the timing of large invoices or significant

²⁶ As an example, Balance Report for May 2025: <https://ventura.primegov.com/portal/item?id=276413>

increases in fees collected, which occur when Semi-Annual Extraction Statements are released for reporting submittal.

2. Work Plan – Matching Staffing to Priorities

The [Draft Fiscal Year 2025-26 Work Plan](#) summarizes estimates of staff services needed to meet the major work tasks identified to meet Agency goals during the next Fiscal Year. The Work Plan identifies staff and staff hours expected to be working on each task; staff track their time working on these tasks during the year for cost accounting.

The Work Plan provides the Board with an opportunity to prioritize the goals and objectives for staff to focus on in the Fiscal Year. The Work Plan also includes a separate category for special projects that are not routinely performed by the Agency on an annual basis. In the Draft FY 2025-26 Work Plan, after receiving initial feedback from the Executive and Fiscal Committees, and from the Board, staff have recommended resources be directed towards efforts deemed higher priorities and not others, such as prioritizing database upgrades and specialized IT support services over sourcing, migrating, and implementing an entirely new reporting database.

The Work Plan categorizes annual operations into Administration and Fiscal Services, Records Services, Technical Services, Legal Services, Public Outreach, and Special Expenditures, and then tallies labor hours and cost estimates for each section.

[Review the Draft FY 2025-26 Work Plan via this link.](#)

Detailed information about each section is available below, including estimates for labor hours and costs. Each section is subtotaled at its end; the grand total is displayed at the bottom of the Work Plan.

Administration and Fiscal Services includes Board and committee meeting administration, agency administration, official document filings and Public Records Act requests, budget administration, PWA CSD-Fiscal services, and biennial audit report administration.

Administration and Fiscal Services				
Task	Board Priority	Description	Labor Hours Estimate	Labor Cost Estimate
1. Board Meeting Administration	I.Board Meetings 1.Board meetings, agendas, minutes	- Regular and special Board meetings, including agendas, minutes, staff reports, presentations, participation, attendance, pre- and post-debriefing meetings - Contract estimate for County General Services Administration (GSA) fees for printing of Board packets and other materials, mail and shipping, Board room and AV fees, etc.	1,554	\$295,970
2. Agency Administration	N/A	- Agency-specific administration and clerical tasks - Customer inquiries and data requests - Staff and management planning meetings	1,179	\$168,438
3. Official Document Filings & Public Records Requests	II.Legislation or Regulations 5.Public Records Act (PRA) Requests	- Process business record filings and certifications (i.e. 700 Forms, CEQA/NOEs, EIR/MND's per fiscal year, State water agency filings, PRA requests, public notices)	654	\$86,384
4. Budget	II.Legislation or Regulations 3.Annual Work Plan & Budget	- Preparation and adoption of Annual Work Plan, Budget, Proposed Budget Report, and performance reports	378	\$74,772
5. CSD-Fiscal Staff Services	N/A	- CSD-Fiscal Services: submit 13-Monthly AP FSRs (incl. AP/AR), provide AP/AR and Cash-Flow Management Services, Fiscal Reports for the Agency	Fixed Cost	\$150,000
6. Committee Meetings	I.Committee Meetings 2. Committee Meeting Administration	- Executive, Fiscal, Operations, and other advisory committee meetings coordination, agendas, minutes, etc.	908	\$177,652
7. Biennial Audit Report	II.Legislation or Regulations 4.Biennial Audit	- Preparation of Scope of Work; Auditor Selection Process; Assist Auditor with Inquiries; QA/QC of Draft Audit Report - next audit FY 2024-25	24	\$4,908
<i>Administration and Fiscal Services Subtotal</i>			4,697	\$958,123

Records Services includes specialized data queries, groundwater and credit transactions, operations and maintenance of our reporting database and our website, semi-annual extraction statement (SAES) reporting and allocation administration, well and CombCode registration, late or non-reporting SAES compliance, and meter calibration program maintenance.

Records Services				
Task		Description	Labor Hours Estimate	Labor Cost Estimate
1. Specialized Data Queries / Groundwater and Credit Transactions	IV.Ordinance 3.Allocation Transfer Requests	Conduct specialized data queries and analyses - Routine variance requests - Credit programs - Allocation transfers - Extraction data analysis	989	\$151,531
2. FCGMA Online and Website O&M	N/A	- Web page revisions and programming revisions - Data management system maintenance, custom data queries, small-scale system enhancements, planning for new data management system (\$260,100 IT services) - Web Application Hosting & GIS Fee (\$16,661 annually)	236	\$35,238
3. SAES and Allocation Administration	IV.Ordinance 1.Semi-Annual Statements (SAES)	TIER 1 - Routine SAES Processing - Prepare and mail SAES incl. data mgt system testing - Process and enter SAES, IAI Applications and payments into the database - Administration TIER 2 - Supervisor / Manager Follow-up - Follow-up regarding errors and omissions - Admin and Manager Reviews - Follow-up regarding incorrect or no payment	6,963	\$718,468
4. Well and CombCode Registration	IV.Ordinance 5.Owner and/or operator changes	- New well registration, change in well registration, CombCode registration or changes - Unregistered well compliance and enforcement	466	\$64,386
5. Late/Non-Reporters (SAES) Compliance	IV.Ordinance 6. Compliance/Enforcement a.Non-reporting b.Failure to register change of owner/operator	- Follow-up with non-reporters - Assess Civil Penalties for late/non-filing and late/non-payment and send letters (by regular and certified mail return receipt) - Retroactive data entry (and billing) into FCGMA Online - Recommendation to EO for enforcement action - Process civil penalty waiver/reduction requests	1,398	\$174,590
6. Meter Calibration Program Maintenance	IV.Ordinance4.Flowmeters & AMI a.Calibration review & processing b.Flowmeter replacement, rollover, water usage estimates c.AMI data management 6.Compliance/Enforcement c.Flowmeter calibration d.AMI	- Mail Flowmeter Calibration Notices, NOV's, and follow-up - Process and upload test results (including failed flowmeter reports) and repair/replacement flowmeter information into FCGMA Online - Process and track flowmeter exemptions, and 5-year waiver requests	1,158	\$139,632
Records Services Subtotal			11,210	\$1,283,845

Technical Services includes annual reports preparation, data collection, studies and analysis, groundwater and well project reviews, AMI operations, and grant applications.

Technical Services				
Task		Description	Labor Hours Estimate	Labor Cost Estimate
1. Annual Reports Preparation	II. Legislation or Regulations 2. GSP Annual Reports	- Compile and analyze resource data for GSP and GMA Annual Reports - Prepare, review, finalize and publish annual reports	632	\$116,564
2. Data Collection, Studies and Investigations and Analysis	V. Resolution 1. Conejo Creek Project 2. NPV Desalter 3. GREAT / RWPA Program	- Routine data analysis (i.e., GW conditions, pumping trends, etc.) - Perform QA/QC review of monitoring programs - Coordination of field investigations in support of tech studies - Tierra Rejada weather station maintenance	923	\$151,259
3. Groundwater and Well Project Reviews	IV. Ordinance 2. Well Permit Applications	- Well permit processing including technical review - Resolution project management (including City of Camarillo North PV Desalter Project, Camrosa WD Conejo Creek Project, Oxnard GREAT & ASR program, Calleguas MWD ASR program) - Project Reviews and technical comment letters	725	\$127,171
4. AMI Operations	4. Flowmeters & AMI c. AMI data management	- Administration of AMI program - Coordination of AMI vendors - AMI data management and analysis	1,138	\$139,218
5. Grant Application	VI. Grant - SGM implementation	Review and evaluate grant opportunities and prepare grant applications	100	\$19,586
Technical Services Subtotal			3,518	\$553,799

Legal Services includes advisory services, representation for anticipated and ongoing litigation, and outside counsel. Note that outside counsel is not included in labor estimates because they bill directly per their contract as consultants.

Legal Services				
Task		Description	Labor Hours Estimate	Labor Cost Estimate
1. Advisory Services	N/A	- Advice to Board and staff on open government laws, conflict of interest rules, Agency regulatory authority, contracting issues and compliance with Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, California Environmental Quality Act and other laws applicable to Agency. - Board letter review and attendance at Board meetings. - Preparation of ordinances, resolutions, contracts and other legal documents. Code enforcement	0	\$0
2. Anticipated and Ongoing Litigation (Staff Time)	III. Judgment and Litigation 2. OPV Adjudication a. Discovery	- Represent Agency in legal proceedings in superior court. - Litigation related staff time, for discovery requests and other related follow up; this is related to staff labor only and does not include attorneys, consultants, contractors.	506	\$113,996
3. Outside Counsel	III. Judgment and Litigation 2. OPV Adjudication a. Discovery	- Special counsel fees related to ongoing and anticipated litigation		
Legal Services Subtotal			506	\$113,996

Public Outreach includes participation in regional groundwater issues and stakeholder meetings, and outreach, including updating content on our website and preparing a newsletter or notices. The labor hours estimate for outreach has increased in FY 2025-26 per the Board's recommendation to prepare the Agency for rampdown discussions.

Public Outreach				
Task		Description	Labor Hours Estimate	Labor Cost Estimate
1. Participation in Integrated Regional Groundwater Issues & Stakeholder Meetings	N/A	Attend/participate in AWA Mtgs/events; BofD / City Council mtgs; Stakeholder mtgs (incl. wholesalers); WCVV/VCIRWP meetings; State/Regional Water agency workshops; and GW Forums and Committee Meetings.	888	\$167,697
2. Outreach, Website, Social Media	N/A	Routine administration and maintenance of Agency website and social media presence; produce Semi-Annual Newsletter; stakeholder outreach and engagement; public workshops; outreach materials.	194	\$33,590
Public Outreach Subtotal			1,082	\$201,287

Special Expenditures include Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation, new allocation systems and non-routine variance application processing, improvements to the Agency's data management system, grant administration, and monitoring well installations.

Special Expenditures				
Task		Description	Labor Hours Estimate	Labor Cost Estimate
1. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation	II. Legislation or Regulations 1. GSP 5-Year Evaluation	Implementation of GSP including monitoring well installation, project review and coordination, address data gaps, modeling analysis, GSP Evaluations & Updates, etc. (Contract expense for Dudek.)	1,720	\$328,255
2. New Allocation Systems (Variances)	VII. Board Direction 4. OPV variance applications	Implementation of new allocation systems including non-routine variance process.	793	\$133,605
3. Improvements to Data Management System	VII. Board Direction 5. Data management system improvement	Two meetings to discuss need and requirements. In a future FY, prepare and administer RFP, enter contract to develop and implement new system. (Planning-level amount of \$200,000 for consultant services.)	224	\$34,889
4. Water Market Development and Implementation	VII. Board Direction	Continue implementation of Water Market pilot study and expansion to all of FCGMA	29	\$5,479
5. DWR SGM Grant Administration	VI. Grant - SGM Rd 1 2. Subgrantee awards to UWCD, PVCWD, Camarillo	DWR SGM Grant administration (Consultant contract estimate)	0	\$0
6. Incentives Program		Develop incentives for taking PTP pipeline, OH pipeline, GREAT water instead of pumping in critical areas	570	\$103,225
7. OPV and LPV Monitoring Networks and Well Installation	VI. Grant - SGM implementation Rd 1 1. OPV Monitoring Well Installation	Planning, permitting, installation, development, and reporting of new OPV monitoring wells partially funded by DWR SGM Grant. (Projected contract expense for drilling contractor).	493	\$92,491
Subtotal Special Expenditures			3,829	\$697,944

Efforts which are not routinely performed each year are included in the Special Expenditures category. Historically, Special Expenditures has included Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation, implementation of new extraction allocation systems, new data management system procurement, Water Market development and implementation, administration of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Implementation Grant - Round 1, and installation of monitoring wells in the Oxnard and Pleasant Valley (OPV) Basins as part of the grant program.

Special Expenditures have moved through the project review and approval steps performed by the Operations Committee, they likely have secured grant funding that incorporated feedback from the Fiscal Committee, and they have proceeded with contract formalization after Board approval; however, prioritizing projects in the Special Expenditures category depends on multiple factors. Competing priorities, staff and consultant availability, and timing all come into consideration.

Aside from ongoing Special Expenditures projects that are well underway, staff expects that Committee and Board discussions of the Draft Fiscal Year 2025-26 Work Plan will identify which Special Expenditures the Agency should prioritize in in this Fiscal Year and in FY 2026-27. For example, is an incentives program on the horizon? Will rampdown outreach become a multi-year initiative? When would the Board prefer staff begin planning for the next round of GSP Periodic Evaluations?

