



Water Resources ♦ Flood Control ♦ Water Rights

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CONSULTANTS:  
JOSEPH I. BURNS, P.E.  
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July 7, 2017

Mr. Leslie Grober, Deputy Director  
Division of Water Rights  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

**Subject: Merced Irrigation District Petition for Temporary Transfer under License 2685 (Application 1224)**

Dear Mr. Grober:

On behalf of Merced Irrigation District (Merced), enclosed are the following documents relative to a Petition for Temporary Transfer under Merced's License 2685 (Application 1224):

1. Petition for Temporary Transfer Form together with an Attachment and a map.
2. Environmental Information Form with Attachment.
3. Check in the amount of \$7,997 to cover the Petition fees.
4. Check in the amount of \$850 to cover the fee for the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Merced is petitioning to temporarily add a place of use to its License 2685 in order to supply previously stored surface water to agricultural lands located near the boundaries of Merced's authorized place of use. These lands are within an area known as Merced's Sphere of Influence Lands (SOI Lands), Le Grand-Athlone Water District, Lone Tree Mutual Water Company, East Side Water District, and Chowchilla Water District (collectively, "Transferees"), which are all located within Merced County. Approval of this petition would provide for up to the proposed temporary transfer quantity of 20,000 AF made available from Merced by releases of previously stored surface water.

We appreciate your attention to this temporary transfer Petition. Please call if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,  
MBK ENGINEERS



Angela Bezzone

AB/nl

5520.7/FINAL TRANSMITTAL TO DIVISION 2017-07-06

Enclosures

cc: John Sweigard, Merced Irrigation District  
Hicham Eltal, Merced Irrigation District  
Phillip McMurray, Merced Irrigation District  
Gary Sawyers, Merced County SOI Water Users Association  
Brad Robson, Le Grand-Athlone Water District  
Doug Welch, Chowchilla Water District  
George Park, Lone Tree Mutual Water Company  
Ward Burroughs, East Side Water District  
Annette Tenneboe, Department of Fish and Wildlife (via certified mail)  
Tim Heyne, Department of Fish and Wildlife (via certified mail)  
Dean Marston, Department of Fish and Wildlife (via certified mail)  
Matt Scroggins, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (via certified mail)  
Mariposa County Supervisors (via certified mail)  
Merced County Supervisors (via certified mail)

Please indicate County where your project is located here:

Merced/Mariposa

MAIL FORM AND ATTACHMENTS TO:
State Water Resources Control Board
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
Tel: (916) 341-5300 Fax: (916) 341-5400
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights

PETITION FOR CHANGE INVOLVING WATER TRANSFERS

Separate petitions are required for each water right. Mark all areas that apply to your proposed change(s). Incomplete forms may not be accepted. Location and area information must be provided on maps in accordance with established requirements. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 715 et seq.) Provide attachments if necessary.

- Point of Diversion Wat. Code, § 1701
Point of Rediversion Wat. Code, § 1701
Place of Use Wat. Code, § 1701
Purpose of Use Wat. Code, § 1701
Temporary Urgency Wat. Code, § 1435
Temporary Change Wat. Code, § 1725
Long-term Transfer Wat. Code, §§ 382, 1735
Instream Flow Dedication Wat. Code, § 1707

Application 1224 Permit 914 License 2685 Statement

I (we) hereby petition for change(s) noted above and described as follows:

Point of Diversion or Rediversion - Provide source name and identify points using both Public Land Survey System descriptions to 1/4-1/4 level and California Coordinate System (NAD 83).

Present: See Attachment
Proposed: See Attachment

Place of Use - Identify area using Public Land Survey System descriptions to 1/4-1/4 level; for irrigation, list number of acres irrigated.

Present: See Attachment
Proposed: See Attachment

Purpose of Use

Present: No change requested
Proposed: No change requested

Instream Flow Dedication - Provide source name and identify points using both Public Land Survey System descriptions to 1/4-1/4 level and California Coordinate System (NAD 83).

Upstream Location:
Downstream Location:

Table with 12 columns for months (Jan-Dec) and rows for cubic feet per second and gallons per day.

Will the dedicated flow be diverted for consumptive use at a downstream location? Yes No
If yes, provide the source name, location coordinates, and the quantities of flow that will be diverted from the stream.

Proposed New User(s)

Provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers for all proposed new user(s) of the water right.

