

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE SANTA CRUZ INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND COMPLEMENTARY EFFORTS**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this interagency cooperative memorandum of agreement (MOA) is to reaffirm the joint efforts of the participating organizations in participating in the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program that supports coordination, collaboration and communication in addressing the region's water resources issues. The signatories hereby commit to the common and specific purpose of maintaining and implementing the Santa Cruz IRWM Plan (IRWMP) and efforts consistent with the IRWM Program. This MOA updates and continues the efforts initiated under the initial MOA completed in 2006 and subsequent updates completed in 2010/2011, and 2016.

2. IRWMP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Santa Cruz IRWMP goals are intended to be a summary of the desired objectives that the agencies in the region are collectively working to achieve:

- Provide safe, reliable, and affordable water supply to meet current and projected demand without causing undesirable environmental impacts.
- Maintain and improve surface and groundwater quality to protect beneficial uses.
- Improve the condition of upland riparian and aquatic ecosystems to support the native species, watershed functions, and water needs.
- Reduce flood hazards and manage stormwater runoff through policies and projects that enhance natural hydrologic function and protect communities.

More specific objectives for the Santa Cruz IRWMP are listed below, according to the four functional areas.

Water Supply

- Ensure reliable and sustainable water supply through strategies that diversify the supply portfolio, develop alternative/supplemental sources, protect and enhance surface water and groundwater, protect against seawater intrusion, maximize efficient delivery, and address the projected impacts of climate change.
- Reduce water demand as technically and economically feasible, particularly in relation to the cost of additional sources.

Water Quality

- Reduce the sources of harmful pollutants (e.g., sediment, bacteria, nitrate, persistent organics and other toxic constituents) and their impacts on aquatic resources.

Watershed Resources

- Improve and protect watershed ecosystems to support healthy watershed function.
- Increase the habitat quality and quantity of critical aquatic ecosystems (i.e., streams,

tidal wetlands, and freshwater wetlands).

Flood/Stormwater

- Implement integrated flood management strategies that reduce hazards and impacts from floods and provide diverse benefits (e.g., improve stormwater quality, protect ecosystems, increase groundwater recharge).

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. **Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP).** The California Water Code defines IRWMP as "a comprehensive plan for a defined geographic area, the specific development, content, and adoption of which shall satisfy requirements developed pursuant to this part. At a minimum, an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan describes the major water-related objectives and conflicts within a region, considers a broad variety of resource management strategies, identifies the appropriate mix of water demand and supply management alternatives, water quality protection, and environmental stewardship actions to provide long-term, reliable, and high-quality water supply and protect the environment, and identifies disadvantaged communities in the region and takes the water-related needs of those communities into consideration." (*CWC §10530 et seq.*)

3.2. **IRWM Planning Region** also known as the IRWM Region. The geographic area in which consolidated planning and coordination efforts including stakeholders, agencies and projects are conducted. Regions are self-forming and organizing. Regions are to be geographically contiguous and determined with regard to shared water management issues, stakeholders, and water-related conflicts. In March 2009, the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) established a Region Acceptance Process to evaluate and approve an IRWM region. Approval of an IRWM region by DWR is required before a region can submit an application for IRWM grant funds. There are 48 IRWM regions statewide, six IRWM regions in the Central Coast Funding Area. In September 2009, DWR formally approved the Santa Cruz IRWM Region. The Santa Cruz region encompasses all of the watersheds of Santa Cruz County, excluding the Pajaro watershed, but including the Watsonville Sloughs watershed. The Pajaro watershed is within the adjacent Pajaro IRWM Region, which also addresses flood and water supply issues in the Watsonville Sloughs watershed.

3.3. **Central Coast Funding Area (CCFA).** The Central Coast Funding Area (CCFA) is one of 12 funding areas statewide allocated a specific amount of funding to support IRWM activities (Water Code section 79744 (a)). The CCFA includes six IRWM Regions and incorporates lands in portions of the counties of Santa Clara (south of Morgan Hill), San Mateo (small portions), Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, Kern (small portions), San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura (northern portion).