A. Tracking Labor Hours

The Work Plan, as an overview of annual operations, is divided into classifications designated by program, which are sorted internally via project and activity identification (ID) codes. The activities are specific tasks performed in service to that specific project. Staff report their time using these codes.

For example, the first section of the Work Plan, Administration and Fiscal Services, is classified by project ID P6020850, with a range of activity IDs. The following table is a list of project and activity IDs for staff time reporting, which corresponds to the first section of the Work Plan:

Administration and Fiscal Services			
Task	Description	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Board Meeting Administration	Board meeting preparation including agendas, scheduling, Board letters, Board presentations	P6020850	P012
	Board meetings including pre- and post-debriefing meetings	P6020850	P039
2. Agency Administration	Agency-specific overhead (not PWA) - general administration tasks, clerical work; email & phone follow-up that is not direct stakeholder/end-user contact	P6020850	P001
	Internal meetings; staff or management planning meetings	P6020850	P003
	Customer inquiries (not PRAs)	P6020850	P065
	Invoice management: routing, tracking, reporting on or approving invoices for Counsel, consultants	P6020850	P023
	Routing or Filing Incoming & Outgoing Correspondence	P6020850	P053
	Training - Providing or receiving Agency-specific procedural training that is not project-related	P6020850	P004
	Contract preparation, modification, review	P6020850	P008
	Strategic planning and oversight; consultant or vendor management	P6020850	P011
	Executive Officer	Fixed Cost	
3. Official Document Filings & Public Records Requests	Review, edit, process and archive business record filings and certifications, Ordinance Amendments, Resolutions	P6020850	P051
	PRA & other public requests	P6020850	P064
4. Budget	Preparation and adoption of Annual Work Plan, Budget, Proposed Budget Report; analysis and performance reports	P6020850	P175
5. CSD Fiscal Staff Services	Submit 13-Monthly AP FSRs (incl. AP/AR) to the Agency; provide AP/AR and cash-flow management services; provide fiscal reports	Fixed Cost	
6. Committee Meetings	Committee meetings, preparation, agendas, minutes	P6020850	P041
7. Biennial Audit Report	Preparation of scope of work; selection process; assist auditor with inquiries; QA/QC draft audit report	P6020850	P089

[You can find a more comprehensive draft time reporting chart, including all work plan sections mapped to project and activity IDs, in the Appendices.](#)

1. Labor Collection and Billing Reports (LCAB)

Agency staff report their time using project and activity IDs in the Ventura County Human Resources Program, biweekly. Labor Collection and Billing (LCAB) reports are pulled from the time reporting database and are used to estimate labor hours and costs or are used to compare estimates with actual time reporting; this data needs to be refined before it will be featured in future iterations of FCGMA Budget documents.

To better track labor hours, staff are currently working on process improvements for time reporting to ensure further detail can be captured by encouraging use of activity IDs mapped to specific task for each project ID when reporting time.

A few drawbacks to data pulled by these reports:

- Practically speaking, the data arrives unsorted and must be manipulated and organized in order to be helpful;
- Salaried employees may work past 8 hours a day, and
- Overtime data for non-hourly employees is not captured in time reporting; managers may report time differently than other staff as the structure of their meetings may cover multiple projects; and
- All staff regardless of level need to discuss preferences and set procedures, then be trained to use the project and activity IDs for FCGMA in a more uniform way.

While it is far from perfect, a comparison between the adopted Work Plan for a Fiscal Year and the actual labor data provided by LCAB reports is assumed to better inform the Agency's estimates in future Work Plans.

3. Agency Priorities

Agency staff have administrative priorities in development that tie in with Board priorities. Staff intend to continue providing high-level services while working to achieve technology upgrades and streamlining internal and public-facing operations, and to continue its hiring initiative to build and maintain an effective workforce. During the 2025-26 Fiscal Year, we hope to see further strategic planning collaboration with the Board, and moving forward we hope the Board will consider including scheduled annual goals and objectives discussions in February or March each year to help guide strategy and continued process development towards an even more transparent, effective budget and work plan.

In lieu of current, formally adopted Agency Objectives²⁷, we have a prioritization matrix for the year, based on the seven principal drivers of Agency work tasks:

1. Board Meetings
2. Legislation and Regulations
3. Judgment and Litigation
4. Ordinance
5. Resolutions
6. Grants
7. Board Direction

1. *FCGMA Work Tasks and Board Priorities*

During times of increased workload, additional requirements ordered by the Courts, and of a challenging period for recruiting and maintaining staffing levels, the Agency began the 2024 calendar year with the Work Tasks and Prioritization Matrix, which identified

²⁷ We do have an Agency Objectives document, but it is from 1998. [See Appendices.](#)

principal work tasks, drivers, and their current prioritization; the Board weighed in during the January 12, 2024, Regular meeting.

Think of the following as the Agency's current action goals for the year.

Prioritized Task	Frequency	Work Plan Section	Current Priority
I. Board Meetings			
1. Board meetings, agendas, minutes	Ongoing	Administration and Fiscal Services	1
2. Committee meetings, agendas, minutes	Ongoing		1
II. Legislation and Regulations			
1. GSP 5-Year Evaluation	Periodic	Special Expenditures	2
2. GSP Annual Reports	Periodic		2
3. Annual Work Plan & Budget	Periodic	Administration and Fiscal Services	2
4. Biennial Audit	Periodic		2
5. Public Records Act (PRA) Requests	Ongoing		2
III. Judgment and Litigation			
1. LPV Adjudication Judgment	Ongoing	LPV Watermaster Budget – Held Separate from FCGMA	3
a. Watermaster Admin	Ongoing		3
b. Basin Optimization Yield Study	Periodic		3
c. Basin Optimization Plan	Periodic		3
2. OPV Adjudication	Ongoing	Legal Services	3
a. Discovery	Ongoing		3
IV. Ordinance			
1. Semi-Annual Statements (SAES)	Ongoing	Records Services	4
a. Processing SAES	Periodic		4
b. Review flowmeter photos	Ongoing		4
c. Payments, refunds, etc.	Ongoing		4
d. Customer service, walk-ins, etc.	Ongoing		4
2. Well Permit Applications	Periodic	Technical Services	4
3. Allocation Transfer Requests	Periodic	Records Services	4
4. Flowmeters & AMI	Ongoing	Records Services	4
a. Calibration review & processing	Ongoing		4
b. Flowmeter replacement, rollover, water usage estimates	Ongoing		4
c. AMI data management	Ongoing	Technical Services	4
5. Owner and/or operator changes	Ongoing	Records Services	4
6. Compliance/Enforcement	Ongoing	Records Services	5
a. Non-reporting	Ongoing		5
b. Failure to register change of owner/operator	Ongoing		5

c. Flowmeter calibration	Ongoing		5
d. AMI	Ongoing	Technical Services	5
V. Resolution			
1. Conejo Creek Project	Ongoing	Technical Services	5
2. NPV Desalter	Ongoing		5
3. GREAT / RWPA Program	Ongoing		5
VI. Grant - SGM Round 2 Grant Application LPV			
1. Application	One-Time	Technical Services	6
2. Administration	Ongoing		6
3. Quarterly reports	Ongoing		6
VII. Board Direction <i>(Pending Committee & Board Review & Discussion)</i>			
1. Rampdown Outreach and Education	Ongoing	Special Expenditures, Administration Services	6
2. Project Prioritization and Strategic Planning	Periodic	Special Expenditures	7
3. Replenishment Fee	One-Time	Records Services	7
4. OPV Variance Applications	One-Time	Technical Services	7
5. Periodic Evaluation Planning	Periodic	Special Expenditures	7
6. CombCode - Ordinance Amendments	One-Time	Administration and Fiscal Services	7
7. Monitoring Network Improvements	Periodic	Special Expenditures, Technical Services	7

In addition, as noted in the section, “How the Agency is Staffed” earlier in this report, a staff recommendation included in the draft FY 2025-26 Budget proposes funding additional staff support in the form of an entry-level hydrologist and a management or administrative assistant to help offset the tasks our Agency must accomplish to be effective, and to provide support for Board-recommended priorities such as Monitoring Network improvement planning, systematically clearing processing backlogs associated with temporary variances or civil penalty waiver requests, and developing a stakeholder outreach plan to educate and discuss rampdown considerations with stakeholders.

The Agency has additional administrative or operations-focused goals for the year, as well, but they are works in progress, along with the second annual edition of this Draft Proposed Budget Report:

1. Continue to bring staffing levels up by filling vacancies with talented, qualified colleagues,
2. Work with the Board to update policies and procedures, and
3. Develop an annual strategic goal review that is completed in tandem with the mid-year budget review, so that the Board and staff are aligned, and stakeholders have more transparency into our organization.
 - a. This way, we will have more to add under “Agency Priorities” and “Board Action Strategies” in future budget deliverables and will be able to further show how our expenditures align with our goal-based actions.
4. The Board has expressed interest in developing a Five-Year Strategic Plan suited to our Agency; staff are excited to research and compile existing Board mandates and sustainability goals, such as those as asserted in our Groundwater Sustainability Plans, to begin building the practical framework for this process.
5. Members of the Board have also provided immeasurably helpful resources and conversations with local agencies on their established project prioritization matrixes, and how such organizational systems provide measurable results directly tied to documented goals; FCGMA staff are looking forward to systematically implementing an actionable draft version tailored to Agency goals and priorities for discussion and development at the committee level.

4. Financial Audits

California Government Code Section 26909²⁸ requires the County Auditor-Controller to perform an annual audit of the financial accounts and records of every special district within the County for which an audit by a certified public accountant or public accountant is not otherwise provided. The County Auditor-Controller has discretion as to whether to perform that annual audit using in-house audit staff or by contracting with a certified public accountant or public accountant. In either case, Subsection 26909 (a) (3) requires the special district to bear the costs of the audit report.

Pursuant to Section 26909, the audit requirements applicable to FCGMA are found in the Minimum Audit Requirements and Reporting Guidelines for California Special Districts, as published by the Division of Accounting and Reporting, Office of the State Controller. Essentially, the minimum requirements reflect Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)²⁹, as described in the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants publication, Audits of State and Local Governmental Units.

In addition, the Agency's audit reports shall be filed with both the County Auditor-Controller of the county in which the special district is located, along with the State Controller, within 12 months of the end of the fiscal year(s) under examination.

Sub-Section 26909 (b) provides for an exception to the annual audit schedule period. That sub-section allows a governing body of a special district, by unanimous vote, to request their Board of Supervisors to replace the annual audit schedule found in Section 26909 with a different period. Specifically, Subsection 26909 (b) (1) allows the governing body of a special district to request a biennial (i.e. covering two years) audit period.

²⁸ Link to Section 26909: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=26909

²⁹ <https://us.aicpa.org/content/dam/aicpa/research/standards/auditattest/downloadabledocuments/au-00150.pdf>

In accordance with California Government Code Subsection 26909 (b)(1), the Agency submits its statement of financial transactions to an independent contract auditor on a biennial basis. The FCGMA is considered a special purpose government, engaged in the management of groundwater extracted within its boundary and operates on a cash-accounting basis. Pursuant to applicable provisions of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement 34 (GASB 34)³⁰, Agency management provides financial statements in an enterprise format to its auditors who perform standard audit verification assurances that the statements are free of material misstatements.

The financial audit to be completed during 2025 and delivered in 2026 will reflect financial transaction information for Fiscal Years 2022-2023 (Ending June 30, 2023), and 2023-2024 (ending June 30, 2024). The independent firm Rogers, Anderson, Malody & Scott, LLP (RAMS), is currently performing the analysis of the Agency's statement of financial transactions for the above reporting periods. The report will be presented to the Board with findings and recommendations identified by RAMS.

(a) Audit Schedule

Currently, FCGMA is on a biennial audit schedule. Accordingly, each year an audit will be scheduled, PWA Fiscal Services, in consultation with the County Auditor-Controller's Office, prepares a letter to qualified CPAs soliciting their interest, qualifications and proposals to provide the Agency with independent auditing services in response to the audit preparation specifications outlined in the body of the letter.