See Attachment

**Amount of Water to be Transferred**

acre-feet will be transferred. If the basis of right is direct diversion, the average rate of diversion for the maximum 30-day period of use is  cubic feet per second or million gallons per day.

**General Information** – Provide the following information, if applicable to your proposed change(s).

Have you attached an analysis which documents that the amount of water to be transferred or exchanged would have been consumptively used or stored in the absence of the proposed temporary change or long-term transfer?  Yes  No

Have you attached an analysis of any changes to streamflow, water quality, timing of diversion or use, return flows, or effects on legal users from the proposed temporary change or long-term transfer?  Yes  No

Have you attached an analysis that shows the proposed temporary change or long-term transfer will not unreasonably affect fish, wildlife, or other instream beneficial uses?  Yes  No

I (we) have access to the proposed point of diversion or control the proposed place of use by virtue of:  
 ownership  lease  verbal agreement  written agreement

If by lease or agreement, state name and address of person(s) from whom access has been obtained.

Give name and address of any person(s) taking water from the stream between the present point of diversion or redirection and the proposed point of diversion or redirection, as well as any other person(s) known to you who may be affected by the proposed change.

**All Right Holders Must Sign Below:** I (we) declare under penalty of perjury that this involves only the amount of water which would have been consumptively used or stored in the absence of the proposed temporary change, and that the above is true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

Dated  at

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Right Holder or Authorized Agent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Right Holder or Authorized Agent Signature

**NOTE: All petitions must be accompanied by:**  
(1) the form Environmental Information for Petitions, available at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/publications\\_forms/forms/docs/pet\\_info.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/publications_forms/forms/docs/pet_info.pdf)  
(2) Division of Water Rights fee, per the Water Rights Fee Schedule, available at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/fees/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/fees/)  
(3) Department of Fish and Wildlife fee of \$850 (Pub. Resources Code, § 10005)

**Attachment to Petition for Temporary Transfer  
License 2685 (Application 1224)  
held by Merced Irrigation District**

**PURPOSE OF PETITION**

The purpose of this Petition for Change Involving Water Transfers (Petition) is to add an additional place of use and point of rediversion under Merced Irrigation District's (Merced) License 2685 (Application 1224) for the release of up to 20,000 AF of surface water for use on lands within Merced County. The releases by Merced for the proposed water transfer would occur beginning upon approval of this Petition. The proposed addition to the place of use includes an area known as Merced's Sphere of Influence Lands (SOI Lands), Le Grand-Athlone Water District, Lone Tree Mutual Water Company, East Side Water District, and Chowchilla Water District (collectively, "Transferees"), which are all located within Merced County as shown on the map accompanying this petition. The majority of the SOI Lands currently, and have historically received surface water from Merced during years that Merced's Board of Directors determines that adequate natural flow is available under its Pre-1914 claims from the Merced River. During months when surface water is not available under Merced's Pre-1914 claims for delivery to SOI Lands, the individual landowners meet their demands through alternate supplies, such as groundwater. The landowners within the nearby water districts would also meet demands through alternate supplies.

In 2016, Merced petitioned and received approval from the Division of Water Rights for a temporary water transfer to continue surface water deliveries to the Transferees. Merced is filing this petition in order to provide continued surface water supplies for the Transferees, in a manner similar to the temporary water transfer completed during 2016. The proposed addition to the place of use is 219,740 acres. The surface water supply available proposed to be made available to the Transferees is diverted, stored, rediverted, and conveyed through Merced's existing facilities.

The quantity of surface water proposed to be released by Merced for delivery to the Transferees will be made available by releases of up to 20,000 AF from reservoir storage. The releases by Merced for the proposed water transfer would occur beginning upon approval of this Petition and potentially during a period of up to one year following approval of this Petition. Releases of previously stored surface water involve the delivery of water to the Transferees and refill of the reservoir, which normally occurs during periods of high runoff. Merced will implement refill criteria to assure no impact occurs to downstream water right holders. Absent the proposed temporary transfer, Merced would retain the entire quantity proposed for transfer in storage pursuant to its water right.

**POINT OF DIVERSION OR REDIVERSION**

No change in Merced's present points of diversion or points of rediversion are proposed. Merced's authorized points of diversion and rediversion under License 2685 are listed below:

***Present Points of Diversion:***

**New Exchequer Dam (Lake McClure)**

The point of diversion to storage of such water is located South thirty-eight degrees, no minutes West (S 38° 0' W), thirty eight hundred (3800) feet from the NE corner of Section 13, T4S, R15E, MBD&M, being within the NW ¼ of SE ¼ of said Section 13 in Mariposa County.

