

Funding the future: 2025-2026 District budget approved

At its June 25, 2025, budget hearing, the District's Board of Directors adopted a budget of \$34,972,182 for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The adopted budget reflects the District's ongoing commitment to protect life and property through effective flood control and urban storm drainage, while also supporting water conservation, groundwater recharge, and the long-term beneficial use of stormwater. The District's vision remains a completed system of stormwater management facilities that deliver multiple quality-of-life benefits to the Fresno-Clovis community.

Overview

The adopted budget supports the implementation of several core District programs, including operations and maintenance, capital construction, and clean stormwater. District leadership and staff remain committed to fiscal responsibility, carefully balancing growth and service while maintaining a stable financial position.

This year's budget continues funding for the construction and upkeep of critical infrastructure, including pipelines, pump stations, dams, and stormwater basins, reflecting strategic investment in long-term planning to ensure facilities remain functional, safe, and resilient as development continues across the District's service area.

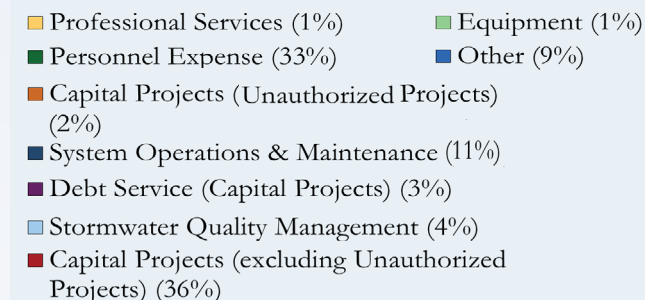
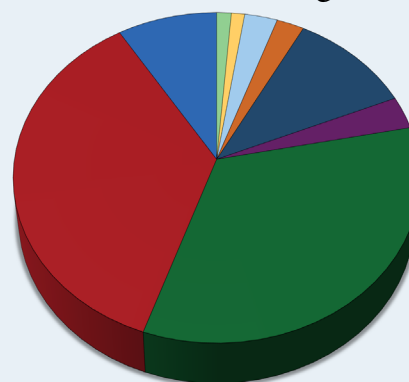
People

This year's budget funds seventy-six (76) permanent positions, maintaining the District's small but highly skilled workforce. Staff manage a range of technical and administrative functions, including operations and maintenance, engineering, real estate, accounting, stormwater pollution prevention, grant writing, information systems, and more.

System Operations and Maintenance

The protection, maintenance, and repair of stormwater

2025-2026 Budget



infrastructure is a major responsibility as development continues across the District's ~400-square-mile service area. For FY 2025-2026, \$3,781,500 is allocated to fully fund system operations and maintenance, supporting over 775 miles of storm drain pipelines, 157 stormwater basins, 147 pumps at 99 pump stations, 3 flood control dams, 7 flood control detention basins, and 2,000 acres of developed and undeveloped basin land. Together, these efforts ensure that the District's system remains safe and efficient.

System operations and maintenance funding includes \$1,565,000 for developed and undeveloped basin maintenance, recharge maintenance, winter operations, and parks and recreation operations and maintenance,

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Message from the General Manager



Peter Sanchez

Summer is here, and just like the temperatures rising across Fresno, the pace of work at the District is heating up as well. These dry months provide a valuable window for preparation, and District teams are working hard behind the scenes to ensure we're ready for the rainy season ahead.

While District leadership finalized the annual budget, setting the stage for another year of responsible stewardship, our maintenance crews tackled essential summer tasks, like equipment upkeep, sediment removal, and mowing. These efforts help keep our stormwater system operating safely and efficiently, especially when the cooler, wetter months return.

Research at our ponding basins is ongoing, including exciting student-led studies exploring migratory waterbirds and the ecological potential of urban stormwater

infrastructure. We're also preparing applications for the upcoming cycle of the Clean Stormwater Grant Program, which this year offers the highest total funding amount in the program's history. Since its founding, this program has supported innovative, community-driven projects that protect water quality and enhance public engagement.

As we focus on outreach and infrastructure this summer, we're also celebrating another key function of our stormwater system: groundwater recharge. Thanks to strong partnerships and planning, the District helped recharge 51,432 acre-feet of water into the local aquifer during the 2024 water year—an above-average outcome that supports long-term sustainability for our region.