Requests for proposals to contract the next independent fiscal audit will be conducted during the fall of 2026 and will cover both the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Fiscal Year periods. PWA Fiscal Services, in their oversight of the process, will prepare the audit

³⁰ <https://gasb.org/page/ShowPdf?path=GASBS+34.pdf&title=GASB%20STATEMENT%20NO.%2034.%20BASIC%20FINANCIAL%20STATEMENTS%E2%80%94AND%20MANAGEMENT%27S%20DISCUSSION%20AND%20ANALYSIS%E2%80%94FOR%20STATE%20AND%20LOCAL%20GOVERNMENTS>

solicitation letters to distribute for CPA firm selection to perform an independent audit of the Agency's financial statements as of June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026, and the related statements of revenues, expenses and changes in net assets and cash flows for the years then ended. The firm selection process takes several months to complete, and we anticipate the audit itself to be underway in spring 2027.

(b) Audit Findings

Upon delivery of the biennial audit report, the report and its findings are discussed with the Board and each finding is detailed in the agenda's accompanying Board letter, sectioned by criteria, condition, cause, effect (or potential effect), recommendation, and views of responsible officials and planned corrective actions. Per previous process, the Audit Report will be uploaded to the Agency website once it is Board approved. Audit findings can be discussed with the Fiscal Committee prior to Board review, depending on timing of report delivery. The Board may prefer that the Fiscal Committee review the Audit Report and provide recommendations before it arrives for their review and approval as a matter of procedure. The Fiscal Committee has expressed interest in developing a formal audit review policy; please see the appendices for a list of policy areas in development.

IV. EXPLANATION OF BUDGET

This section discusses the accounts the funds are held in, analyzes where the revenue feeds those accounts, and then details the expenses paid out of those accounts.

A. Agency Accounts Overview

The Agency maintains separate classifications for funds collected from different sources. Here's an overview of our account summary by fund classification:

Account	Board Direction
Designated GEMES Account (Groundwater Extraction Management Enforcement Surcharge)	Designated GEMES Account established by Resolution 2006-04 ³¹ ; Board directed to fund litigation costs including Agency counsel; Reserve Fee established by Resolution 2020-05 ³² and extended for 4 years with Resolution 2024-05 ³³
Designated Surcharges Account	For Board-directed uses only, not to be used for routine Agency operations
Designated Operating Reserves Account	Maintain \$1,000,000 reserve balance based on Board direction; reallocate contingency fund as annual staircase reserves contribution (\$250,000 for FY 25-26)
Operating Account	Routine annual operation expenses as identified in Work Plan
Grand Total Fund Balance	Total of all above

³¹ Resolution 2006-04: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Resolution-2006-04.pdf>

³² Resolution 2020-05: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Resolution-2020-05.pdf>

³³ Resolution 2024-05: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Resolution-2024-05.pdf>

1. Designated Accounts

Three of these fund classifications are designated accounts where the funds can only be accessed through Board action:

1. Designated GEMES Account
2. Designated Surcharges Account
3. Designated Operating Reserves Account

2. The Operating Account

The Operating Account is approved by the Board with the budget to fund efforts associated with better management of groundwater. Activities funded include reporting, enforcement, groundwater management planning, data collection, record keeping, training, outreach, and others as identified through the course of business.

The Operating Account includes pump charges, groundwater sustainability fees, interest earnings, penalties, grant, and miscellaneous revenues, which are detailed later in this Budget Report. Additionally, there are line items for projected reimbursement from the DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 for projects in the OPV Basins and the repayment of a loan (transfer from Designated Surcharges Fund to Operating Accounts in FY 2022-23).

B. REVENUE

Agency revenue comes primarily from pump charges with a lesser amount from surcharges and penalties and interest earned. Revenue is collected primarily via payments by well owners or operators to reconcile the fees they owe semi-annually based on their extraction reporting.

To forecast revenue from pump charges, an average of historical pumping rates of 121,000 acre-feet (AF) has traditionally been used. Below are the Agency's current pump charges used to calculate forecasted revenue using the historical pumping average.

Pump Charge – set by enabling legislation (only fee for de minimis domestic operators)	\$6 / AF
Groundwater Sustainability Fee (\$29/AF, effective Oct 1, 2022) (Recommended reduction by \$5/AF for FY 25-26)	\$24 / AF
GEMES Reserve Fee (sunsets Oct 1, 2028, unless extended by Board)	\$20 / AF
Total	\$50 / AF

The following table is an expanded version of the fee schedule table displayed on Semi-Annual Extraction Statements (SAES), which are mailed to well owners or operators (and which are available online for those who have registered online accounts with the Agency) for self-reporting during the water year.

Note the amounts and percentages related to penalties, surcharges, and interest that apply when a reporter is late or has exceeded their extraction allocation.

The final column is a hyperlinked list of relevant Resolution or Ordinance documenting the fee type and, if applicable, ways to appeal or request a waiver of said fees; these linked references are also available on our online reporting database, [FCGMAonline.org](https://www.fcgmaonline.org), for each statement period.

Water Year 2025-2026 Fee Schedule				
Fee Type	Amount	Unit	AF Exceedance Range	Resolution or Ordinance
Extraction	\$6	AF	-	2014-02
Groundwater Sustainability*	\$24**	AF	-	2022-05
GEMES Reserve*	\$20	AF	-	2020-05 , 2024-05
Civil Penalty	\$50	x Days Late	-	2019-1
Non-Metered Water Use	\$12	AF		3.5.1
Extraction Interest	1.5%	x Months Late	-	2.4.2
Surcharge Interest	1.5%	x Months Late	-	5.8.6.2
Surcharge Tier 1	\$1,929	AF	0.000 - 25.000	2024-03
Surcharge Tier 2	\$2,179	AF	25.001 - 99.999	2024-03
Surcharge Tier 3	\$2,429	AF	>100.000	2024-03

*Sustainability and GEMES Reserve fees are not imposed on any person who extracts, for domestic purposes, two acre-feet per year or less.

**Groundwater Sustainability fee has been recommended for reduction from \$29 / AF to \$24 / AF for WY 25-26 / FY 25-26 Budget.

Surcharges, if incurred, are assessed at the end of the Water Year on the "-2" statement.
For more information regarding fees, visit [FCGMA.org/Public-Documents/Resolutions](https://fcgma.org/Public-Documents/Resolutions).

1. Pump Charge, AKA Extraction Fee

The Agency's current maximum charge of \$6.00 per acre-foot was set through adoption of Resolution No. 2014-02, linked in the above table. These fund efforts are associated with better management of groundwater. Known on the SAES as the Extraction Fee, the activities this pump charge funds include reporting, enforcement, groundwater

management planning, data collection, record keeping, training, outreach, and others as identified through the course of business.

The current cap of \$6 per AF has been adjusted in the past but cannot be adjusted upward without a revision to Section 121-1007 of the FCGMA Act. Projections included in the FY 2025-26 Draft Budget are based on average pumping; the Agency is not currently anticipating drought conditions.

Pump Charge (Extraction Fee) Summary	FY 2022-23 Actuals	FY 2023-24 Actuals	FY 2024-25 Actuals	FY 2025-26 Draft Budget
Revenue	\$801,486	\$841,816	\$874,038	\$800,000

Revenue note: FY 2025-26 projected pump charge revenue assuming 121,000 AF/YR extraction at \$6.00 per AF.

2. Groundwater Sustainability Fee

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)³⁴ identified the Agency as the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the basins within its jurisdiction.

As the GSA, the Agency now has additional responsibilities and authority to ensure these basins are managed sustainably by the deadlines set forth in SGMA. To help meet those responsibilities, SGMA authorizes a GSA to “impose fees, including, but not limited to, permit fees and fees on groundwater extraction or other regulated activity, to fund the costs of a groundwater sustainability program, including, but not limited to, preparation, adoption, and amendment of a groundwater sustainability plan, and investigations, inspections, compliance assistance, enforcement, and program administration, including a prudent reserve.” (Water Code Section 10730, emphasis added.)

³⁴ SGMA: <https://water.ca.gov/programs/groundwater-management/sgma-groundwater-management#>

SGMA authorizes the Agency to control groundwater extractions by regulating or otherwise establishing groundwater extraction allocations (Water Code section 10726.4(a)(2).) and defines a groundwater sustainability program as “a coordinated and ongoing activity undertaken to benefit a basin, pursuant to a groundwater sustainability plan.” (Water Code section 10721³⁵.)

Additional fee authority was granted to the Agency following the adoption of its groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) to fund costs of groundwater management including the acquisition of land or other property, facilities, and supply, production, treatment, or distribution of water (Water Code Section 10730.2). This is distinct from a regulatory fee for a groundwater sustainability program, authorized under Water Code Section 10730 described above, as it includes projects and replenishment that may not benefit the entirety of the Agency. SGMA specifically states these fees are subject to Prop 218 sections of the California Constitution. The Agency followed the Prop 218 process to adopt a replenishment fee as required under SGMA.

For FY 2025-26, Staff recommend that the established fee of \$29 per Acre-Foot be reduced by \$5 / AF to \$24 / AF.

Groundwater Sustainability Fee Summary	FY 2022-23 Actuals	FY 2023-24 Actuals	FY 2024-25 Actuals	FY 2025-26 Draft Budget
Revenue	\$1,626,366	\$2,756,100	\$3,546,969	\$2,904,000

Revenue note: Projected groundwater sustainability fee revenues at \$24/AF assuming 121,000 AF extractions and a recommended \$5 reduction in fee for FY 2025-26.

3. Surcharges

One of the principal ways the Agency manages the groundwater resources within its jurisdiction is by controlling groundwater extractions by establishing extraction allocations

³⁵ Amended February 13, 2023; Legislative Counsel's Digest: <https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB828/id/3013211>

and imposing surcharges (in the OPV and ASRV Basins) on extractions in excess of allocations. The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Act (Act), California Water Code³⁶ Appendix, Chapter 121, and the Agency's several ordinances authorize these management actions. The Act authorizes the Agency to both establish extraction allocations and surcharges:

"The agency may, by ordinance, establish an operator's extraction allocation for each groundwater extraction facility located within the agency. The agency may, by ordinance, impose upon the operator of any groundwater extraction facility located within the agency, extraction surcharges for extractions in excess of his or her extraction allocation and late penalties for nonpayment of extraction surcharges." (Wat. Code App., § 121-1101.)

The Act states that the purpose of surcharges is "to discourage the use of groundwater beyond the extractions allocation" in recognition that "extraction allocations and extraction surcharges ... are necessary to eliminate overdraft caused by excess extractions[.]" (Id., at §121-1102(a), (b).) Since the Act's enactment in 1982, the Agency has adopted several ordinances that set forth the Agency's surcharge policy and requirements. The Agency Ordinance Code recognizes that extraction surcharges are necessary to achieve the basin(s') management goals and shall be assessed when annual extractions exceed allocations. (Agency Ordinance Code, § 5.8.1.1.)

Surcharges have been based on (1) the cost to import potable water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, or other equivalent water sources that can or do provide non-native water within the Agency jurisdiction and (2) the current groundwater conditions within the Agency jurisdiction, however the Agency Ordinance Code requires the Board to "fix the surcharge ... at a cost sufficiently high to discourage extraction of groundwater in excess of the approved allocation when that extraction will adversely affect achieving" the management goals for the basins. (Agency Ordinance Code, §§ 5.8.1.1, 5.8.3.) In turn, the Agency Ordinance Code authorizes the Board to structure,

³⁶ California Water Code: <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codedisplayexpand.xhtml?tocCode=WAT>

tier, and vary the extraction surcharge between basins and aquifers in its discretion. (Agency Ordinance Code, § 5.8.2.)

Historically, the Agency has used Calleguas Municipal Water District's (CMWD) Tier 2 Supply Rate to set surcharges. This calendar year, CMWD did not adopt a Tier 2 Supply Rate and only has a Tier 1 rate³⁷. The CMWD Tier 1 rate is less than the Agency's current and previous year's surcharge rates; as such staff will not be requesting a change in the current Agency surcharge rate in 2025.

A. Current Surcharge Rates

Tier	Pumping	Rate	Notes
Tier I	0.001 to 25.000 AF	\$1,929 per AF	
Tier II	25.001 to 99.999 AF	\$2,179 per AF	additional surcharge of \$250 per AF
Tier III	100 AF or more	\$2,429 per AF	additional surcharge of \$500 per AF

B. Designated Surcharges Account

The [FY 2025-26 Draft Designated Accounts Budget](#) projects \$1,000,000 in surcharge revenue. Revenue included in the draft FY 2025-26 Budget is consistent with previously projected revenues.

The Agency does not depend on surcharge revenue for its operation. Surcharge revenue is not used for operating expenses and can only be used for Board-designated expenses, which have been principally for water replenishment or supporting projects to increase the water supplies and/or sustainable yield of the Basins.

