



May 31, 2022

Attention: Proposition 68 Groundwater Treatment and Remediation Program
State Water Board
Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov

Subject: Coachella Valley RWMG Comments on Proposition 68 Groundwater – Drinking Water Treatment Operations and Maintenance Funding Program Draft Guidelines

Dear Ms. Townsend:

The Coachella Valley Regional Water Management Group (CVRWMG) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the State Water Board Proposition 68 Groundwater – Drinking Water Treatment Operations and Maintenance Funding Program Draft Guidelines that was released on April 25, 2022.

The CVRWMG is comprised of the Coachella Water Authority, Coachella Valley Water District, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Valley Sanitary District. The group represents a collaborative effort to implement the Coachella Valley Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan to address the water resources planning needs of the Coachella Valley. The CVRWMG's IRWM Region is located in central Riverside County, within the Colorado River Funding Area.

Specific comments on the draft Guidelines are as follows:

1. Clarify Allocation of Remaining Funds

The draft Guidelines state that \$29.5 million remains uncommitted, of which approximately \$8.5 million is reserved for severely disadvantaged communities (SDACs). The Division of Financial Assistance will award the remaining funds to assist disadvantaged community (DAC) drinking water systems that treat groundwater for direct potable use, without necessarily remediating the aquifer. Program funds will be allocated to eligible water systems to operate and maintain existing treatment systems that treat contamination in groundwater for potable use. However, the draft

Guidelines do not indicate how any unused funds will be allocated. The CVRWGM implements a diverse range of capital projects that secure long-term water supply reliability within Coachella Valley. Many of the projects benefit DACs and SDACs that do not currently have reliable sources of water supply. The CVRWGM recognizes that capital projects are not eligible under the draft Guidelines, but we request the State Water Board to clarify if any unused funds will be made available to capital projects.

2. Indicate Timeline of Program

As mentioned, the Division of Financial Assistance will award remaining funds to help DACs meet drinking water needs. However, the draft Guidelines do not indicate when the State Water Board will notify the public in the event where there are any unused funds. The CVRWGM requests the State Water Board to state when they plan to notify the public about the program's unused funds. The CVRWGM would like to ensure that interested and eligible applicants will have sufficient time to prepare an application for consideration.

Thank you for your willingness to work with the applicants to improve the process. The CVRWGM looks forward to continued collaboration with the State Water Board.

Sincerely,



Zoe Rodriguez Del Rey
On behalf of the Coachella Valley Regional Water Management Group
Water Resources Manager
Coachella Valley Water District

cc: Honorable State Senator Melissa Melendez
Honorable Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia
Honorable Assemblyman Chad Mayes

CVRWGM agency representatives:

Ashley Metzger, Desert Water Agency
Ron Buchwald, Valley Sanitary District
Castulo Estrada, Coachella Water Authority
Reymundo Trejo, Indio Water Authority
Steve Ledbetter, TKE Engineering / Mission Springs Water District