3.4. **Regional Water Management Group (RWMG).** State guidelines define the RWMG as a group of three or more agencies, at least two of which have a statutory authority over water supply or water management, as well as those persons who may be necessary for the development and implementation of an IRWM Plan, pursuant to the requirements in CWC

§10540 and §10541.

For the Santa Cruz IRWM program, the RWMG consists of the local Agencies with statutory authority over water management and related resources, and the Regional Water Management Foundation (RWMF) which serves as the administrative and coordinating entity. RWMG members that are signatories to the 2016 MOA includes:

- Central Water District
- City of Capitola
- City of Santa Cruz
- City of Scotts Valley
- City of Watsonville
- County of Santa Cruz
- Santa Cruz County Sanitation District
- Davenport County Sanitation District
- Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
- San Lorenzo Valley Water District
- Scotts Valley Water District
- Soquel Creek Water District

3.5. **Steering Committee.** The Santa Cruz IRWM Steering Committee is an active, decision-making entity of the RWMG that is designed to comprise a broad representation of the RWMG to effectively make decisions on behalf of the group in a timely manner. The Steering Committee meets on a regular basis to oversee IRWM implementation and coordinate efforts as needed. The Steering Committee currently consists of the County Water Resources Program Manager, the Executive Director of the Resource Conservation District, and the General Manager/Director of a water supply agency. These individuals continue to serve as the Steering Committee unless a majority vote of the RWMG (based on one vote per agency) replaces all or some of the Steering Committee members or a replacement is necessary due to an individual's resignation. The Steering Committee provides direction and expertise in the four functional planning areas – water supply, water quality, watershed resources, and flood/stormwater management. The RWMF Program Director participates as a non-voting member of the Steering Committee and provides staff support. All Steering Committee decisions with material financial implications are ratified by the RWMG.

The Steering Committee provides information and consults with the RWMG, and performs the following functions on behalf of the RWMG

- guides IRWM Plan development and implementation;
- acts as a liaison to the Regional Water Management Foundation (see below) and all stakeholders, including state agencies, elected officials, non-governmental organizations, and the public;
- coordinates funding proposals;
- promotes project integration of multi-benefit projects;
- ensures stakeholder participation; and,

- tends to administrative matters concerning IRWM efforts.

3.6. **Regional Water Management Foundation (RWMF).** The RWMF was established in 2007 to provide organizational support for the implementation of the Santa Cruz IRWMP. The RWMF is a subsidiary of the Community Foundation Santa Cruz County (CFSCC). The RWMF is a separate 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. It has its own Board of Directors and staff, with an office located at the CFSCC. The RWMF Board, includes directors appointed by the Community Foundation and three directors representing public agencies; currently, the Public Agency director seats are filled by the Steering Committee members. The primary objectives of the RWMF are to (1) protect communities in Santa Cruz County from water shortages and floods; (2) improve water supply reliability in Santa Cruz County (3) protect and improve water quality and the natural environment in Santa Cruz County; and,; and (4) improve preparedness, adaption, mitigation, and resiliency to climate change related impacts to water resources. The RWMF aims to support regional planning and implementation efforts via the IRWM program and complementary efforts such as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Groundwater Sustainability Plans, Watershed Resilience and Climate Resiliency programs.

The RWMF served as the grantee on prior IRWM grants awarded to the Santa Cruz region, including: a 2007 IRWM Implementation grant, a 2011 IRWM Planning grant; a 2013 Disadvantaged Communities Engagement Pilot Project; a 2016 IRWM Implementation grant; a 2018 IRWM Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Grant; and IRWM Implementation grants awarded in 2020 and 2023. The RWMF provided management and administration of these grants and served as the central hub for reporting, invoicing, and inter-agency coordination. The RWMF also assists with the preparation of grant applications and provides administrative services to agencies' awarded grants that are complementary to IRWM efforts.

The RWMF also provides administrative and planning support to two Groundwater Sustainability Agencies that formed in response to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The RWMF has provided administrative and planning support to the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency since 2016. The RWMF has supported the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency with grants since 2018 and with administrative and planning support since 2022.