³⁷ CMWD 2025 Adopted Water Rates: <https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-10C-Calleguas-MWD-2025-Adopted-Water-Rates.pdf>

During budget discussions, the Board approved a \$1,000,000 loan from the Designated Surcharges Account to the FCGMA Operating Account in the FY 2022-23 Budget to cover the projected shortfall due to expenses for installing monitoring wells in the OPV Basins as part of the SGM Grant program. At that time the Board's direction was for the loan to be repaid in FY 2024-25. At the April 24, 2024, Board meeting, the Board discussed the possibility that these expenses be fully funded through the Designated Surcharges Account³⁸. During FY 2024-25 Budget adoption, the Board approved repayment of the loan in FY 2025-26.

Designated Surcharges Account Summary	FY 2022-23 Actuals	FY 2023-24 Actuals	FY 2024-25 Actuals	FY 2025-26 Draft Budget
Revenue	\$1,027,229	\$895,179	\$1,085,523	\$1,000,000

Now that the LPV Adjudication Judgment is implemented, enforcement is levied differently in the LPV Basin. Any monies collected are held in the LPV Watermaster account, separate from FCGMA funds.

4. Operating Reserves Designated Account

This account, colloquially referred to as the reserves, yet listed in the budget and formally referred to as the Operating Reserves Designated Account, carries a balance that remains at a minimum of \$1,000,000. Each year, when the Board adopts the Budget, we have included a million-dollar reserve; the Agency's reserve was \$1 million for FY 2023-24 and \$1 million for FY 2024-25.

The Fiscal Committee has recommended reallocating previously earmarked "Contingency funds" (\$250,000) to the Operating Reserves Designated Account as an

³⁸ See page 16 (FCGMA Board Meeting Minutes, 4/24/2024): https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/AGENDA-PACKET-5-22-2024_Updated.pdf

annual contribution, beginning with FY 2025-26, bringing the total reserves for the year to \$1,250,000. The Fiscal Committee recommends that the fund's target balance be set at 50% of anticipated annual expenses, or \$2.5 mm; in future years, they recommend contributing 10% annually of the net operating results until the target is met.

The intent of the Operating Reserves Designated Account has historically been that it be held for use in case of absolute need, only. During the July Fiscal Committee meeting, policy discussion centered on creating target reserves earmarked for specific needs. For example, revenues have fluctuated over recent years. To find a baseline in the overall program, staff looked at FY 2023-24 actuals (last year experienced high variability in some components, especially regarding expenditures related to the 5-Year Periodic Evaluations, which were completed during FY 2024-25). For more information on this ongoing policy development, see the Appendices.

5. GEMES Reserve Fee and Designated Account

On October 28, 2020, the FCGMA Board adopted Resolution 2020-05 imposing a fee of \$20.00 per Acre-Foot (AF) on groundwater extractions to establish a reserve fund to be used to pay the cost and expenses of legal actions and proceedings related to implementation of the Agency's groundwater sustainability program. The fee became effective January 1, 2021, and is imposed on all pumpers within the Agency's jurisdiction other than small domestic pumpers extracting 2 AF or less per year. On September 25, 2024, the Board adopted Resolution 2024-05 extending the fee for four years. The GEMES Reserves Fee sunsets on October 1, 2028, unless extended by the FCGMA Board.

The reserve fee provides revenue exclusively to the Agency's Groundwater Extraction Management Enforcement Surcharge (GEMES) Fund established in 2006 for the purpose

of retaining special counsel to represent Agency interests. The GEMES Reserve Fee is reflected in the draft budget as the GEMES Designated Account.

GEMES Designated Account Summary	FY 2022-23 Actuals	FY 2023-24 Actuals	FY 2024-25 Actuals	FY 2025-26 Draft Budget
Revenue	\$1,776,295	\$2,137,678	\$2,472,441	\$2,420,000

6. Interest Earnings

Annual interest earnings apportionments are projected to be received from funds maintained in the County Pooled Investment Fund. The entire FCGMA fund O170 earns interest.

Interest earnings were historically divided using the formula created by the Agency's former Groundwater Manager: of the collective earnings, 13% were paid to the operating account, and 87% of interest earnings were held in the designated accounts. Per the Fiscal Committee's 2024 recommendation, all interest earnings are now held in the [Operating Account](#).

Interest Earnings	FY 2022-23 Actuals	FY 2023-24 Actuals	FY 2024-25 Actuals	FY 2025-26 Draft Budget
Revenue	\$88,089	\$277,445	\$134,362	\$130,000

Revenue note: Annual interest earnings apportionments projected to be received from the County Pooled Investment Fund.

7. Grant Funding

Resolutions Nos. 2022-01³⁹ and 2022-02⁴⁰ authorized the Executive Officer to submit applications to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for funding from the 2021 Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Implementation Grant Program to implement projects in the Oxnard Subbasin and Pleasant Valley Basin.

The Agency received award notification letters from DWR dated April 28, 2022, for funding of \$7.6 million in each of the two basins. The total grant amounts were \$6,479,700 to United Water Conservation District (UWCD), \$5,810,000 to Pleasant Valley County Water District (PVCWD), and \$332,500 to the City of Camarillo as subgrantees to the Agency. The grant funding also included \$2,577,800 for the Agency's monitoring well projects. All projects were completed, and final deliverables submitted in order for DWR to close out the grants by June 30, 2025.

A. SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 (OPV) DWR

SGM Impl Grant Round 1 (OPV) - DWR	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26	
	Adopted Budget	Adopted Budget	Actuals Through June 2025	Proposed Budget	Year Over Year % Change
Revenues & Transfers In	\$0	\$2,577,800	\$2,577,800	\$0	(100%)
Expenditures & Transfers Out	\$0	\$4,870,000	\$2,768,117	\$0	(100%)

³⁹ Resolution 2022-01: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Resolution-2022-01-SGM-Grant-App-Oxnard-Subbasin.pdf>

⁴⁰ Resolution 2022-02: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Resolution-2022-02-SGM-Grant-App-PV-Basin.pdf>

Revenue note: Past projected reimbursement from DWR for SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 funds for FCGMA projects in the Oxnard & Pleasant Valley Basins.

Expenditure note: Past monitoring well installation in OPV basins projected expense.

Regarding the DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 for Oxnard & Pleasant Valley Basins: the \$3,039,717.80 in actual costs from FY 2024-25 will be moved as an asset on the balance sheet now that the grant is closed out.

B. SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 (OPV) - Administration

UWCD, PVCWD, and the City of Camarillo were subgrantees on Round 1 Administration funding. The Subgrant Agreements flowed down the provisions of the Grant Agreement between DWR and the Agency and they included a requirement to pay the proportional cost of grant administration consultant services.

The Subgrant Agreements also provided the option for the subgrantee to choose to make annual payments to the Agency or to have the costs withheld from disbursements to the subgrantee. The payments are reflected in the following table as revenue.

FY 2024-25 saw \$102,393 in actual spending through June 2025; FY 2025-26 includes an estimate of \$44,800 in expenditures for remaining reimbursements and other costs.

SGM Impl Grant Round 1 (OPV) - Admin	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26	
	Adopted Budget	Adopted Budget	Year Over Year % Change	Draft Budget	Year Over Year % Change
Revenues & Transfers In	\$47,729	\$46,472	(2.63%)	\$51,502	11%
Expenditures & Transfers Out	\$57,477	\$60,000	4.39%	\$44,800	(25%)
Revenues Over/(Under) Expenditures	(\$9,748)	(\$12,528)		\$6,702	

Revenue note: Reimbursement from subgrantees City of Camarillo, UWCD, and PVCWD for consultant grant administration services per Board direction (7/20/2022).

Expenditure note: Previous consultant cost to assist with DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 administration for the OPV Basins. Reimbursement from City of Camarillo, PVCWD, and UWCD, with FCGMA net shared \$9,748 annually.

C. SGM Round 2 Grant Application

FY 2025-26 includes \$150,000 in estimated expenditures for consultant expenses for grant application for DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 2, for projects in Las Posas Valley Basin. This line item was not included in past recent budgets.

8. Civil Penalties, Late Fees, and Interest

Listed in the draft budget spreadsheet as the line item “Penalties / Interest,” this item is comprised of revenue from civil penalties, late fees, and interest accrued and paid by late or non-reporters, with regards to Semi-Annual Extraction Reporting. This line item is included in the Operating Account because of the extra administrative burden necessary to accommodate late reporters, remediation for erroneously reported SAES, and enforcement.

Penalties / Interest Summary	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26	
(Pooled in Operating Account)	Year-End Actuals	Adopted Budget	Year-End Actuals	Adopted Budget	Year-End Actuals	Proposed Budget	YoY % Change
Revenues	\$47,965	\$60,000	\$299,408	\$130,000	\$158,717	\$150,000	15%

C. EXPENDITURES

1. Total Operating Account Expenditures

The total proposed Operating Account expenditures for FY 2024-25 are estimated at \$5,520,137 million, which reflects a decrease of \$4,465,211 (or 47%), from the FY 2024-25 budgeted expenditures adopted at \$9,985,348. The Draft 2025-26 Budget assumes a fully staffed Agency and allows for current contract expenses and proposed new expenses, such as Monitoring Wells Network Improvement Planning and Public Outreach and Strategic Planning.

2. Transfers Out

The repayment of the loan made in FY 2022-223 to the Operating Account from the Designated Surcharges Account; the loan was approved by the FCGMA Board during adoption of the FY 2022-23 Budget, to be repaid in FY 2024-25. During adoption of the FY 2024-25 Budget, the Board postponed repayment to FY 2025-26. The Fiscal Committee recommends repaying the loan during FY 2025-26.

3. Significant Annual Operating Expenditures

Following are the significant annual operating expenditures, those that are greater than \$25,000:

1. *Public Works Agency Charges:* The FY 2025-26 Draft Budget includes \$2,988,752 for PWA staff services per the projections in the draft Annual Work Plan. (The actual amount may vary depending on the negotiated salary of the new full-time dedicated Executive Officer.) The Work Plan categorizes Annual Operations into Administration and Fiscal Services, Records Services, Technical Services, Legal

Significant Annual Operating Account Expenditures		2023-24 Adopted Budget	2024-2025 Adopted Budget	2024-25 Year-End Actuals	2025-26 Proposed Budget	Over / Under	YoY % Change
1	Public Works Agency Charges	\$2,860,200	\$3,382,544	\$2,758,888	\$2,988,752	(\$393,792)	(11.64%)
2	General Services Agency Charges	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$19,784	\$20,000	(\$5,000)	(20%)
3	FCGMA Online Database Support/GIS	\$276,761	\$247,061	\$93,332	\$200,000	(\$47,061)	(19%)
4	Legal Services (County Counsel)	\$150,000	\$170,000	\$119,711	\$255,000	\$85,000	50%
5	Legal Services (Special Counsel)	\$1,350,000	\$1,655,000	\$1,001,490	\$1,560,000	(\$95,000)	(6%)
6	GSP Annual Reports	\$65,730	\$97,000	\$65,248	\$138,000	\$41,000	42%
Total Large Expenditures:		\$4,727,691	\$5,576,605	\$4,058,453	\$5,233,752	\$342,853	6.14%

Services, and Public Outreach. Efforts which are not routinely done each year are included in a separate Special Expenditures category. Time estimates for each staff position's efforts are developed to estimate the budget. This estimate is for a fully staffed Agency.

County Labor Rates are included in the Appendices.

2. *General Services Agency Charges:* County General Services Agency (GSA) fees include Board room and AV fees, etc. GSA expenses are budgeted at \$20,000 for FY 2025-26.

3. *FCGMA Online Database Support:* Support for the FCGMA Online database management system is supplied by PWA and County IT services. These services include the annual maintenance costs, system revisions and updates, special database queries, software enhancements, and includes GIS and other software license fees. An increase in IT services is requested to provide for 0.65 of additional staff time to cover the Agency's tasks and to provide for redundancy; FCGMA Online support is budgeted at \$200,000 for FY 2025-26.

4. *Legal Service Fees:* Agency Counsel legal services are provided by the County Counsel's Office, which serves as Agency Counsel, to provide routine legal services. Legal services are budgeted at \$255,000 for FY 2025-26.

