MONTARA WATER AND SANITARY DISTRICT AGENDA

For Meeting Of: **July 9, 2026**

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: Clemens Heldmaier, General Manager

SUBJECT: Review and Support for WaterSMART Grant Applications

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program provides competitive grant funding to water utilities in the Western United States to improve water management, efficiency, and drought resilience. MWSD has engaged Balance Hydrologics to identify suitable grant opportunities under the *Applied Sciences* and *Small Watershed Resiliency* programs and prepare application packages for three proposed projects. These grants are being pursued as part of a coordinated strategy to secure outside funding for high-priority infrastructure and scientific investments, reducing the financial burden on MWSD ratepayers while advancing the District's long-term water supply and operational goals.

PROPOSED PROJECTS:

1. **Modernizing Hydrologic Data Management and Decision Support.** The proposed project will modernize MWSDs data systems, consolidating streamflow, groundwater, pumping, and water quality monitoring records into a standardized, integrated database and deploy a map-based decision-support platform that allows staff to efficiently visualize, analyze, and report on water system conditions. Six priority monitoring stations will be upgraded to telemetry to provide near-real-time data. The project will also establish repeatable workflows, decision metrics, and online dashboards for drought management, water quality risk screening, and system efficiency monitoring.

2. **Building Drought Resilience Through Isotopic Characterization of Recharge and Groundwater Sources.** The proposed project will conduct a stable isotope and environmental tracer study of the Montara Mountain watershed. Stable isotopes of water to characterize recharge sources, groundwater residence times, and the connectivity between precipitation, surface water, and groundwater. Rainfall and storm event samples will be collected using newly installed instrumentation at existing monitoring sites, and monthly sampling will be conducted over two water years. Data analysis and modeling will be used to develop a quantitative understanding of watershed water balance and groundwater recharge that directly informs MWSD's source water management and drought planning, with results available through an online dashboard.

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3. **SCADA and Distribution Monitoring Modernization**. This project will install flow meters and pressure sensors throughout MWSD's distribution system to improve leak detection, reduce non-revenue water, and enhance supply resilience. It will also upgrade the software system to monitor system status and improve response times.

FISCAL IMPACT:

All three grants require a 50/50 non-federal cost-share which we have increased to 55% to improve chances of application success. For all three projects, non-federal cost share will be met primarily through MWSD staff time. Project 1 will include substantial cost offsets via inclusion of ongoing monitoring services within the grant scope. If any application is selected for award, staff will return to the Board for authorization to execute a financial assistance agreement.

Preliminary Project Budget Summaries

	1. Data System	2. Isotope Study	3. SCADA
Total Project Cost	$714,170	$308,000	$250,000
Federal Share (45%)	$321,377	$138,600	$112,500
Non-Federal Share (55%)	$392,793	$169,400	$137,500
In-Kind Staff Time	$196,397	$65,000	$68,750
Monitoring Services Offset	$150,000	$0	$0
Net New Cost to MWSD	**$46,396**	**$104,400**	**$68,750**

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is provided for Board information. Staff will present an overview of the proposed projects at a subsequent Board meeting and will be available to answer questions.