As the busy summer months continue, we're proud to lay the foundation for a future that protects our community, rain or shine. In the meantime, we invite you to enjoy the safe, family-friendly spaces we've created, whether it's relaxing at our award-winning park or birdwatching at a neighborhood basin.

Flooded with ideas? Apply for a grant to bring them to life

Got a great idea? We've got the grant funds to back it. The Clean Stormwater Grant Program, established in January of 1997 by the District's Board of Directors, promotes partnerships between the District and local schools, nonprofits, and community organizations by funding projects that protect stormwater quality, prevent pollution, and educate the public. Funding is available for a wide range of efforts, from water resource-focused field trips to environmental restoration and stormwater education campaigns.

For the upcoming 2026 grant cycle, up to \$40,000 will be awarded. Grants of up to \$2,000 are available for field trips, and up to \$4,000 will be awarded for general projects that tackle issues like trash reduction, integrated pest management, and low impact development.

In 2025, grant funding supported water education field trips to Scout Island for 13 schools and helped launch five additional community projects, two of which were featured in the Spring and Summer 2025 issues of *Flood Line*. These projects are making a tangible impact within the Fresno-Clovis area by fostering

The District funded 14 field trips to Scout Island in 2025

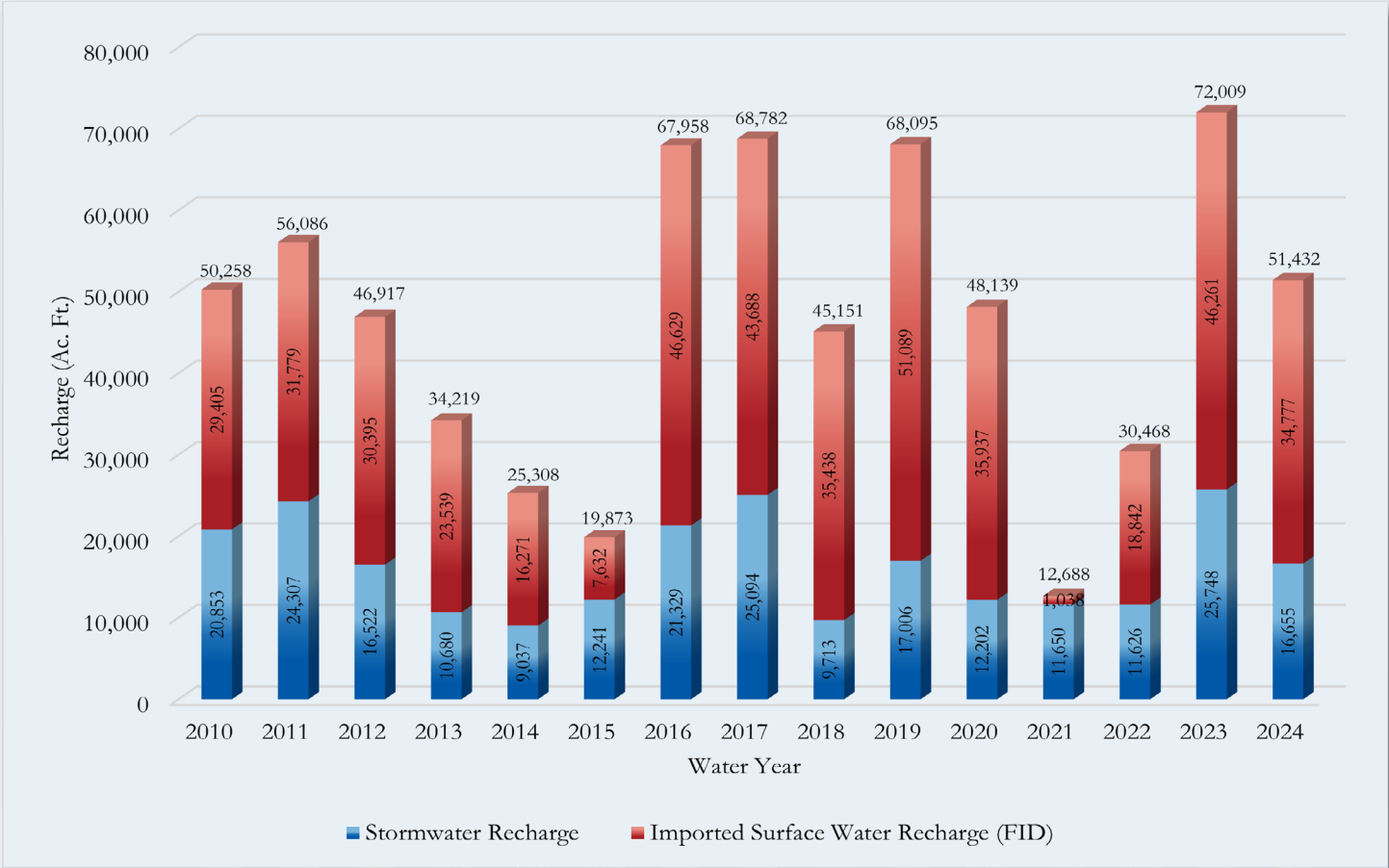


local workforce development and engaging youth, volunteers, and residents in protecting our watershed.

If you know a class that would benefit from an engaging water resource-focused field trip or a group with great ideas to protect stormwater quality, whether through education, outreach, cleanup, restoration, or research, please spread the word! The District wants to support creative, community-driven solutions.

Applications for the 2026 cycle open October 1, 2025. Follow us on Instagram [@fresnometroflood](#) and Facebook at [www.facebook.com/fresnometroflood](#) for updates.

Groundwater gains: 2024 recap



The District's stormwater basins continue to serve more than one purpose. While they are designed to protect the community from flooding, these facilities also play a critical role in recharging the region's groundwater aquifer. In the highly urbanized Fresno-Clovis metropolitan area, where concrete and asphalt limit natural percolation, District basins help retain captured stormwater, allowing it to percolate into the groundwater aquifer rather than exit the region. The District's basins also accept imported surface water for groundwater recharge purposes. The result? More water stays local for future beneficial use.