3.7. **IRWM Stakeholders.** Stakeholder group includes a diverse range of resource agencies, municipalities, local districts, non-governmental organizations, interest groups, and residents with an interest in water resources planning and management. Efforts to engage, inform and provide opportunities for stakeholders to actively participate in IRWM have occurred from the program's inception. The stakeholder engagement seeks to ensure that diverse interests and perspectives are considered in establishing the region's water management goals, objectives, strategies and priorities. Local agencies, organizations, and stakeholders have opportunities for input on the IRWM Plan development and specific projects through meetings and workshops and the broader community informed through boards, advisory groups, meetings and events.

3.8. **IRWM Projects.** The California Water Code (§10537) establishes that IRWM projects and programs are those that accomplish any of the following objectives;

- a) Reduce water demand through agricultural and urban water use efficiency.
- b) Increase water supplies for any beneficial use through the use of any of the following, or other, means:
 - 1. Groundwater storage and conjunctive water management
 - 2. Desalination
 - 3. Precipitation enhancement
 - 4. Water recycling
 - 5. Regional and local surface storage
 - 6. Water use efficiency
 - 7. Stormwater management
- c) Improve operational efficiency and water supply reliability, including conveyance facilities, system reoperation, and water transfers.
- d) Improve water quality, including drinking water treatment and distribution, groundwater and aquifer remediation, matching water quality to water use, wastewater treatment, water pollution prevention, and management of urban and agricultural runoff.
- e) Improve resource stewardship, including agricultural lands stewardship, ecosystem restoration, flood plain management; recharge area protection, urban land use management, groundwater management, water-dependent recreation, fishery restoration, including fish passage improvement, and watershed management.
- f) Improve flood management through structural and non-structural means, or by any other means.

4. SUMMARY OF SANTA CRUZ IRWM EFFORTS TO DATE

2005 – A Preliminary IRWMP was developed and a Proposition 50 IRWM grant proposal submitted to the DWR and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), with the CFSCC serving as applicant at the behest of the Partner Agencies.

2006 – The Partner Agencies (presently referred to as the Regional Water Management Group) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to establish an institutional framework to implement the IRWMP under the context of a single, regional grant agreement. The MOA describes the Partner Agencies' and CFSCC's responsibilities to fulfill the terms of the Prop 50 IRWM Implementation grant agreement. Signatories to the 2006 MOA include:

- Soquel Creek Water District
- Scotts Valley Water District
- County of Santa Cruz
- Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County

- Santa Cruz County Sanitation District
- Davenport County Sanitation District
- City of Santa Cruz
- City of Watsonville
- Watsonville Wetlands Watch
- Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County

2007 – The SWRCB awarded a \$12.5 million grant to the CFSCC to fund the implementation of high priority IRWM projects in the region. In 2007, the CFSCC created a subsidiary organization, the RWMF, to support the IRWMP efforts and the Prop 50 administrative duties.

2008 – The RWMF and SWRCB executed a Proposition 50 IRWM Implementation Grant that awarded \$12.5m for local agencies to implement 15 high priority components addressing water supply, water quality, and watershed/habitat condition. Many of components feature multi-benefit projects with on-the ground improvements in multiple locations. In total, over 50 projects were completed at more than 80 sites in the County from 2008 - 2013. The total cost of the implementation, including local match contribution, was over \$30m. The RWMF served as grantee and provided the administration and coordination of this grant.

2009 – The Santa Cruz Region successfully completed the state’s IRWM Regional Acceptance Process, through which the region was formally evaluated and approved by the Dept. of Water Resources. Approval is a requirement to be eligible for IRWM grant funding. This effort was coordinated by the Santa Cruz IRWM Steering Committee with the RWMF and consultant support.

2010 – The Santa Cruz Region conducted an open solicitation for partners, affiliates, and stakeholders to submit planning and implementation projects for inclusion in the IRWMP. Also, local agencies initiated the renewal and update of the 2006 IRWM Memorandum of Agreement. Central Water District joined as new signatory.