**Merced Falls Diversion Dam for Northside Canal**

Point of direct diversion and rediversion of stored water from Merced River for Northside Canal is located North sixty eight degrees, no minutes West (N 68° 0' W) twenty seven hundred fifty (2750) feet from the SE corner of Section 4, T5S, R15E, MDB&M., being within the SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 7 in Merced County.

**Crocker-Huffman Diversion Dam for Main Canal**

Point of direct diversion and rediversion of stored water from Merced River for Main Canal is located North forty seven degrees, thirty minutes East (N 47° 30'E) twenty eight hundred thirty (2830) feet from the SW corner of Section 7, T5S, R15E, MDB&M, being within the NE ¼ of SW ¼ of said Section 7 in Merced County.

**Mariposa Town Planning Area**

Point of direct diversion from Merced River for Mariposa Town Planning Area Main is located at a point North 48°34'35" West 1,113 feet from SE corner of Section 9, within the SE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 9, T4S, R18E, MDB&M in Mariposa County.

***Present Points of Rediversion:***

**Merced Falls Diversion Dam for Northside Canal**

Point of direct diversion and rediversion of stored water from Merced River for Northside Canal is located North sixty eight degrees, no minutes West (N 68° 0' W) twenty seven hundred fifty (2750) feet from the SE corner of Section 4, T5S, R15E, MDB&M., being within the SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 7 in Merced County.

**Crocker-Huffman Diversion Dam for Main Canal**

Point of direct diversion and rediversion of stored water from Merced River for Main Canal is located North forty seven degrees, thirty minutes East (N 47° 30'E) twenty eight hundred thirty (2830) feet from the SW corner of Section 7, T5S, R15E, MDB&M, being within the NE ¼ of SW ¼ of said Section 7 in Merced County.

**Duck Slough (formerly El Nido Irrigation District)**

Point of rediversion located on Duck Slough at a point 100 feet North and 50 feet East of ¼ Cor. Sections 10 and 11, T8S, R14E, within the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ Section 11, T8S, R14E, MDB&M in Merced County. This point of rediversion is associated with the former place of use for El Nido Irrigation District described below and in Licenses 6032 and 9429 (Applications 8238 and 18774), formerly held by El Nido Irrigation District and hereby transferred to Merced Irrigation District.

***Proposed:***

No change in the present points of diversion and rediversion is proposed.

**PLACE OF USE**

***Present Places of Use:***

Domestic and irrigation purposes on 164,395 gross acreage within the boundaries of Merced Irrigation District as shown on map of District filed with the Division of Water Rights December 11, 1942.

Municipal use to 1,900 acres known as the Mariposa Town Planning Area, located within portions of projected Sections 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 36, T5S, R18E, MDB&M, as shown on a map on file with the State Water Resources Control Board dated May 1, 1995.

Irrigation purposes on 9,418.6 acres within the boundaries of El Nido Irrigation District as shown on map of El Nido Irrigation District filed with the Division of Water Rights for Application 8238. El Nido Irrigation District has been consolidated with Merced.

***Proposed Place of Use:***

No change to the present place of use is proposed. The following lands are proposed to be added to the place of use:

Irrigation of up to 219,740 acres as shown on the attached map titled "Merced Irrigation District Map to Accompany Petition for Temporary Transfer under License 2685 (Application 1224) Proposed Addition to Place of Use".

**PROPOSED NEW USERS**

Chowchilla Water District  
Doug Welch, General Manager  
P.O. Box 905  
Chowchilla, CA 93610  
559-665-3747

East Side Water District  
Ward Burroughs  
P.O. Box 280  
Denair, CA 95316  
209-874-9400

Le Grand-Athlone Water District  
Brad Robson  
66510 Minturn Road  
Le Grand, CA 95333  
800-532-1500

Lone Tree Mutual Water Company  
George Park, General Manager  
5002 West El Nido Road  
El Nido, CA 95317  
209-722-3997

Sphere of Influence Landowners  
c/o Gary Sawyers  
652 W Cromwell Ave, Ste. 101  
Fresno, CA 93711  
559-438-5656