5. *GSP Annual Reports:* The Agency is required to prepare GSP annual reports for the LPV, Oxnard, and Pleasant Valley basins. GSP annual reports are budgeted at \$138,000 for preparation of the three annual reports in order to engage consultant

Dudek after the current contract expires October 2025. The Agency previously had a 2022 contract that locked rates for Dudek thus the previous expenditures were low for all three reports. About 15% of this increase will be the rate increase; the rest of the increase is attributed to the updated Department of Water Resources (DWR) preparation guidelines⁴¹ that our annual reports must be formatted to adhere to. We are going to use this Fiscal Year's annual reports to develop templates that better conform to the DWR guidelines.

4. Special Expenditures

The FY 2025-26 Draft Budget identifies special expenditures, including the following:

1. *Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation and SGMA Compliance:* The FY 2025-26 Budget includes \$150,000 for GSP implementation based on the agreement with Dudek approved by your Board at the December 9, 2022, and April 22, 2024, meetings. The majority of these costs are for project coordination for planning future periodic evaluations or analyzing incentive programs. The FY 2024-25 expenses reflected the 5-Year Periodic Evaluations⁴².
2. *SGM Round 2 Grant Application:* Projected consultant expenses for grant application for DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 2 for projects in Las Posas Valley Basin.
3. *Monitoring Network Improvement Planning:* In order to prepare the aforementioned grant application, a plan to expend its proposed funds dovetails with

⁴¹ <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management/Best-Management-Practices-and-Guidance-Documents>

⁴² Periodic Evaluations: <https://fcgma.org/gsp-periodic-evaluations/>

the stakeholder recommended goal of improving our monitoring network; this proposed analysis can be used as a discussion tool with stakeholders in developing a plan incorporating their feedback, a plan which can then be utilized in the grant application. The FY 2025-26 Draft Budget includes \$150,000 as a contract estimate for this special expenditure.

4. ***Stakeholder Facilitation / Public Outreach:*** The FY 2025-26 Draft Budget includes \$100,000 for stakeholder facilitation and/or public outreach per Board recommendation to develop an outreach strategy to engage stakeholders in rampdown discussions and education.

5. ***Rate Counsel:*** The FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget included \$100,000 for rate counsel and consultant assistance with studying and preparing a replenishment fee consistent with your Board's awarded agreement with Jarvis Fay. Less than \$5000 has been spent. The FY 2024-25 Draft Budget projected this effort would be on hold with only \$17,000 budgeted; instead, \$1,976 was expended in FY 2024-25, these funds were targeted towards renewing the GEMES fee in October 2024. \$25,000 is budgeted for FY 2025-26, should the replenishment fee study be prioritized by your Board.

Not Included: A New FCGMA Data Management System

A Special Expenditure that will not be included in this year's budget, nor last year's, is the new FCGMA Data Management System. Previously discussed at length for sourcing and implementation, the acquisition of a new system has been put on hold.

Significant progress has been made improving the current data management system, and this initiative will continue with the Operations Committee's focused feedback. In August 2024, staff presented a status report on the current online reporting system and discussed action strategies for implementing process improvements to the current system. The current data management system is built on a framework that is not outdated, and it can

be improved in the coming years. A substantial time investment will be required to plan and execute process improvements in collaboration with PWA IT staff, which is a further incentive to make informed decisions that improve upon what we already have.

The Operations Committee also discussed hiring an additional part-time PWA IT developer to support the current data management system, to build in cross-training and redundancy. Percentages updated to 0.825 allocated for Watermaster and 0.825 allocated for FCGMA, which equals a 1.7 FTE, but actual billings may be lower. Projected costs are to meet the needs of the Agency with a list of pending projects that were paused due to low staff availability (so there is a contingency built into the estimate). We can also utilize other IT staff that are available, but the increased FTE percentage is a resource for highly technical database work. That recommendation and estimated amount is factored into the line item “FCGMA Online Support / GIS.”

5. Expenditures – Personnel

As a reminder, the FY 2025-26 Work Plan was drafted to assume full staffing levels; you will see this factored into all calculations and estimates.

Work Plan Labor Cost Comparison				
Work Plan Sections	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	
	Adopted	Adopted	Proposed Budget	Cost Difference
Administration and Fiscal Services	\$829,857	\$943,005	\$958,123	\$15,118
Records Services	\$843,647	\$1,152,821	\$1,283,845	\$131,024
Technical Services	\$432,540	\$471,303	\$553,799	\$82,496
Legal Services <i>(Not paid by GEMES)</i>	\$107,006	\$114,862	\$113,996	\$866
Public Outreach	\$65,020	\$95,930	\$201,287	\$105,357
Special Expenditures	\$582,130	\$604,623	\$697,944	\$93,321
Total Labor Estimates	\$2,860,200	\$3,382,544	\$3,808,994	

6. Counsel Expenses and GEMES

Expenditures

The [GEMES account](#) was established by your Board as a reserve account for legal expenses; projected Special Counsel and Agency Counsel litigation expenses are based on the updated estimates. The GEMES account is funded through a \$20 per Acre-Foot (AF) Reserve Fee which sunsets on October 1, 2028, unless extended by your Board.

GEMES Designated Account		2024-25 Adopted Budget	2024-25 Year-End Actuals	2025-26 Draft Budget	Over / Under	% YoY Change
1	Reserve Fee	\$2,420,000	\$2,472,441	\$2,420,000	\$0	0%
2	Special Counsel	(\$1,655,000)	(\$1,001,490)	(\$1,560,000)	\$95,000	(5.74%)
3	County Counsel	(\$230,000)	(\$73,507)	(\$215,000)	\$15,000	(6.52%)
4	Ending Balance	(\$513,955)	\$548,490	\$1,193,490	\$110,000	(27.77%)

Special Counsel refers to Stoel Rives; Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger (SMW); Rutan Tucker; and Greines, Martin, Stein & Richland LLP (GMSR Appellate Lawyers).

Additional Special Counsel estimates may be added per Board contract with Light Gabler to negotiate the County Staffing Services Contract renewal.

A. OPERATING ACCOUNT DETAIL

1	Operating Account (Draft)	2024-25 Adopted Budget	2024-25 Actuals Through June 2025	2025-26 Draft Budget	Increase / Decrease Over Previous Year	% Change Over PY
2	<u>Revenues</u>					
3	Pump Charge ¹	\$726,000	\$874,038	\$800,000	\$74,000	10%
4	Groundwater Sustainability Fee ²	\$3,509,000	\$3,546,969	\$2,904,000	(\$605,000)	-17%
5	Penalties / Interest	\$130,000	\$158,717	\$150,000	\$20,000	15%
6	SGM Impl Grant Round 1 (OPV) - DWR ³	\$2,577,800	\$2,577,800	\$0	(\$2,577,800)	-100%
7	SGM Impl Grant Round 1 (OPV) - Admin ⁴	\$46,472	\$46,472	\$51,502	\$5,030	11%
8	Interest Earnings ⁵	\$287,000	\$134,362	\$130,000	(\$157,000)	-55%
9	Loan From Surcharges ⁶	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
10	Misc. Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
11	Total Revenues	\$7,276,272	\$7,338,358	\$4,035,502	(\$3,240,770)	-45%
12	<u>Expenditures</u>					
13	Public Works Agency Charges ⁷	\$3,382,544	\$2,758,888	\$2,988,752	(\$393,792)	-12%
14	General Services Agency Charges ⁸	\$25,000	\$19,784	\$20,000	(\$5,000)	-20%
15	FCGMA Online Support / GIS ⁹	\$247,061	\$93,332	\$200,000	(\$47,061)	-19%
16	LAFCO Funding ¹⁰	\$3,510	\$3,510	\$5,192		0%
17	General Legal (County Counsel) ¹¹	\$170,000	\$119,711	\$255,000	\$85,000	50%
18	Board Member Insurance	\$4,085	\$4,085	\$5,045	\$960	24%
19	Biennial Audit	\$20,000	\$26,820	\$20,848	\$848	4%
20	AWA Dues / Symposium/Conference	\$2,500	\$2,786	\$3,000	\$500	20%
21	Public Notices	\$1,000	\$1,111	\$1,500	\$500	50%
22	GSP Annual Reports (Dudek) ¹²	\$97,000	\$65,248	\$138,000	\$41,000	42%
23	Watershed Contributions / Match ¹³	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500	\$0	0%
24	Computer Equipment, Office Software & Website ¹⁴	\$5,000	\$1,473	\$7,500	\$2,500	50%
25	Office Equipment / Supplies / Printing	\$1,000	\$1,347	\$1,500	\$500	50%
26	Misc Expense / Misc Payment	\$2,500	\$383	\$2,500	\$0	0%
27	<u>Special Expenditures</u>					
28	New FCGMA Data Management System ¹⁵	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
29	GSP Implementation (Dudek) ¹⁶	\$989,000	\$592,213	\$150,000	(\$839,000)	-85%
30	SGM Impl. Grant Monitoring Well Install (OPV) ¹⁷	\$4,870,000	\$2,768,117	\$0	(\$4,870,000)	-100%
31	SGM Impl. Grant Round 1 - Administration ¹⁸	\$60,000	\$102,393	\$44,800	(\$15,200)	-25%
32	Monitoring Wells Network Improvement Planning	\$0		\$150,000	\$150,000	
33	SGM Round 2 Grant Application ¹⁹	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	
34	Public Outreach & Strategic Planning ²⁰	\$25,000	\$15,879	\$100,000	\$75,000	300%

35	AMI Data Support	61,648	36,627	\$0	(\$61,648)	-100%
36	Oxnard Well Destruction ²¹	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
37	Rate & Fee Schedule Consultant (Jarvis Fay) ²²	\$17,000	\$1,976	\$25,000	\$8,000	47%
38	Recruitment - Executive Officer	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	
39	Repayment of Loan (Initiated FY 2022-23)	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	
40	Contribution to Reserves ²³	\$0	\$0	\$250,000		
41	Total Expenditures ²⁴	\$9,985,348	\$6,645,681	\$5,520,137	(\$4,465,211)	-45%
42	Net Operating Results	(\$2,709,076)	\$692,677	(\$1,484,635)	\$1,224,441	45%
43	OPERATING RESERVES	\$1,000,000	1,000,000	1,250,000	250,000	25%

Footnotes:

- (1) FY 25-26 projected pump charge revenue assuming 121,000 AFY extraction at \$6.00 per AF.
- (2) Projected groundwater sustainability fee revenues assuming 121,000 AF extractions, and assuming fee is reduced by \$5 to \$24/AF for FY 2025-26 per Fiscal Committee.
- (3) Projected reimbursement from DWR for SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 funds for FCGMA projects in the Oxnard & Pleasant Valley Basins.
- (4) Reimbursement from subgrantees City of Camarillo, UWCD, and PVCWD for consultant grant administration services per Board direction (7/20/2022).
- (5) Annual interest earnings apportionments projected to be received from the County Pooled Investment Fund. As of FY 2024-25, all interest is allocated to Operating per Fiscal Committee.
- (6) Loan from Designated Surcharges Account approved by Board as part of FY 2022-23 Budget; Fiscal Committee recommends repaying loan in FY 2025-26.
- (7) Projected PWA charges to implement annual Work Plan. FY 2025-26 estimate includes PWA CS Fiscal allocation and FTE Executive Officer; does not include additional proposed roles.
- (8) County General Services Agency (GSA) fees for Board room and AV fees, etc.
- (9) FY 2025-26 Estimate for IT services to support, maintain, and technically improve FCGMA Online Data Management System and interface. IT Services and Support costs are split evenly between FCGMA and Watermaster. Staff proposes increasing FCGMA FTEs to 0.825 from 0.5 for FY 2025-26 (totals 1.7 FTEs for both).
- (10) Payment to LAFCO Per Govt. Code Sect. 56381 (b) (1).
- (11) County Counsel services for regular FCGMA legal services.
- (12) GSP Annual Report expense updated based on new Dudek scope approved by Board 12/9/2022 and amended 3/22/24; estimate accounts for Dudek rates adjusted up from 2022 levels, as contract will be renewed or modified October 2025, and will include revising reporting templates to comply with updated DWR guidelines.
- (13) Includes contributions to Watershed Coalition of Ventura County (\$2,200) and Santa Clara Watershed Committee (\$1,500).