2011 – The RWMF and DWR executed a Proposition 84 IRWM Planning Grant that awarded approximately \$1m for IRWM planning efforts in the region. The grant funded an update of the 2005 IRWM Plan and key technical studies to inform water resources management. The technical studies included: Aromas and Purisima Groundwater Basin Management; Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin Model Update; Conjunctive Use and Water Transfers (Phase II); and Watsonville Sloughs hydrology study.

2013 – The Santa Cruz Region was one of seven regions selected statewide to participate in a pilot project to identify methods and strategies to enhance economically disadvantaged community participation in the IRWM planning process. The RWMF served as grantee and supported this work that targeted efforts in Watsonville and Davenport.

2014 – A comprehensive update of the Santa Cruz IRWM Plan was completed. The Plan was reviewed and approved by the Department of Water Resources. Each of the Santa Cruz RWMG agencies formally approved the Plan through a publicly noticed process.

2015 – The City of Capitola and the City of Scotts Valley formally join the RWMG. With these additions, all municipalities within the IRWM region are members of the RWMG and have approved the 2014 IRWM Plan.

2016 – The DWR recommended the Santa Cruz IRWM region receive a \$1.2m grant to implement three projects to enhance water supply reliability, improve drinking water quality, and provide recycled water. The participating local agencies approved updates to and renewal of the IRWM Memorandum of Agreement.

2016 – Establishment of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA), a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The agency has four member agencies: Soquel Creek Water District, City of Santa Cruz, Central Water District and the County of Santa Cruz. The MGA is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors comprising of two representatives from each member agency and three private well owner representatives tasked with overseeing the groundwater management activities of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin.

2017 – Establishment of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA), a GSA that oversees the groundwater management activities of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin. The agency has three member agencies: Scotts Valley Water District, San Lorenzo Valley Water District, and County of Santa Cruz and is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors comprising of two representatives from each member agency, one representative from the City of Scotts Valley, one from the City of Santa Cruz, one from Mount Hermon Association, and two well owner representatives.

2018 – The Santa Cruz Region received approximately \$472,000 to assess the water-related needs of economically disadvantaged communities, to conduct involvement activities, and to advance projects to address needs. The six IRWM regions in the Central Coast Funding Area (Santa Cruz to Santa Barbara) coordinated efforts through DWR's statewide disadvantaged communities involvement program. Work was conducted from 2018 to 2022.

2019 – The RWMF led the coordination and completion of an addendum to the 2014 IRWM Plan to meet the state's updated Plan standards. The addendum included a climate change vulnerability assessment and additional requirements added by the state after 2014. The addendum was approved by DWR, thus maintaining eligibility to apply for IRWM grants.

2020 – The DWR awarded the Santa Cruz IRWM region \$2.3m to implement multiple projects. The Resource Conservation District (RCD) will implement improvements at approximately 15 sites to reduce sediment loads in the San Lorenzo River watershed and other impaired waterbodies. Davenport County Sanitation District will improve water supply storage infrastructure. The RCD and partner organizations will implement watershed restoration in the Watsonville Sloughs to improve habitat and reduce flood hazard.

2023 – The RWMF successfully applied for the final round of Proposition 1 funding and was

awarded a \$2.5m IRWM grant to fund six projects to improve water supply reliability, wastewater infrastructure improvements, water quality, and climate change resiliency. Implementing agencies include: San Lorenzo Valley Water District, County of Santa Cruz, cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and Watsonville Wetlands Watch. Projects will be implemented from 2023 to 2028.

5. PROPOSITION 1 FUNDING FOR IRWM AND CENTRAL COAST FUNDING AREA COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Proposition 1 (Water Code §79744) authorized \$510 million for projects that are included in an adopted IRWM plan that is consistent with Water Code §10530, et seq., and respond to climate change and contribute to regional water security. Funding is administered by the DWR which awards funding through competitive grants for IRWM planning and projects. \$510 million is allocated across 12 hydrologic region-based Funding Areas; \$43 million is allocated to the Central Coast Funding Area.

