

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025**

**MINUTE ORDER NO. 1**

**SUBJECT: ADOPT RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT CALIFORNIA STREAM GAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CALSIP) GRANT FROM CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL ACTION TO COMPLETE GRANT PROCESS, AND CEQA EXEMPTION FINDING (DISTRICTS: 2 & 5)**

**OVERVIEW**

The San Diego County Flood Control District (District) was formed to provide for the control of flood and storm waters in the unincorporated county; to preserve such waters for beneficial uses such as water supply, groundwater percolation, recreation, and environment; to protect land, properties, facilities, and people from damage caused by storm and flood waters; and to protect, preserve, and restore the watersheds within the unincorporated county.

The District operates the Automatic Local Evaluation in Real-Time (ALERT) Flood Warning System, which provides real-time data for flood forecasting and emergency response. The ALERT system consists of 120 monitoring stations that track water levels in rivers and streams, rainfall amounts, and lake levels in real-time. The need for an expanded and modernized flood monitoring system was underscored by the major flooding in the region during the January 2024 storms. These extreme weather events demonstrated the importance of real-time data collection in protecting residents, preparing emergency responders, and informing decision-making. Multiple agencies and departments use this data to enhance flood preparedness and response.

The District applied for funding through the California Stream Gage Improvement Program (CalSIP) in September 2024 and has since received notice of an award for \$642,000 from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). This funding will fund the installation of four new stream gages on Pine Valley Creek, Pala Creek, Lower San Vicente Creek, and Santa Maria Creek, as well as the reactivation of two gages on the San Luis Rey River and San Felipe Creek. A stream gage is a monitoring device installed in a river, creek, or stream to measure water levels and flow rates in real time, providing critical data for flood monitoring, water resource management, and environmental conservation. To determine the most suitable locations for the new stream gages, County staff conducted a comprehensive evaluation of unincorporated areas using multiple criteria, including jurisdiction type, proximity to existing ALERT stations, whether the area serves or has a stream that drains into an underserved community, and alignment with the state's priority ungaged watersheds as identified in the California Stream Gaging Prioritization Plan (Senate Bill 19, Statutes of 2019, Ch. 361, Dodd). These priority watersheds were determined by the state based on their significance for flood management, water quality monitoring, and ecosystem conservation, with a focus on areas where limited data currently hinders effective resource management. As part of this evaluation, staff also reviewed the location of existing stream gages to avoid redundancy while ensuring adequate coverage in high-need areas. Additionally, site selection was influenced by property ownership considerations, ensuring that the gages could be placed on publicly accessible lands. Staff's selected sites reflect the highest-need areas within the County's jurisdiction in the unincorporated area. By addressing these gaps, the program enhances the County's capacity to mitigate flood risks and protect vulnerable populations.

Today's request is for the Board of Directors to adopt a resolution to accept the CalSIP grant from California DWR and authorize additional action to complete the grant process. Approval of this resolution will enable the County to meet grant requirements, accept grant funding, and proceed with the necessary actions to implement the program and improve its flood monitoring and response capabilities.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

### **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

#### **Acting as the Flood Control District Board of Directors:**

1. Find that adoption of the proposed resolutions is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because there is no possibility for the activity to cause a significant effect on the environment.
2. Adopt a resolution entitled: RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT CALIFORNIA STREAM GAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CALSIP) GRANT FROM CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES & AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL ACTION TO COMPLETE GRANT PROCESS.
3. Establish appropriations of \$642,000 in the Department of Public Works, Flood Control District, Services & Supplies, for the California Stream Gage Improvement Program (CalSIP) based on grant revenue from the California Department of Water Resources. **(4 VOTES)**

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Adopting the proposed resolution supports equitable access to vital flood monitoring and water resource management, improving public safety by enhancing early warning systems and supporting timely emergency response in historically underserved and vulnerable communities. The San Diego County Flood Control District prioritizes flood preparedness and the protection of life and property through innovative programs and infrastructure improvements. The California Stream Gage Improvement Program (CalSIP) will strengthen the District's Automatic Local Evaluation in Real-time (ALERT) Flood Warning System by expanding its stream gage network. These enhancements will provide critical real-time data for early warning systems, flood forecasting, and emergency response, particularly benefiting underserved communities. Five of the proposed gages-Pala Creek, Lower San Vicente Creek, Santa Maria Creek, San Luis Rey River, and San Felipe Creek-are located either within underserved areas, or in watersheds that drain into underserved areas, based on criteria such as:

- Healthy Places Index (HPI) rankings in the 3rd and 4th quartiles.
- CalEnviroScreen (2.0) percentile scores above 25%.
- Inclusion in "San Diego LiveWell Communities," which are Central San Diego, Southeastern San Diego, Lemon Grove, National City, and Spring Valley.
- Identification as Environmental Justice Communities in the County's General Plan Environmental Justice Element.

Additionally, the Pine Valley Creek gage will serve a Census-designated disadvantaged community, further extending the program's equity benefits.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

This initiative aligns with the County's sustainability goals by improving flood preparedness, enhancing emergency response, resiliency, and monitoring environmental conditions. Some gages may include sensors to measure water quality parameters like turbidity, conductivity, and temperature, providing

valuable data for long-term water quality management. The enhanced stream gage network will provide additional critical data for the Automatic Local Evaluation in Real-time (ALERT) flood warning system, helping mitigate the impacts of extreme weather events and supporting the well-being of residents in vulnerable communities. These improvements also contribute to long-term economic sustainability by informing better floodplain management practices, reducing possible flood damages by improving land development decision making, and potentially lowering flood insurance costs for residents and businesses. With improved hydrological data, better understanding of flow patterns is possible, which is essential for planning sustainable water use and implementing effective flood resilience strategies. This prioritization targets basins critical for water resource management, freshwater species conservation, and flood resilience, particularly in areas facing significant climate-related challenges. Furthermore, this program potentially supports environmental sustainability by improving water quality monitoring.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for this request are not included in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Operational Plan for the Flood Control District. If approved, this request will result in costs and revenue in the amount of \$642,000 for the installation and reactivation of stream gages and, up to five years of operations and maintenance costs for these gages. No matching funds or cost-sharing are required. The funding source is grant revenue from California Department of Water Resources. Operations and maintenance cost, after the five years, will be funded by San Diego County Flood Control District annual property tax revenues. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

### **BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

The California Stream Gage Improvement Program (CalSIP) grant will enhance San Diego County's Automatic Local Evaluation in Real-time (ALERT) Flood Warning System by improving the monitoring of streamflow conditions, thereby benefiting local businesses indirectly through enhanced flood preparedness and risk mitigation. The additional streamflow data helps mitigate the secondary impacts of flooding by enabling quicker and more informed decisions to protect critical infrastructure and transportation networks, such as road closures or evacuation routes. Additionally, the project promotes regional economic activity through the procurement and installation of advanced stream gaging equipment and services, which may involve local contractors and suppliers.

### **ACTION:**

ON MOTION of Director Desmond, seconded by Director Montgomery Steppe, the Board of Directors of the San Diego County Flood Control District took action as recommended, on Consent, and adopted Resolution No. 25-022 entitled: RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT CALIFORNIA STREAM GAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CALSIP) GRANT FROM CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES & AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL ACTION TO COMPLETE GRANT PROCESS.

AYES: Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

ABSENT: (District 1 Seat Vacant)

State of California)  
County of San Diego)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Flood Control District.

ANDREW POTTER  
Clerk of the Board of Directors



**Signed**  
**by** Andrew Potter

APRIL 23, 2025