- (14) Equipment cost related to computer hardware and software; a laptop was purchased as part of upgrades. Standard software licenses such as Adobe or MS Office; also includes website management costs (WordPress, Elementor).
- (15) New FCGMA data management system procurement planning-level projections. Not included this FY in favor of upgrading current system per FY 2024-25 Operations Committee recommendation.
- (16) Projected GSP implementation consultant costs based on contract approved 12/9/2022 and subsequent amendments; FY 2024-25 expenses reflected 5-Year Periodic Evaluations.
- (17) Monitoring well installation in OPV basins projected expense. Majority funded by DWR SGM Implementation Grant.
- (18) Consultant to assist with DWR SGM Implementation Grant Round 1 administration for the OPV Basins. Reimbursement from City of Camarillo, PVCWD, and UWCD. FCGMA net share was \$9,748 annually.
- (19) Estimated grant application consultant expenses for DWR SGM Impl. Grant Round 2 for projects in Las Posas Valley Basin; projection based on routine grant application cost.
- (20) FY 2024-25 included Hallmark contract costs to complete staffing needs analysis; FY 2025-26 estimate is per Board / Fiscal Committee recommendation to develop stakeholder outreach strategy (Board would like to prioritize rampdown conversations) and to develop 5-year strategic plan.
- (21) FY 2023-24; Projected cost to destroy Oxnard well. Delayed due to interest from County Airport in taking over well.
- (22) Rate counsel and consultant for planned replenishment fee. Projected expense in FY 2024-25 for GEMES by Jarvis Fay.
- (23) FY 2025-26 contribution to reserves is \$250,000 reallocated from funds previously earmarked as contingency. Per Fiscal Committee, future budgets will include a 10% annual contribution of net operating reserve to fund the reserves until the target amount is met (50% of anticipated annual expenses, or \$2.5 mm).
- (24) Additional line items may be added to Expenditures pending Fiscal Committee mid-year budget review and discussion (Light Gabler contract estimate, Board Member Compensation estimate).

B. DRAFT FY 2025-26 BUDGET WORKSHEETS

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Operating Account Budget:

<https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12A-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA-Operating-Account-Budget.pdf>

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Designated Accounts Budget:

https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12B-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA_Designated-Accounts-Budget.pdf

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Statement of Financial Position:

<https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12C-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA-Statement-of-Financial-Position.pdf>

C. DRAFT FY 2025-26 WORK PLAN

Link to Draft FY 2025-26 Work Plan:

<https://fcgma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Item-12D-Draft-FY-2025-26-FCGMA-Work-Plan.pdf>

D. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

This Proposed Draft FY 2025-26 Budget was developed with several recommendations from the Fiscal Committee, including recommendations for future Proposed Budget Reports to improve transparency and clarity.

First, below are summarized the assumptions and recommendations made in the Draft FY 2025-65 budget for the Board's consideration, followed by a short status update on the recommendations made with the FY 2024-25 Proposed Draft Budget Report; we then move on to planning recommendations for future strategy and budget development.

1. Negotiate and Renew the County Staffing Services Agreement

The FCGMA Board has expressed interest in reviewing and revising the staffing agreement and has recently retained the services of Light Gabler LLP to represent their negotiations of such. Staff recommend the budget for Light Gabler's services be added to the draft FY 2025-26 Budget as a line item to track expenses throughout the process.

Regarding retention and hiring efforts in the Agency's future, staff requests Board feedback to "identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may lead to obstacles in the hiring process," as described in AB 2561, as needed. Perhaps this element could be addressed for future attention during negotiations to renew the Agency Staffing Contract with the County.

2. Consider Additional Proposed Roles and Labor Estimates

- A staff recommendation included in the draft FY 2025-26 Budget proposes funding 2 additional roles: additional staff support in the form of an entry-level hydrologist and a management or administrative assistant to help offset the tasks our Agency must accomplish to be effective, and to provide support for Board-recommended priorities such as Monitoring Network improvement planning, systematically clearing processing backlogs associated with temporary variances or civil penalty waiver requests, developing a stakeholder outreach plan to educate and discuss rampdown considerations with stakeholders, and more.
- The labor hours estimate for outreach has increased in FY 2025-26 per the Board's recommendation to prepare the Agency for rampdown discussions.
- In 2024, the Operations Committee discussed hiring an additional part-time PWA IT developer to support the current data management system, to build in cross-training and redundancy. That 0.65% rise in IT staff time and labor amount estimate is factored into the line item "FCGMA Online Support / GIS."

3. Reduce the Groundwater Sustainability Fee by \$5 per Acre-Foot for FY 2025-26

For FY 2025-26, Staff and Fiscal Committee recommend that the established fee of \$29 per Acre-Foot be reduced by \$5 / AF to \$24 / AF.

4. Build Up the Operating Reserves

The Fiscal Committee has recommended reallocating previously earmarked “Contingency funds” (\$250,000) to the Operating Reserves Designated Account as an annual contribution, beginning with FY 2025-26, bringing the total reserves for the year to \$1,250,000.

5. Repay the Loan Back to the Designated Surcharges Account

The repayment of the loan made in FY 2022-223 to the Operating Account from the Designated Surcharges Account; the loan was approved by the FCGMA Board during adoption of the FY 2022-23 Budget, to be repaid in FY 2024-25. During adoption of the FY 2024-25 Budget, the Board postponed repayment to FY 2025-26. The Fiscal Committee recommends repaying the loan during FY 2025-26.

6. Perform Initial Research Prior to Formal Strategic Planning

The Board has expressed interest in developing a Five-Year Strategic Plan suited to our Agency; staff are excited to research and compile existing Board mandates and sustainability goals, such as those as asserted in our Groundwater Sustainability Plans, to begin building the practical framework for this process.

7. Strategic Goal Development Sessions and Annual Reviews

Once Board mandates are collected, Directors, Alternates, and key stakeholders surveyed for input, GSPs reviewed, and prioritized projects are compiled; develop Agency goals and priorities for use with strategic planning.

Members of the Board have provided immeasurably helpful resources and conversations with local Agencies on their established project prioritization matrixes, and how such organizational systems provide measurable results directly tied to documented goals; FCGMA staff are looking forward to systematically implementing an actionable draft version tailored to Agency goals and priorities for discussion and development at the committee level. If needed, consider presenting a use case scenario based on the City of Camarillo's project prioritization framework, showing how the structure can be adapted to the Agency's.

Develop an annual strategic goal review that is completed in tandem with the mid-year budget review, so that the Board and staff are aligned, and stakeholders have more transparency into our organization. If the goal review is linked to framework, the discussions will prove more effective and deliverables can be created to track progress and educate stakeholders.

E. FY 2024-25 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Budget at Full Staff Levels*

The FY 2024-25 Draft Budget presents a “highest cost scenario” for staff planning purposes. Unlike the development of previous Agency budgets, the Draft FY 24-25 Budget assumes funding of a fully staffed agency, with no vacant positions, along with the funding of a full-time Executive Officer. Previous budgets estimated when existing vacancies would be filled, or positions vacated, and the Executive Officer position was previously set at a fixed cost of 25% of the Public Works Agency Director.

Status: Effected and carried over to the FY 2025-26 Draft Budget.

2. *GEMES Fee Renewal*

The ongoing litigation the Agency faces will lead to significant costs and therefore it is recommended the GEMES Fee be continued, and that recommendation has been incorporated into the proposed draft budget. Bringing the GEMES Fee to the Board for renewal the same day as the FCGMA Budget will streamline process so the budget discussion can be informed by that action of the Board.

Status: Renewed for four years until October 2028.

3. FY 2022-2023 Loan from Designated Surcharges Account – Extend Repayment Deadline

A \$1,000,000 loan from the Designated Surcharges Account in the FYv2022-23 budget was previously scheduled to be repaid in FY 2024-25. The draft FY 2024-25 Budget did not include repayment of this loan. The loan was intended to cover the FY 2023-24 drilling costs for monitoring wells partially funded by a DWR SGM Grant. Those wells are in the process of being drilled right now with almost the entirety of the costs to be in the FY 2024-25 budget. The Board directed repayment of this loan be deferred to FY 2025-26 on September 13, 2024 when they adopted the FY 2024-25 Budget.

Status: Deferred to this Fiscal Year for repayment.

4. Split Past Costs of the LPV Watermaster Appeal

Splitting the costs evenly of the appeal of the Las Posas Valley Judgment has been recommended by the Fiscal Committee and is included in this proposed draft FY 2024-25 budget. Half the \$400,000 spent on counsel is included as revenue for the Agency in FY 2024-25. The Agency entered the appeal prior to any designated funding source for the LPV Watermaster, thus legal representation was funded by funds collected Agency-wide. The reimbursement of \$200,000 to the Agency for the LPV Watermaster Rules Appeal was recommended by the Fiscal Committee on June 10, 2024, and approved by the Board on September 13, 2024.

Status: The adopted FY 2024-25 Budget reflected that direction.

5. Schedule a PWA Contract Renewal Discussion

The contract between the Agency and the County for staffing services was entered in 1983 and amended in 1998. The Fiscal Committee recommended reviewing and updating this contract if necessary.

Status: The Board has selected a firm to assist with contract negotiations in preparation for a contract renewal discussion.

6. Amend Resolution 2005-08

Amend Resolution 2005-08, appointing the Director of Watershed Protection District as the Executive Officer, to create a full-time Agency Executive Officer to better suit the needs of the agency.

Status: The Board adopted Resolution 2024-06⁴³, rescinding Resolution 2005-08, on December 13, 2024.

⁴³ Resolution 2024-06: <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Resolution-2024-06.pdf>

V. APPENDICES

A. Organizational Detail

1. Agency Roles

Staff positions and general duties within the FCGMA are summarized below. The summary descriptions will be refined over time.

Executive Officer – The Executive Officer (EO) is described in the section, “Agency Profile,” earlier in this report.

Agency Counsel – Agency Counsel and Assistant Agency Counsel for the FCGMA from the Ventura County Counsel’s Office. In general two attorneys handle FCGMA-related matters and provide legal advice on an as-needed basis. Agency Counsel attends all Board meetings and closed sessions. With assistance from other County legal staff, Agency Counsel also manages relationships with legal consultants who act as special counsel during litigation and acts as the lead legal expert in any and all court actions or enforcement issues. At the time of this report’s writing, FCGMA currently has one Agency Counsel staff member.

Deputy Director, Groundwater Manager and Assistant Groundwater Manager, WPD – These position classifications provide principal administrative, budgetary and program management support to the EO as required. Among the functions performed by these individuals are strategy development; staff supervision, budget management, and reporting performance on Work Plan/task oversight at the direction of the EO; they manage water resources specialists and operations administrators serving the FCGMA; they lead implementation of the LPV Adjudication Judgment and serve as main point of contact for LPV Watermaster.

Engineer / Hydrologist / Groundwater Specialist – An engineer or hydrologist. These full-time positions were established to provide technical support for the Agency’s initiatives; they have expertise in groundwater hydrology and are knowledgeable about Ventura County geography and geology. These roles draft reports, conduct hydrologic research and technical reviews, assist in project management as assigned, assists the public with information requests, attends meetings on behalf of the Agency, and acts as Agency technical expert to stakeholders.

Water Resources Specialists – Manages AMI data, meter updates and calibration, and oversees and initiates compliance in keeping with relevant ordinance code and resolutions, all of which involves a high degree of stakeholder engagement and collaboration with operations administrators, documentation, research, and follow-up; develops and streamlines processes for ensuring effective compliance enforcement; designs and leads stakeholder education workshops on relevant topics. Provides project oversight or assistance to project managers as assigned.

Staff Services Specialist / Business Process Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, Management Assistant – These roles are operations administrators for the Agency, and they manage the semi-annual extraction reporting process for all pumpers within FCGMA boundaries. Previously just one individual, this team builds the processes that document reporting, registration, and other Agency requirements; they process payments and issue reports, memos and receipts; they develop stakeholder outreach materials along with the Board Clerk; they provide a high degree of customer service to member agencies, stakeholders, and staff alike. The Business Process Coordinator manages, trains, and onboards this team, including the student worker extra help role (currently vacant).

Clerk of the Board – The Board Clerk is responsible for assisting the EO with agenda preparation and development, meeting logistics, scheduling, director support, invoice and accounts payable tracking, report preparation, contract modifications, document creation and version control, special event planning, and outreach materials, including updating the public-facing website’s content and design. This role is heavily collaborative and

involves action item tracking and follow-up with any given member of the Agency or its stakeholders.

2. County Labor Rates

PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY CONTRACT RATES: The rates are calculated to provide for total cost recovery of the department's Requested Budget. Each department is treated as a separate cost center and a rate is established for each classification within each department. Therefore, rates for the same classification may differ between departments.

DIRECT LABOR RATE: Average annual salary of all employees within each classification divided by 1,800 hours.

FRINGE BENEFIT RATE: Average of all benefits adopted by the Board of Supervisors or mandated by State/Federal law.