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Releases of water from storage will increase the streamflow between Lake McClure and Merced's Main Canal and Northside Canal by up to 20,000 AF during the period of releases in order to convey stored surface water for rediversion to the Transferees. The quantity of surface water delivered to the Transferees will be made available from Merced by releases of previously stored water. Merced will continue the same surface water supplies to its existing customers with or without the proposed temporary water transfer. In addition, Merced is required to release water to meet its other existing downstream commitments and requirements on the Merced River below the inlet to its Main Canal. Deliveries to the Transferees will be in addition to existing downstream requirements. Therefore, there will be no downstream change of the streamflow, water quality, timing of diversion, return flows, effects on legal users of water, or change in the purposes of use authorized by License 2685 during the period of the proposed temporary transfer, which is proposed to occur beginning upon approval of this Petition and potentially during a period of up to one year following approval of this Petition. Absent the proposed transfer, storage in Lake McClure at the end of the irrigation season, October 31, is projected to be approximately 674,600 AF. Considering this volume, the proposed transfer of 20,000 AF would result in less than a 3 percent decrease from this projected storage.

A potential effect to the downstream flow from the release of stored water arises during the subsequent refill of the 20,000 AF of vacated stored water. This refill normally occurs during periods of high runoff and periods of low water demand by downstream water right holders. Merced will implement refill criteria to assure no impact occurs. Absent the proposed temporary transfer, Merced would retain the entire quantity proposed for transfer in storage pursuant to its water rights, and the Transferees would meet their demands through alternate supplies, such as pumped groundwater. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act



(SGMA) directs the Department of Water Resources to develop groundwater basin priorities and identify groundwater basins and subbasins in conditions of critical overdraft. The proposed addition to the place of use includes lands overlying the Merced Subbasin and the Turlock Subbasin. The Merced Subbasin has been identified as a critically overdrafted basin, and the Turlock Subbasin has been designated as high-priority. The proposed project may help provide recharge and alleviate the portions of the subbasin by using the transferred surface water for irrigation in lieu of groundwater pumping.

Although there are water users taking water from the stream between Merced's current points of return flow and the points at which the Districts would return water to the system, we have responded to the relevant section of the Petition form as "not applicable." Merced would not transfer water such that it would adversely impact water users within Merced, and Merced will continue the same surface water deliveries to its existing customers with or without the proposed temporary water transfer; therefore, there will be no change in the return flow pattern from water users within Merced.