Since 2005, the six CCFA IRWM regions have worked to improve the IRWM planning process, to coordinate planning across region boundaries, and to facilitate the distribution of funding for IRWM projects by DWR. In May 2016, the CCFA IRWM regions entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (CCFA MOA) (incorporated herein by this reference). The primary intent of the CCFA MOA is to share Proposition 1 IRWM funding allocated to the CCFA among the six IRWM regions in a fair and equitable manner. The CCFA MOA will enhance the potential to improve inter-regional cooperation and efficiency. The CCFA MOA is also intended to reduce the need for the regions to compete against each other for grant funds, which creates unnecessary economic inefficiencies in implementing each region’s IRWM Plan. Each region will retain autonomous control over how funds are allocated within their respective IRWM regions. Each IRWM region will independently determine and prioritize projects to be funded within its IRWM region consistent with the IRWM program guidelines.

The CCFA is allocated \$43 million through Proposition 1 for the IRWM program. This funding allocation includes the following breakdown:

IRWM Central Coast Funding Area allocation	\$ 43,000,000
State Administration Fee ¹ - 7% of Funding Area Total	\$ 3,010,000
DAC Specific Funding Allocations - 20% of Funding Area Total	
DAC involvement funding ² (10%)	\$ 4,300,000
DAC project implementation ² (10%)	\$ 4,300,000
Implementation and Planning Grants	\$ 31,390,000

¹ State of California administrative fees (7%) consisting of 5% for DWR program administration and 2% for statewide bond costs.

² Per Proposition 1, 20% of the Funding Area allocation is to be award for projects and planning efforts that directly benefit economically Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) with 10% directed towards Involvement and 10% towards project implementation.

Per the CCFA MOA, the formula for sharing funds is based on the following: one-half (50%) of funds are equally split among the six IRWM regions; one-quarter (25%) of funds are split based on population percentage of each region based on 2009-2013 American Census Data; and one-quarter (25%) of funds are split based on the percentage of area in square miles of each region. As mandated under Proposition 1 IRWM guidelines, not less than \$8.6M, or 20%, shall be allocated to projects that directly benefit Disadvantaged Communities (DAC); these funds may be awarded on a competitive or non-competitive basis. The CCFA regions will coordinate on grant funding requests by each of the regions to ensure that the sum of the total grant requests from the Funding Area does not exceed the amount allocated to the Funding Area. The division of funding shall be consistent terms of the CCFA MOA.

	Santa Cruz	Pajaro	Greater Monterey	Monterey Peninsula	San Luis Obispo	Santa Barbara	Total CCFA
Description	ALLOCATIONS						
DAC support	\$1,109,810	\$1,340,107	\$1,775,034	\$931,966	\$1,712,669	\$1,730,414	\$8,600,000
Implementation	\$4,050,805	\$4,891,390	\$6,478,875	\$3,401,677	\$6,251,243	\$6,316,010	\$31,390,000
Subtotal	\$5,160,615	\$6,231,497	\$8,253,910	\$4,333,643	\$7,963,912	\$8,046,424	\$39,990,000
State Admin Fee							\$3,010,000
Total							\$43,000,000

6. IRWM COLLABORATION

In addressing the region's water resources challenges, the participating agencies are committed to:

- 6.1 Establish and foster relationships with regional, state, and local governments, individuals, and other interested organizations to develop and implement management practices to preserve and protect Santa Cruz County water resources.
 - a. Undertake cooperative research and resource management initiatives that are regional in scope and disseminate information resulting from these activities.
 - b. Produce and share relevant informational materials among the RWMG.
 - c. Recommend to the respective governing boards actions necessary to successfully develop and implement the IRWMP.
- 6.2 All parties to this agreement wish to join in a common effort to develop and implement an IRWMP which shall include, but not be limited to establishing water quality, water supply, watershed stewardship, and stormwater and flood management objectives for the Santa Cruz IRWM Region.
- 6.3 As with IRWM efforts to date, the RWMG will contribute the personnel and financial resources necessary to develop and implement the IRWMP proportional to their potential benefit.