DEPARTMENT OVERHEAD RATE: The department overhead rate was computed to recover the departmental operating cost, e.g., supervision; office supplies; training; memberships and dues, uniforms; safety supplies, vehicle and radio charges; insurance; Government Center building expense (office maintenance, utilities, custodial, landscape and security); office equipment maintenance; telephone charges; postage; and depreciation expenses of fixed assets.

AGENCY OVERHEAD RATE: Agency overhead rate allocated the cost of Public Works Agency – Central Services (includes salaries, benefits, department and County overhead costs); Director of Public Works and staff; fiscal services (budgeting, fiscal and accounting services); and support services (payroll and personnel services, agency safety coordination and computer services).

COUNTY OVERHEAD RATE: To Recover General Fund operation, i.e., maintenance of the common area of the Government center and depreciation; Auditor-Controller's Office

(Accounts payable processing, financial reports, audit, payroll, etc.); Personnel; County Counsel; Chief Administrative Office and Civil Service Commission.

County Overhead Rate, Department, and Agency Rates:

PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC WORKS CHARGES FY 2025 RATES EFFECTIVE 07/01/24					
DEPARTMENT	BUDGET UNIT	DIRECT & BENEFIT	DEPT & AGENCY INDIRECT	CAP INDIRECT	TOTAL %
WATERSHED - GEN	4431	59.6%	38.7%	1.7%	100.0%

B. Agency Program Codes

1. Draft Time Reporting Chart

Below follows the draft, as of September 10, 2024. The Agency hopes to use this chart as a source for developing a key to accompany quarterly or annual budget reports in future.

Items in progress: some activity IDs need to be confirmed for a few projects, and further drafts of the time reporting chart will also include a section for LPV Watermaster IDs, as the chart is primarily a reference for staff as they enter time.

TIME REPORTING TRACKED TO ANNUAL OPERATIONS			
Administration and Fiscal Services			
Task	Description	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Board Meeting Administration	Board meeting preparation including agendas, scheduling, Board letters, Board presentations	P6020850	P012
	Board meetings including pre- and post-debriefing meetings	P6020850	P039
2. Agency Administration	Agency-specific overhead (not PWA) - general administration tasks, clerical work; email & phone follow-up that is not direct stakeholder/end-user contact	P6020850	P001
	Internal meetings; staff or management planning meetings	P6020850	P003
	Customer inquiries (not PRAs)	P6020850	P065
	Invoice management: routing, tracking, reporting on or approving invoices for Counsel, consultants	P6020850	P023
	Routing or Filing Incoming & Outgoing Correspondence	P6020850	P053
	Training - Providing or receiving Agency-specific procedural training that is not project-related	P6020850	P004
	Contract preparation, modification, review	P6020850	P008
	Strategic planning and oversight; consultant or vendor management	P6020850	P011
	Executive Officer	Fixed Cost	
3. Official Document Filings & Public Records Requests	Review, edit, process and archive business record filings and certifications, Ordinance Amendments, Resolutions	P6020850	P051
	PRA & other public requests	P6020850	P064

4. Budget	Preparation and adoption of Annual Work Plan, Budget, Proposed Budget Report; analysis and performance reports	P6020850	P175
5. CSD Fiscal Staff Services	Submit 13-Monthly AP FSRs (incl. AP/AR) to the Agency; provide AP/AR and cash-flow management services; provide fiscal reports	Fixed Cost	
6. Committee Meetings	Committee meetings, preparation, agendas, minutes	P6020850	P041
7. Biennial Audit Report	Preparation of scope of work; selection process; assist auditor with inquiries; QA/QC draft audit report	P6020850	P089
Records Services			
Task	Activity	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Specialized Data Queries / Groundwater and Credit Transactions	Conduct extraction data analysis	P6020851	P072
	Allocation transfers, credit programs, routine variance requests; review and or processing of requests	P6020851	P058
2. FCGMA Online and Website O&M	Data management system maintenance, data mgt system testing, custom data queries, small-scale system enhancements	P6020851	P502
	Website programming revisions and content development for statements	P6020851	P082
	Website hosting & GIS fee	Fixed Cost	
3. SAES and Allocation Administration	TIER 1 - Routine SAES Processing: Prepare & mail SAES; Process SAES, IAI Applications and payments into the database; Reviewing meter photos; Administration including payment reporting and tracking; surcharge processing	P6020851	P513
	TIER 2 - Extended Follow-up: Account audits, Researching errors and omissions; Admin and Manager Reviews; Follow-up regarding incorrect or no payment (pumping, civil penalties, surcharges)	P6020851	P512
4. Well and CombCode Registration	Processing registration applications; Researching owners of record; Unregistered well follow-up; Assist new well owners/operators with registration, reporting and payment	P6020851	P505
5. Late/Non-Reporters (SAES) Compliance	Late or non-reporter follow-up and compliance; Civil Penalty assessment and notifications; Retroactive data entry (and billing) into FCGMA Online; Enforcement action recommendations to EO	P6020851	P504
	Process civil penalty waiver/reduction requests	P6020851	P620
6. Flowmeter Records Services			
Meter Calibration Program Maintenance	Mail Flowmeter Calibration Notices, NOVs, and follow-up	P6020851	P514
	Process test results and repair/replacement flowmeter info; Process and track flowmeter exemptions, and 5-year waiver requests	P6020851	P506
AMI	AMI Operations	P6020860	P500

	AMI vendor coordination and management	P6020860	P011
	AMI meetings	P6020860	P003
Technical Services			
Task	Activity	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Annual Reports Preparation	Compile and analyze resource data for GSP and GMA Annual Reports; Prepare, review, finalize and publish	P6020852	P171
2. Data Collection, Studies, Investigations and Analysis	Routine data analysis (GW conditions, pumping trends)	P6020852	P072
	Field investigations; coordination of field investigations	P6020852	P076
	Unregistered well follow-up; new well owner/operator registration	P6020852	P505
	Perform QA/QC review of monitoring programs	P6020852	P665
3. Groundwater and Well Projects			
Well Permits	Technical review for well permit processing	P6020852	P612
Resolutions and Related Board-Approved Projects	Resolution project management, including City of Camarillo North PV Desalter Project, Camrosa WD Conejo Creek Project, Oxnard GREAT & ASR Program, Calleguas MWD ASR Program; meetings (billed under P011 because they are part of the project requirements)	P6020852	P011
	Studies, reviews, comment letters, compliance	P6020852	P665
	Meter calibration resolution implementation, replacement, rollover, water usage estimates	P6020852	P500
	Correspondence	P6020852	P053
	Meetings	P6020852	P003
Oxnard Basin Monitoring Wells	Project Administration [maintenance, monitoring, and permit and post-grant compliance (insurance submittal, data submittals, etc)]	P6020872	P500
	Contract preparation, modification, review	P6020872	P008
	Subgrantee or Vendor Management	P6020872	P011
Pleasant Valley Basin Monitoring Wells	Project Administration [maintenance, monitoring, and permit and post-grant compliance (insurance submittal, data submittals, etc)]	P6020874	P500
	Contract preparation, modification, review	P6020874	P008
	Subgrantee or Vendor Management	P6020874	P011
4. Grant Administration	Grant application and administration; subgrantee awards	P6020852	P021
Legal Services			
Task	Activity	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Advisory Services	Advice to Board and staff on open government laws, conflict of interest rules, Agency regulatory authority, contracting issues, compliance with SGMA, CEQA and other applicable laws; Board letter review and attendance at Board meetings; review and commentary or preparation of Ordinances, Amendments, Resolutions, contracts and other legal documents; code enforcement	P6020853	Invoiced separately; tracked via object code 2185
2. Anticipated and Ongoing			

LPVWRC v FCGMA	Meetings	P6020864	P003
	Correspondence	P6020864	P053
	PRAs and discovery	P6020864	P064
City of Oxnard v FCGMA	Meetings	P6020866	P003
	Correspondence	P6020866	P053
	PRAs and discovery	P6020866	P064
OPV Coalition v FCGMA	Meetings	P6020867	P003
	Correspondence	P6020867	P053
	PRAs and discovery	P6020867	P064
Public Outreach			
Task	Activity	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Participation in Integrated Regional Groundwater Issues & Stakeholder Meetings	Attend / participate in stakeholder meetings (AWA, WCVC, City Council, etc.)	P6020854	P501
2. Outreach, Website, Communications	Semi-Annual Newsletter; stakeholder outreach and engagement; public workshops; outreach materials	P6020850	P646
	Routine content management & maintenance of Agency website and social media presence	P6020850	P082
Special Expenditures			
Task	Activity	Project ID	Activity ID
1. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation	All GSP implementation tasks: meetings, studies, analyses, etc.	P6020858	P507
GSP 5-Year Evaluation and Amendments	Data collection (including data requests) and analyses, report preparation, technical report review, etc	P6020858	P665
	Workshop planning, logistics, materials development promotions, attendance	P6020858	P091
	Prepare and review upload documents / modules, and upload to DWR website.	P6020858	P500
2. New Allocation Systems	New allocation system development, stakeholder meetings, etc.	P6020854	P503
	Variance processing	P6020854	P072
3. New Data Management System Requirements	Develop performance specification for new data management system, prepare and administer RFP; planning and implementation analysis	P6020862	P010
4. Water Market Development and Implementation	Continue implementation of Water Market pilot study and expansion to all of FCGMA	P6020861	P010
5. Oxnard Well Destruction	Destroy abandoned well in Oxnard	P6020854	P617
PWA Admin & Overhead (Billed to Public Works Agency; Not Paid Out of FCGMA Budget)			

Task	Activity	Project ID	Activity ID
Overhead & Administration	Breaks, timesheet, County/PWA/WPD paperwork, etc.	P6990308	P001
Meetings	County/PWA/WPD/WRD/GRS meetings	P6990308	P003
County Training	County/PWA/WPD training	P6990308	P046

C. Performance Measurements

Our performance measures are based on the budget and work plan, and they tell the Agency's story about whether our work is achieving its objectives, and if progress is being made toward achieving our goals.

"A performance measure is a quantifiable expression of the amount, cost, or result of activities that indicate how much, how well, and at what level, products or services are provided to customers during a given time."⁴⁴

Our draft budget is quantifiable because it includes year-over-year data that shows the progression of the Agency's reserves and expenditures, categorized by sections of the work plan, which is divided by project and activity, reflecting the work, business processes, and functions of FCGMA. These are understandable high-level performance measurements that are further detailed in following sections of this narrative.

1. More Measurements in Development

To measure results with more specificity, the Agency should consider developing practical, yet specific results-based performance measurements. Performance measurements must be designed to align with Board and Committee priorities.

To structure future performance measurements, staff will consider creating them with the parameters of S.M.A.R.T. goals⁴⁵, so that we can more effectively show proof of results to our stakeholders and can more easily pinpoint areas for improvement. We hope that this discussion will start with the Fiscal Committee during the development of the FY 2024-2025 Draft Budget.

⁴⁴ <https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/budget/instructions/other/PMGuide.pdf>

⁴⁵ University of California, SMART Goals: A How-To Guide https://www.ucop.edu/local-human-resources/_files/performance-appraisal/How%20to%20write%20SMART%20Goals%20v2.pdf

Examples of possible performance measurements:

- Percentage of saved but unsubmitted SAES reporting in database each quarter
- Average time spent following up with Semi-Annual Extraction Statement (SAES) reporting that contains errors and omissions in a statement cycle
- Number of Flowmeter Calibrations noticed and processed in one year

Staff goal: Update based on project prioritization methodology structure shared by City of Camarillo.

D. Other Financial Information

1. Trends and Assumptions for Key Revenue

As noted in the main section of this narrative, to forecast revenue from pump charges, an average of historical pumping rates of 121,000 Acre-Feet has traditionally been used. Below are the Agency's current pump charges used to calculate forecasted revenue using the historical pumping average.

Pump Charge – set by enabling legislation (only fee for de minimis domestic operators)	\$6 / AF
Groundwater Sustainability Fee (GWSF) effective Oct 1, 2022 Note: Reduction in fee recommended for FY 2025-26	\$29 / AF \$24 / AF
GEMES Reserve Fee (sunsets Oct 1, 2026, unless extended by Board)	\$20 / AF
Total With FY 25-26 Reduction in Groundwater Sustainability Fee:	\$55 / AF \$50 / AF

2. Two-Year Forecast

2.5 and 3% were used for forecasting based on past practices.