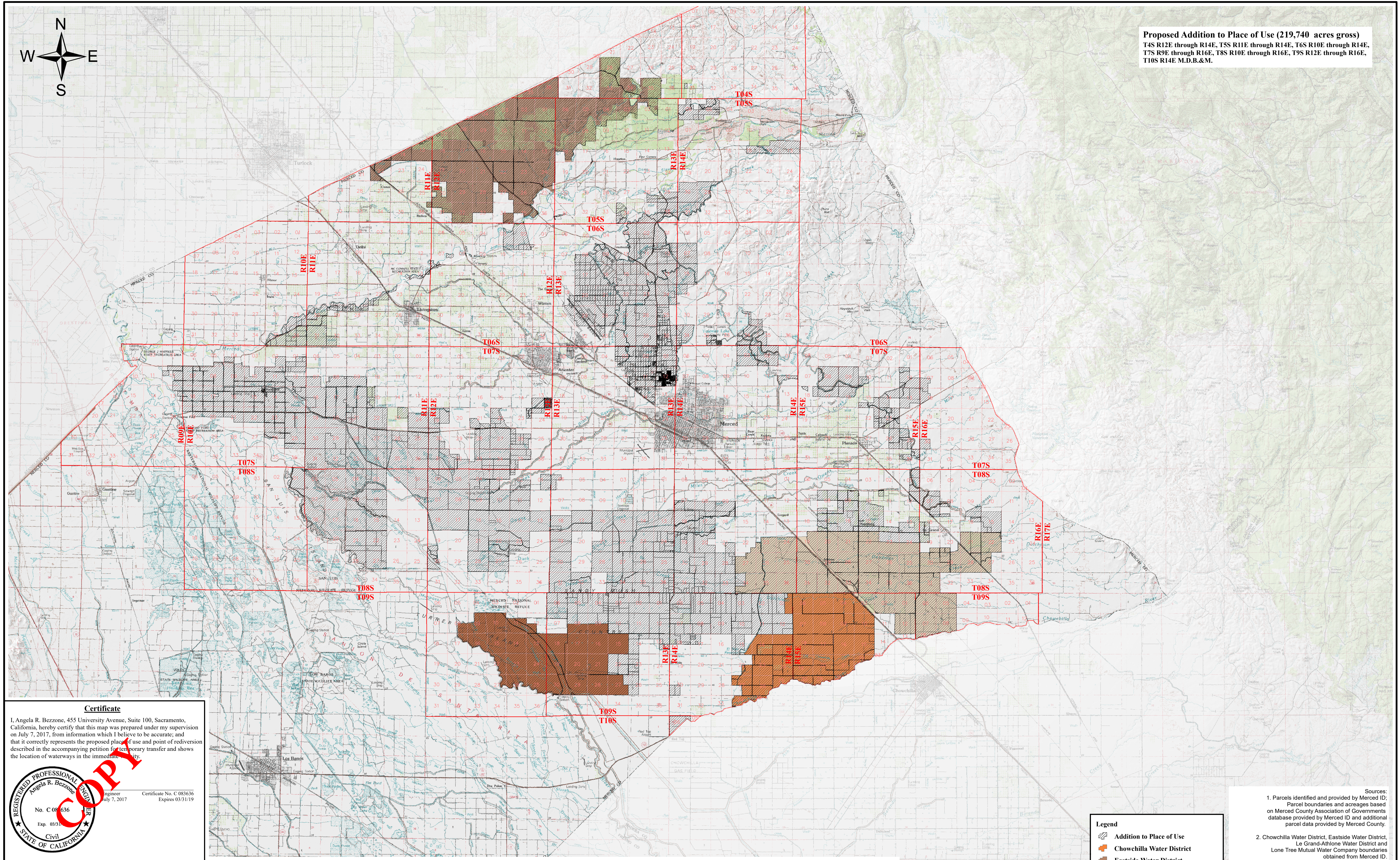
See files of SWRCB for more information regarding other legal water users, which may include the Delta water users, the CVP, and the SWP. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) were contacted. Consultation with Annette Tenneboe, Regional Water Rights Coordinator, DFW was made by telephone during the development phase in May 2017 and during the petition process in order to discuss the proposed temporary water transfer. Copies of this Petition have been provided by Certified Mail to Annette Tenneboe (559-243-4014 x 231) of DFW, Tim Heyne of the Anadromous Fish Restoration Research Project, Dean Marston of the Anadromous and San Joaquin Basin Fisheries Restoration Programs, and Matt Scroggins (559-445-6042) of the CVRWQCB Fresno Office.

AB/

5520.7/FINAL ATTACHMENT TO PETITION FOR TRANSFER 07.06.2017



**Proposed Addition to Place of Use (219,740 acres gross)**  
 T4S R12E through R14E, T5S R11E through R14E, T6S R10E through R14E,  
 T7S R9E through R16E, T8S R10E through R16E, T9S R12E through R16E,  
 T10S R14E M.D.B.&M.



**Certificate**  
 I, Angela R. Bezzone, 455 University Avenue, Suite 100, Sacramento, California, hereby certify that this map was prepared under my supervision on July 7, 2017, from information which I believe to be accurate; and that it correctly represents the proposed place of use and point of redirection described in the accompanying petition for temporary transfer and shows the location of waterways in the immediate vicinity.

**REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER**  
 Angela R. Bezzone  
 No. C 08 636  
 Exp. 03/31/19  
 Civil  
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Engineer July 7, 2017  
 Certificate No. C 083636  
 Expires 03/31/19

**MBK ENGINEERS**  
 455 University Avenue, Suite 100  
 Sacramento, California 95825-6579  
 (916) 456-4400

No.	Date	Approved	Revision

**Merced Irrigation District**  
 Map to Accompany Petition for Temporary Transfer under License 2685 (Application 1224)  
**PROPOSED ADDITION TO PLACE OF USE**

Job Number: 5530.7  
 Requested By: DC  
 Drawn By: MB  
 Date: July 2017  
 Scale in Miles: 0 1 2

**Legend**

- Addition to Place of Use
- Chowchilla Water District
- Eastside Water District
- Le Grand-Athlone Water District
- Lone Tree Mutual Water Company

- Sources:**
- Parcels identified and provided by Merced ID; Parcel boundaries and acreages based on Merced County Association of Governments database provided by Merced ID and additional parcel data provided by Merced County.
  - Chowchilla Water District, Eastside Water District, Le Grand-Athlone Water District and Lone Tree Mutual Water Company boundaries obtained from Merced ID.
  - Basemap - U.S. Geological Survey 1:100,000 Quadrangles.
  - Section, Township, Range delineation and labels based on DWR projected PLSS lines for Merced County.