- 6.4 As new partners elect to participate, they shall approve and execute this Memorandum of Agreement which establishes the understanding among participating agencies with regard to the purposes, development, and implementation of the Santa Cruz IRWMP.
- 6.5 In the event of future IRWM-related grant awards, sub-grantee agreements, referred to as Local Project Sponsor agreements, are anticipated to be developed that establish the specific roles and responsibilities of the grantee and sub-grantee based upon the terms and conditions of the grant award.

7. IRWMP AMENDMENTS, FORMAL UPDATES, AND PROJECT LIST UPDATES

The Santa Cruz IRWMP is intended to be a dynamic document that changes over time in response to changing conditions and priorities in order to remain current in identifying strategies to address the region's water resource needs. The updates serve to keep the document up to date with the state's IRWM Plan Standards including amendments, formal updates, and updates to the IRWMP Project List.

- 7.1 **Amendments.** Amendments to the IRWMP may include informal changes that reflect minor process or organizational changes that occur relatively frequently and do not necessitate a decision by the governing bodies of the individual RWMG entities. Amendments may also include new content in response to state legislation (e.g., SB985, AB1249) to ensure the state's Plan Standards for state funding eligibility. The IRWM Steering Committee will provide guidance and coordination of amendments. A RWMG member agency may present an amendment for consideration to the Steering Committee. The RWMG will be informed of and provided opportunity for input on proposed interim amendments. The Steering Committee will ratify amendments by consensus. An amendment to the IRWMP was completed in 2019 to maintain consistency with the state's IRWM Plan Standards. As necessary, amendments will be incorporated into the IRWMP during the subsequent formal update.
- 7.2 **Formal updates.** Formal updates will reflect any significant changes to the IRWMP including processes, organizational structure and governance, water management conditions, or goals and objectives. The Steering Committee will provide a leadership role in guiding and coordinating the formal updates, as necessary, to ensure an inclusive and transparent decision-making process. Formal updates will include stakeholder outreach, including disadvantaged communities, to ensure that interested entities have an opportunity to participate.
- 7.3 **Project list updates.** The IRWMP includes a list of projects, submitted by proponents, such as a RWMG member agencies or stakeholder organizations, which were evaluated and included based upon each project's anticipated contribution towards meeting the goals and objectives of the IRWMP. The list of projects will be periodically updated as projects are completed and as new priorities arise. The Steering Committee is tasked with coordinating updates. The Steering Committee conducts a review of the project list no less frequently than every five years, and as needed, initiate and coordinate a publicly

announced solicitation for projects. Projects may also be submitted for addition to the list during interim periods. Projects submitted will be vetted for eligibility by the Steering Committee; eligible projects will be added to the list of IRWMP Projects and incorporated into future IRWMP updates.

8. COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

8.1 SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT (SGMA)

The State of California enacted the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), effective January 1, 2015, as the first legislation in the state's history to mandate comprehensive sustainable groundwater resources management. In response, two Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) formed in the Santa Cruz IRWM Region.

The Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) formed in 2016 under SGMA to develop this Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP or Plan) for the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin. The MGA is Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), with four member agencies: Central Water District, City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, and Soquel Creek Water District. The Board of Directors includes two representatives from each member agency and three private well owner representatives.

The Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA) formed in 2017 under SGMA to develop the GSP for the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin. The SMGWA is a JPA among the Scotts Valley Water District, the San Lorenzo Valley Water District, and the County of Santa Cruz. The SMGWA is governed by a Board of Directors comprising two representatives from each member agency, single representatives from the City of Scotts Valley, City of Santa Cruz, and Mount Hermon Association (MHA), and two private well owners.

The respective GSPs describe how both GSAs intend to manage groundwater in their respective Basins to achieve groundwater sustainability and meet the requirements of SGMA. Both Basin Plans provide the basis for ongoing management to both achieve sustainability in the State's required 20-year planning horizon and to maintain sustainability over the 50-year implementation horizon. By following their GSPs, the MGA and SMGWA, and their cooperating agencies, and other local stakeholders will collaboratively manage the respective Basins to maintain a safe and reliable groundwater supply for all beneficial groundwater uses and users.