3. About Trend and Comparative Data⁴⁶

4. Basis of Accounting

The basis of accounting describes how financial activities are recognized and reported; specifically, when revenues, expenditures (or expenses), assets, and liabilities are recognized and reported in the financial statements.⁴⁷

D. Appropriations Limit Calculation

Article XIII B, section 9(C) of the California Constitution⁴⁸ exempts certain special districts from the appropriations limit calculation mandate. Special districts required by law to calculate their appropriations limit must present the calculation as part of their annual audit.

The following local governments are not subject to Appropriations Limit requirements:

- Special districts which did not, as of FY 1977-78, levy a property tax in excess of 12.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value.
- Any special district which is entirely funded by other than the proceeds of taxes.

⁴⁶ <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/the-use-of-trend-data-and-comparative-data-for-financial>

⁴⁷ <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/en/Resources/SAM/TOC/7400/7440>

⁴⁸ <https://www.californiacityfinance.com/MRSHBch10GannLimit.pdf>

E. Policies and Procedures

1. Resolutions, Policies, and Procedures

Resolutions reflect a statement of Agency policy and are an official documentation of Board action regarding matters brought before the Board for consideration, which are then approved by a majority vote, provided a quorum is maintained.

Resolutions adopted by the Board typically address specific legal, technical, or administrative goals and objectives of the Agency. Resolutions may also authorize contracts, describe policy changes, or simply honor individuals for service to the Agency.

Any Board member, Alternate member, or individual from the public audience may suggest a resolution; however, the decision to consider deliberation and final approval action on any proposed resolution is at the sole discretion of the Board.

A summary of the resolutions adopted by the FCGMA Board can be found in a numbered listing with each effective date on the FCGMA website at <https://fcgma.org/resolutions/>, or you can download a PDF with hyperlinks to each resolution at <https://s42135.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Current-Resolution-List Reverse-Chronological-Order 20250630.pdf>.

2. Ordinances

[Agency Ordinance Code](#) – Originally passed and adopted by the FCGMA Board of Directors on June 26, 2002, the current Ordinance Code (No. 8.10) was amended and adopted on Mayon May22, and became effective on the thirty-first day after adoption, June 24, 2022.

[Summary of FCGMA Ordinances](#)

Visit <https://fcgma.org/ordinances/> to read more about the following:

Water Market-AMI Pilot Project phase 1– An Ordinance to establish a combined Water Market Pilot Program and Advanced Metering Infrastructure system demonstration project.

Water Market Phase 2 Ordinance Extension 2– An Ordinance to extend Phase II of the Water Market.

Water Market Phase 2 Extension- Final– An Ordinance to extend Phase II of the Water Market a second time.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Ordinance – An Ordinance to require that flowmeters be equipped with Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Telemetry.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Domestic Operator Exemption – An Ordinance to Exempt Domestic Operators from the Requirement that Flowmeters be Equipped with Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Telemetry.

Emergency Ordinance E – Passed and adopted April 11, 2014, Emergency Ordinance E limits extractions from groundwater extraction facilities, suspends use of credits, and prohibits construction of any groundwater extraction facility and/or the issuance of any permit therefor due to severe drought conditions.

Amendment to Ordinance E – Passed and adopted on December 13, 2019, An Amendment to Emergency Ordinance E repealed Article 2.C of Emergency Ordinance E, with respect to groundwater extractions subject to temporary extraction allocations beginning on January 1, 2020. This amendment restores temporary allocations for municipal and industrial operators.

Ordinance to Establish an Allocation System for the OPV Groundwater Basins with Amendments – Originally passed and adopted by the FCGMA Board of Directors October 2019, the OPV Ordinance was amended and adopted on October 2020 and March 2021, and became effective on the thirty-first day after adoption. This ordinance established a new pumping allocation system for the Oxnard and Pleasant Valley Basins.

On March 27, 2024, the Board passed and adopted An Ordinance Amending Articles 4 and 6 and Rescinding Section 10.2 of An Ordinance to Establish an Allocation System for the Oxnard and Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basins to comply with the Los Angeles County Superior Court’s peremptory writ of mandate issued August 31, 2023, and to ensure the continued applicability and viability of the OPV Ordinance and the sustainable management of the OPV Basins in accordance with SGMA.

Transition Allocation Ordinance – Adopted May 27, 2020, an ordinance to adjust extraction allocations to facilitate the transition from calendar year to water year reporting of groundwater extractions.

LPV Allocation Ordinance with Amendments – Originally passed and adopted by the FCGMA Board of Directors December 2019, the current Ordinance was amended and

adopted February 2021, and became effective on the thirty-first day after adoption, this ordinance establishes a new pumping allocation system for the Las Posas Valley Basin.

LPV Transition Ordinance – Adopted February 24, 2021, An Ordinance to Adjust Extraction Allocations in the Las Posas Valley Basin to Facilitate the Transition from Calendar Year to water Year Reporting of Groundwater Extractions.

Note: Please visit the LPV Watermaster section of our website to learn more about the LPV Adjudication Judgement.

Ordinance History: <https://fcgma.org/ordinances/ordinance-history/>

Emergency Ordinance History: <https://fcgma.org/ordinances/emergency-ordinance-history/>

3. Agency Objectives

FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY OBJECTIVES 1998

1. **ADMINISTER GMA ORDINANCES.** Priority work to carry on normal GMA business, schedule and hold monthly meetings, bill and receive payments, and scheduling agenda items for action on items beyond the authority of the Coordinator.
2. **IMPLEMENT THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.** Implement the GMA Management Plan by bringing individual items to the board for approval.
3. **IMPLEMENT THE GMA WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES.** Follow-on action for the water quality objectives as approved by the board.
4. **DESIGN AND SUBMIT A NEW BUDGET FORMAT SUITABLE TO THE BOARD.** Submit new budget format based upon the Waterworks District formatting. Obtain approval and submit 1998-1999 budget in new format.
5. **DEVELOP CHLORIDE DATA.** Continue to hold discussions, obtain new information and develop GMA position on chloride concentrations.
6. **INCREASE PENALTY CHARGES.** Review the need for increased penalties for overpumping and determine the new penalty assessments if appropriate.
7. **PLACE ORDINANCES AND AGENDA ON INTERNET.** Install all ordinances, enabling legislation, GMA history, directors biography and publish monthly agenda on the internet.
8. **RETURN TO A MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE.** Keep meeting schedule to monthly, or bi-monthly unless pressing items demand attention.
9. **INVESTIGATE USING PUMP CHARGES TO FUND WELL DESTRUCTION.** Investigate the desirability of using \$.80 per acre foot of water pumped out of the GMA to augment the well destruction program funding.
10. **CONSIDER CHANGING ORDINANCE 5.6 TO MAKE THE APPLICATION FOR CONSERVATION CREDITS AUTOMATIC.** Ordinance 5.6 requires each operator to apply for conservation credits by July 1st each year. Many credits are not applied for because they will not be used. However, there are a few pumpers who need and want the credits and some of those are not meeting the annual deadline for credit applications. Since all pumping is recorded in a data base, we already know how many credits are due each year. Automatic generation of credits would simplify the process for pumpers and staff. Alternately, making the credit application process automatic will result in approximately 20,000 acre feet of additional credits each year most of which will never be used.
11. **DISCUSS THE DESIRABILITY OF APPOINTING A COMMITTEE TO STUDY AND RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS TO THE LAS POSAS BASIN OVERDRAFT PROBLEM.** Resolution of the overdraft problems in the Las Posas Basin can best be accomplished by involving the pumpers who depend upon this basin for water. A truly representative group will have a greater probability of finding and implementing a solution to the problem.

Staff goal: Draft new objectives document based on Board initiatives, GSP sustainability goals - mark as draft for Board review and discussion.

4. Fiscal Committee

A. *FY 2025-26 Policy and Procedures Recommendations*

The Fiscal Committee's recent policy and procedures recommendations are summarized below.

Procedures

- The Fiscal Committee has agreed to begin its budget planning with a late January/early February midyear budget review in order to analyze estimates in the current Fiscal Year's adopted budget against its actual expenses. The Committee will then direct staff to develop a report based on their midyear recommendations and considerations for the discussion at a subsequent Board meeting.

Budget Presentation

- Clearly identify contributions to Reserves as Expense line items on any presentations.
- Separate out and provide more detail for Designated Accounts, including the GEMES fund, the Surcharge fund, and the Reserves fund. Prioritize the presentation of the Operating Account and Designated Accounts worksheets to the Board when the budget is discussed in a subsequent Item on this meeting's Agenda to provide greater clarity.
- *Year End Account Balance*: Remove year end account balance and other such statements of financial condition from Operating or Designated Accounts budget worksheets; such as yearend account balance, carry forward balance, debits for the year, and net operating results, as they are confusing to stakeholders when included with the budget. Move to a separate accounting and label it a Statement of Financial Position. The Committee would prefer total expenses to be more clear on the budget itself.

FCGMA Reserves Policy Development

1. *Formalize the Fiscal Policy Regarding an Annual Contribution to Operating Reserve:* The Committee has requested the FCGMA Operating Reserve Target be set at 50% of anticipated annual expenses, or \$2.5 million, and recommends an annual contribution until the target is met. This Fiscal Year, the funds previously held as a \$250,000 contingency policy have been reallocated to the Reserves fund, bringing the Agency's current total reserves to \$1,250,000.
2. *Net Operating Reserve Policy:* The Fiscal Committee discussed funding the reserve by a percentage of the net operating results, 10% annually until the Operating Reserve Target is met.
3. *Reserves Policy Discussion:* As revenues and expenses have fluctuated over recent years, with major projects such as the 5-Year Periodic Evaluations or installing monitoring wells, the Committee discussed establishing a nuanced reserves policy to manage rate stabilization elements and saving for capital projects in closely monitored and clearly reported on separate accounts. The funds would only be utilized after Board approval. Set a target amount and contribute until it's met. Use unspent revenue to contribute to a rate stabilization reserve so it is funded by the efficiencies in the budget, and consider utilizing funds collected from surcharges for improvement projects. The Committee discussed allocating a percentage of net operating results into these different reserve accounts.
4. *Rate Stabilization Reserve and Policy:* The Committee recommends creating this targeted fund, and notes that funding it would need further discussion, but suggests contributing 50% of net operating results into the rate stabilization fund as a working plan. Rate stabilization would be a major contributing factor for predictable rates for the next 3 to 5 years, which would be beneficial for stakeholders as they plan their own budgets and decision making.
5. *Capital Improvement Reserve and Policy:* The Committee discussed how a targeted capital improvement reserve could, after extensive planning and Board approval, help add water to the system, whether through funding incentives or grants to support projects by member agencies that benefit the basins. The Committee identified the need to first discuss this concept with major stakeholders, especially the Agency's definition of "capital improvement" and possible uses for the fund after it is established and defined. Chair West suggests utilizing the Surcharge account as a major component of the Capital Improvement Reserve, perhaps with the addition of a 5% annual contribution from net operating results. This fund and its intent will need to be communicated to stakeholders efficiently to show how the capital improvement funds are tied to specific projects, including their timeline and costs. First, the capital improvement reserve would need to be created, then funded, then project prioritization established, then funding projects would be approached. The Committee discussed developing a 5-year capital improvement plan in the future.

5. FY 2024-25 Staff Recommendations for Development

Annual Agency Objectives Discussion

A review of Agency objectives should be scheduled annually with the Board in February or March for input into the next fiscal year's budget and work plan. Objectives related to project evaluations and data management should be sent to the Operations Committee meetings during the year, as needed.

Annual Strategic Goal Review

Along with Agency objectives, a review of the Agency's strategic goals should be scheduled annually with the Board in February or March for input into the next fiscal year's budget and work plan. The Executive Committee should be directed to address how the Agency will meet its strategic goals.

Fiscal Committee Policy Development

The Fiscal Committee has identified several areas for policy development, as noted in the appendices; the policies they would like to prioritize are highlighted below.

- Loan and Reimbursement Policies
- Reserve Policy

Sufficient reserves should be available to ensure Agency operations. A clear policy on how reserves are set, contributed to, and accessed through a separate accounting should be developed.

Review Policy

- Budget and Fiscal Policy
- Fiscal Management Policy

- Audit Management Policy
 - Audit Review Policy
- Enforcement Policy
 - Collect resources for review⁴⁹
- Funding Policies
 - Grants
 - Interfund Loans
 - Loans to Other Programs (LPV Watermaster)

⁴⁹ <https://www.cdtfa.ca.gov/taxes-and-fees/manuals/cpm-07.pdf>

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H. Agency Contacts

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