During the 2024 Water Year (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024), the District's facilities recharged a total of 51,432 acre-feet of water. Of that amount, 34,777 acre-feet came from surface water deliveries coordinated with the Fresno Irrigation District (FID), and 16,655 acre-feet came from captured stormwater. This total reflects an above-average performance compared to historical recharge totals.

This year our recharge efforts were conducted in 83 of the District's 100 basins that have surface water recharge connections to FID's canal system. The remaining 17 basins were offline due to maintenance or construction activities.

The District's recharge program aligns with broader efforts to meet the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). As a member of the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (North Kings GSA), the District participates in coordinated planning to sustainably manage the Fresno area's portion of the Kings Subbasin. Recently, the North Kings GSA launched a well registration effort to better monitor groundwater extraction—another important step toward SGMA compliance by the 2040 deadline.

According to the North Kings GSA 2024 Water Year Annual Report, although the Kings Subbasin experienced a normal water year, surface water diversions reached 108% of the long-term average, allowing agencies to substitute more surface water for groundwater pumping and continue recharge efforts. This shift helped reduce pressure on the aquifer and maintain the momentum gained during 2023's wet year.

Together, these efforts are helping stabilize groundwater levels. While there is more work ahead, the recharge performance in 2024 marks meaningful progress toward the region's long-term sustainability goals.

Team Spotlight: Finance

Meet the District's Finance Team! Led by Finance Manager Cindy Bare, this small but highly effective group includes one accountant and two accounting technicians that manage a wide array of critical financial functions to keep the District running seamlessly.

This tight knit team brings a wide range of experience to the table and includes Cindy Bare, who has led the team since 2021, Cynthia Martinez, who has dedicated over twenty years to District service, Mary Gin, who has served for just over three years, and Melissa Westrick, a recently promoted team member who transitioned from Office Assistant. Melissa was featured in the Winter 2024-2025 *Flood Line*. Their collective dedication to accuracy, organization, and fiscal stewardship supports every project, paycheck, and basin throughout the District.