08/07/17 2:04 PM  
 R:\2017\2017 501 Water Transfer\ACMap\Merced Irrigation District - Proposed Addition to Place of Use.mxd

State of California  
State Water Resources Control Board  
**DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS**  
P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000  
Tel: (916) 341-5300 Fax: (916) 341-5400  
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights>

## ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION FOR PETITIONS

This form is required for all petitions.

Before the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) can approve a petition, the State Water Board must consider the information contained in an environmental document prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This form is not a CEQA document. If a CEQA document has not yet been prepared, a determination must be made of who is responsible for its preparation. As the petitioner, you are responsible for all costs associated with the environmental evaluation and preparation of the required CEQA documents. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability and submit any studies that have been conducted regarding the environmental evaluation of your project. If you need more space to completely answer the questions, please number and attach additional sheets.

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGES OR WORK REMAINING TO BE COMPLETED

For a petition for change, provide a description of the proposed changes to your project including, but not limited to, type of construction activity, structures existing or to be built, area to be graded or excavated, increase in water diversion and use (up to the amount authorized by the permit), changes in land use, and project operational changes, including changes in how the water will be used. For a petition for extension of time, provide a description of what work has been completed and what remains to be done. Include in your description any of the above elements that will occur during the requested extension period.

See Attachment No. 1

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

1

**Coordination with Regional Water Quality Control Board**

For change petitions only, you must request consultation with the Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding the potential effects of your proposed change on water quality and other instream beneficial uses. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 794.) In order to determine the appropriate office for consultation, see: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterboards\\_map.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterboards_map.shtml). Provide the date you submitted your request for consultation here, then provide the following information.

Date of Request

June 22, 2017

Will your project, during construction or operation, (1) generate waste or wastewater containing such things as sewage, industrial chemicals, metals, or agricultural chemicals, or (2) cause erosion, turbidity or sedimentation?

Yes  No

Will a waste discharge permit be required for the project?

Yes  No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

**Local Permits**

For temporary transfers only, you must contact the board of supervisors for the county(ies) both for where you currently store or use water and where you propose to transfer the water. (Wat. Code § 1726.) Provide the date you submitted your request for consultation here.

Date of Contact

July 7, 2017

For change petitions only, you should contact your local planning or public works department and provide the information below.

Person Contacted:  Date of Contact:

Department:  Phone Number:

County Zoning Designation:

Are any county permits required for your project? If yes, indicate type below.  Yes  No

- Grading Permit     Use Permit     Watercourse     Obstruction Permit  
 Change of Zoning     General Plan Change     Other (explain below)

If applicable, have you obtained any of the permits listed above? If yes, provide copies.  Yes  No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

**Federal and State Permits**

Check any additional agencies that may require permits or other approvals for your project:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board     Department of Fish and Game
- Dept of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams     California Coastal Commission
- State Reclamation Board     U.S. Army Corps of Engineers     U.S. Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management     Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

Have you obtained any of the permits listed above? If yes, provide copies.     Yes     No

For each agency from which a permit is required, provide the following information:

Agency	Permit Type	Person(s) Contacted	Contact Date	Phone Number

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

**Construction or Grading Activity**

Does the project involve any construction or grading-related activity that has significantly altered or would significantly alter the bed, bank or riparian habitat of any stream or lake?     Yes     No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

**Archeology**

Has an archeological report been prepared for this project? If yes, provide a copy.  Yes  No

Will another public agency be preparing an archeological report?  Yes  No

Do you know of any archeological or historic sites in the area? If yes, explain below.  Yes  No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Not Applicable

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

**Photographs**

For all petitions other than time extensions, attach complete sets of color photographs, clearly dated and labeled, showing the vegetation that exists at the following three locations:

- Along the stream channel immediately downstream from each point of diversion
- Along the stream channel immediately upstream from each point of diversion
- At the place where water subject to this water right will be used

**Maps**

For all petitions other than time extensions, attach maps labeled in accordance with the regulations showing all applicable features, both present and proposed, including but not limited to: point of diversion, point of rediversion, distribution of storage reservoirs, point of discharge of treated wastewater, place of use, and location of instream flow dedication reach. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, §§ 715 et seq., 794.)

Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 794, petitions for change submitted without maps may not be accepted.