The RWMF has provided administrative and planning support to the MGA since 2016 and to the SMGWA on grant related support since 2018. In 2022, following a County issued Request for Qualifications, the RWMF was awarded a contract to provide administrative and planning services to both MGA and SMGWA from 2022 - 2025.

Many of goals and objectives in the IRWMP and the GSPs in both Basins are complementary and aligned. Funding awards in IRWM grants have supported planning and technical studies that have advanced the work of member agencies participating in both Basins. The same GSA member agencies are also participating in IRWM. There are

potential mutual benefits and efficiencies to be gained in the cooperation and collaboration of the agencies participating in IRWM and SGMA.

8.2 WATERSHED RESILIENCE

California's 2023 Water Plan Update (September 2023 draft) presents a statewide vision for Watershed Resilience to be achieved via partnerships between state agencies, local agencies, organizations and stakeholders. The Plan describes the need for climate resilience planning at the watershed scale and broadly outlines a new framework for the State's efforts to promote local collaboration at regional scales to respond to climate change risks. The Plan introduces a new Watershed Resilience program to be administered by DWR. The forthcoming program will build on existing collaborative relationships, planning, and investments to improve regional climate resilience and invest in natural and built backbone infrastructure.

The Santa Cruz Regional Water Management Group is well positioned to build upon existing collaborative programs, such as the IRWM Program and Sustainable Groundwater Management Program, to pursue funding to support multi-sector collaborations and solutions at the watershed- and regional-scale.

8.3 CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Climate change is increasingly impacting the state's and the region's water resources and watersheds, as evidenced by greater weather extremes, changes in rainfall and runoff patterns, sea level rise, wildfire intensity, and impacts related to water resources and watersheds. Multiple state and federal programs provide guidance, technical support, planning and assessment tools, and/or funding to public agencies and organizations to improve local adaptation and resiliency to climate change impacts.

Municipalities (County and cities), agencies and organizations in Santa Cruz County have conducted extensive planning to respond to climate change. Multiple local plans document the vulnerability, impacts, adaptations, mitigations and/or responses (e.g., municipal Climate Action Plans; County Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP); IRWM Plan; Groundwater Sustainability Plans; other).

As noted by DWR, as the impacts of climate change intensify, local water managers will need better tools to identify the adaptation strategies for their watersheds and diverse hydrology to make more-informed infrastructure investment decisions. Two steps identified by DWR to fulfill key the goals of the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio are:

1. Develop data, tools, and guidance for watershed-based climate vulnerability and adaptation analyses.
2. Explore the formation of a California-based network of climate scientists and water management practitioners.

Regional coordination and collaboration may provide opportunities to pursue funding and other resources for studies/projects to generate better climate change information for decision-making or develop systems that are more resilient to climate change and natural

disasters.

8.4 STORM WATER RESOURCE PLAN (SWRP)

The SWRP is a comprehensive document outlining regional stormwater project priorities, as well as regional stormwater permit compliance. A SWRP was completed in December 2016. Development of the SWRP was led by the County of Santa Cruz Environmental Health with contributions by staff and representatives from the City of Santa Cruz, the City of Scotts Valley, the City of Watsonville, the City of Capitola, Ecology Action, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, and the University of California Santa Cruz. The SWRP is incorporated into the IRWM Plan as an appendix. In June 2017, the State Water Resources Control Board issued its letter of concurrence that the SWRP met the requirements of the California Water Code and the SWRP Guidelines. IRWM and SWRP efforts are aligned. The coordination of these programs offers the potential benefit of identifying and pursuing funding opportunities to support planning and implementation.

9. MUTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- 9.1 **Purpose of the MOA.** This MOA pertains to the joint efforts of the agencies participating in the IRWM Program to increase coordination, collaboration and communication in addressing the region's water resources issues. This MOA updates and continues the efforts initiated under the prior MOA executed in 2006 and renewed in 2010/2011 and 2016.
- 9.2 **Subject matter scope of the IRWMP.** The IRWMP includes, but may not necessarily be limited to, water supply, water quality, wastewater, recycled water, water conservation, stormwater and flood management, watershed planning and habitat protection and restoration, and climate change resiliency related to water and watersheds.
- 9.3 **Decision-making.** Consensus is sought in decision-making. The Steering Committee provides a lead role in the decision-making process and coordinating input from the participating agencies. As needed, the Steering Committee ratifies decisions by majority vote. Amendments resulting in material financial implications are ratified by the RWMG. Votes are recorded as one vote per signatory agency.
- 9.4 **Approval of the IRWMP.** IRWMP adoption occurs by adopting a resolution by each RWMG agency's governing body. The 2014 IRWMP was adopted by all the RWMG members.
- 9.5 **Relation to local planning efforts.** The Santa Cruz IRWMP is intended to be complementary to the participating agencies' individual plans and programs and does not supersede such plans and programs.
- 9.6 **Termination.** An agency may terminate their participation in the IRWMP effort by providing 90 calendar days written notice to the Regional Water Management Foundation.

- 9.7 **Personnel and financial resources.** It is expected that agencies contribute the personnel and financial resources necessary to develop, implement and update the IRWMP and pursue complementary efforts.
- 9.8 **Reports and communications.** The Steering Committee reports regularly on IRWMP progress to the participating agencies and stakeholders. The SantaCruzIRWMP.org website is used for disseminating news, reports and updates to the participating agencies and the public.
- 9.9 **Future awards.** In the event of future grant awards, it is expected that agreement(s) are entered into by the applicable participating agencies that establish the terms and conditions applicable to the specific grant award.
- 9.10 **Term.** This updated MOA commences as of January 1, 2024 and continues until terminated by action of a majority of the participating agencies or is superseded by a future MOA. This agreement is evaluated and reviewed no later than five years after its implementation, at which time, recommendations for improvements and modifications are considered by all parties. Any amendment or modification to this agreement must be in writing, agreed upon by a majority of all signatories, executed by the duly authorized representatives of the parties hereto, and incorporated into this agreement by reference.

10. SIGNATORIES TO THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

We, the undersigned representatives of our respective agencies, acknowledge the above as our understanding of how the Santa Cruz Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and complementary efforts will be developed and implemented.

Each party has full power and authority to enter into and perform this MOA and the person signing this MOA on behalf of each party is authorized and empowered to enter into this MOA. Each party further acknowledges that it has read this MOA, understands it and agrees to it.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE SANTA CRUZ INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

Central Water District	Signature: _____ Ralph Bracamonte, General Manager Date: _____
City of Capitola	Signature: _____ Jamie Goldstein, City Manager Date: _____
City of Santa Cruz	Signature: _____ Matt Huffaker, City Manager Date: _____

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE SANTA CRUZ INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

City of Scotts Valley

Signature: _____

Mali LaGoe, City Manager

Date: _____

City of Watsonville

Signature: _____

René Mendez, City Manager

Date: _____

County of Santa Cruz

Signature: _____

Carlos Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Date: _____

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE SANTA CRUZ INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

County of Santa Cruz Sanitation
District

Signature: _____

Matt Machado, Director of Public Works

Date: _____

Davenport County Sanitation District
(County of Santa Cruz)

Signature: _____

Matt Machado, Director of Public Works

Date: _____

Resource Conservation District of
Santa Cruz County

Signature: _____

Lisa Lurie, Executive Director

Date: _____

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE SANTA CRUZ INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

San Lorenzo Valley Water District	Signature: _____ Brian Frus, Interim General Manager Date: _____
Scotts Valley Water District	Signature: _____ David McNair, General Manager Date: _____
Soquel Creek Water District	Signature: _____ Ron Duncan, General Manager Date: _____

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE SANTA CRUZ INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

Santa Cruz Mid-County
Groundwater Agency

Signature: _____

Board Chair

Date: _____

Santa Margarita Groundwater
Agency

Signature: _____

Board Chair

Date: _____

Regional Water Management
Foundation

Signature: _____

John Ricker, Board President

Date: _____