**All Water Right Holders Must Sign This Form:**

I (we) hereby certify that the statements I (we) have furnished above and in the attachments are complete to the best of my (our) ability and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge. Dated JULY 6, 2017 at 744 W 20th, MERCED, CA 95340

*Richard S. Tel*  
Water Right Holder or Authorized Agent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Water Right Holder or Authorized Agent Signature

**NOTE:**

- **Petitions for Change** may not be accepted unless you include proof that a copy of the petition was served on the Department of Fish and Game. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 794.)
- **Petitions for Temporary Transfer** may not be accepted unless you include proof that a copy of the petition was served on the Department of Fish and Game and the board of supervisors for the county(ies) where you currently store or use water and the county(ies) where you propose to transfer the water. (Wat. Code § 1726.)

**Attachment No. 1**  
**to Environmental Information for**  
**Petition for Temporary Transfer**  
**License 2685 (Application 1224)**  
**held by Merced Irrigation District**

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGES**

The Merced Irrigation District (Merced) is petitioning to add a place of use to its License 2685 (Application 1224) in order to supply previously stored surface water to agricultural lands located near the boundaries of Merced's authorized place of use. These lands are within an area known as Merced's Sphere of Influence Lands (SOI Lands), Le Grand-Athlone Water District, Lone Tree Mutual Water Company, East Side Water District, and Chowchilla Water District (collectively, "Transferees"), which are all located within Merced County. The majority of the SOI Lands currently, and have historically received surface water from Merced during years that Merced's Board of Directors determines that adequate natural flow is available under its Pre-1914 claims from the Merced River. During months when surface water is not available under Merced's Pre-1914 claims for delivery to SOI Lands, the individual landowners meet their demands through alternate supplies, such as groundwater. The landowners within the nearby water districts would also meet demands through alternate supplies.

Approval of this petition would provide for up to the proposed temporary transfer quantity of 20,000 AF made available from Merced by releases of previously stored surface water. The releases by Merced for the proposed water transfer would occur beginning upon approval of this Petition and potentially during a period of up to one year following approval of this Petition. These releases involve the delivery of previously stored surface water to the Transferees and refill of the reservoir, which normally occurs during periods of high runoff. Merced will implement criteria to assure no impact occurs to downstream water right holders. There will be minor changes to Merced's current operations as a result of this Petition. Absent the proposed temporary transfer, Merced would retain the entire quantity proposed for transfer, and the Transferees would meet their demands through alternate supplies, such as pumped groundwater. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) directs the Department of Water Resources to develop groundwater basin priorities and identify groundwater basins and subbasins in conditions of critical overdraft. The proposed addition to the place of use includes lands overlying the Merced Subbasin and the Turlock Subbasin. The Merced Subbasin has been identified as a critically overdrafted basin, and the Turlock Subbasin has been designated as high-priority. The proposed project may help provide recharge and alleviate the portions of the subbasin by using the transferred surface water for irrigation in lieu of groundwater pumping.

Merced is required to release water pursuant to its other existing downstream requirements and commitments. Releases of water from storage will increase the streamflow between Lake McClure and Merced's Main Canal by up to 20,000 AF during the period of releases in order to convey stored surface water for rediversion to the Transferees. There will be no changes to the crops produced within Merced's boundaries as a result of the temporary water transfer; thus, Merced will provide the proposed releases over and above existing requirements,

commitments, and deliveries. For these reasons, the proposed temporary transfer does not involve any construction or physical changes to the District's facilities. Petitions for temporary transfer of water pursuant to Water Code Section 1725 are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act.

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

The present points of diversion include existing facilities that are well known and documented with the Division. In addition, the present and proposed places of use are also well known and documented with the Division. Therefore, for these reasons, photographs of these points of diversion and places of use are not included.

**MAPS**

The present points of diversion, points of rediversion, and places of use are shown on maps filed with the Division for License 2685. The proposed additional place of use is shown on the attached map titled "Merced Irrigation District Map to Accompany Petition for Temporary Transfer under License 2685 (Application 1224) Proposed Addition to Place of Use and Point of Rediversion".

AB/

5520.7/FINAL ATTACHMENT 1 TO ENVIRONMENTAL FORM TRANSFER 07.06.2017



**Attachment No. 2**



*Views of typical irrigated lands within the proposed addition to the place of use.*

*Photographer - Merced Irrigation District*

*June 2016*

**MBK**   
**ENGINEERS**