Like the pipelines in the District's stormwater system, mostly unseen but absolutely vital, the Finance Team works behind the scenes to make sure everything flows smoothly. From payroll to budget development, without this team, the system wouldn't function at all. They oversee accounts receivable and payable, verifying that vendors, contractors,

and service providers are paid correctly and on schedule. Summertime is the culmination of many months of hard work. One of their largest responsibilities when summer sizzles is the finalization of the District's annual budget, a 6-month-long effort that concludes with the adoption of the budget at the end of each June. Concurrently, they prepare for and coordinate with outside auditors to complete the District's annual financial and pension audits, providing thorough documentation, responding to inquiries, and ensuring transparency every step of the way.

In the fall, when the Clean Stormwater Grant Program cycle begins, and all throughout the year, the Finance Team plays a key role in reimbursing grant recipients for various costs. These reimbursements cover a range of expenses, from school bus transportation for field trips to teacher and facility-use fees to lab supplies. Their attention to detail helps guarantee that grand-funded projects stay within budget and on track for successful completion.

Another critical aspect of their work is managing the Assessment Tax Fund. Since a significant portion of the District's revenue is derived from this assessment, the

team carefully reviews, calculates, and submits data to Fresno County to ensure accurate collection. They also generate monthly and quarterly financial reports, maintain the general ledger, and respond to public records requests related to District finances.

So, what's next? With the 2025-2026 budget officially adopted, the Finance Team is already gearing up for the next cycle of reports, audits, and assessments, all while ensuring that daily operations never miss a beat. From balance sheets to basins, the Finance Team is keeping the District fiscally strong, one financial statement at a time.



From left to right: Cynthia Martinez, Melissa Westrick, Cindy Bare, & Mary Gin

Hot weather, cool work: A season of maintenance

Whether it's 105 degrees in July or pouring rain in January, the District's maintenance team and independent contractors, led by Facilities Manager Jacob Eubanks, are hard at work behind the scenes. From weed control and sediment removal to playground upkeep and wrangling rodents, they're the reason District basins and facilities function year-round. With over 150 basins and 775 miles of pipeline, specialized maintenance is essential to keep facilities clean, functional, and prepared for both everyday needs and emergency response.



Maintenance at Basin H (near Bullard & Maroa, Fresno)

When land is acquired for a future ponding basin, it's leased or enrolled in the District's Undeveloped Basin Maintenance Program. Each site in the program undergoes monthly inspection and trash pickup, while vegetation management is conducted three times per year. Excavation operations to remove soil, shape the basin, and make way for future drainage infrastructure begins once the basin's perimeter fencing is installed.

When a basin is landscaped, that indicates it has been transferred to the District's Developed Basin Maintenance Program. This program functions similarly to the Undeveloped Basin Maintenance Program with added site inspections, tree and shrub trimming, mowing, and irrigation system monitoring and repairing. Sediment removal is performed to remove pollutants and maintain percolation rates, affected by runoff deposits that accumulate along the basin floor. To remove sediments, the basin must first be dewatered. Pools of water are placed for the wildlife during this process. After sediments are removed, the basin is redressed and graded. Once per year, hydroseeding is performed on freshly excavated side slopes. This method employs a slurry made of water, seed, mulch, and fertilizer that's sprayed evenly over soil to encourage quick vegetation growth and reduce erosion.

In addition to the Undeveloped and Developed Maintenance Programs, the District has a Master

Maintenance Program, which handles specialized tasks not covered by traditional contracts. This program covers major tree trimming, pipeline video inspection and sediment removal, earthwork, environmental hazard cleanup, and channel maintenance. In accordance with the Department of Fish and Wildlife's guidelines, channel maintenance is conducted annually or biannually to remove overgrown vegetation, sediment buildup, and storm debris. To reduce fire hazards and maintain large, rural properties, annual mowing/discing is conducted. In areas that cannot be reached with conventional equipment, boom mowers (equipment attached to a tractor) allow steep embankments to be maintained, while flat areas are cleared with tractors and labor crews. Rodent control is also a top priority. The District's Rodent Abatement Program includes regular inspections and treatments, timed seasonally to maximize effectiveness and remove ground squirrels, gophers, and meadow mice, which threaten basin integrity and increase the risk of erosion and damage to dams and levees.

And we can't forget about the parks, one of which is award-winning! Staff continually repair damaged playground equipment, patch Playsafe rubber matting, and maintain restrooms and site lighting, while irrigation systems and landscaping features are routinely inspected and repaired.



Maintenance at Basin 1G (near Ashlan & Temperance, Clovis)

From the visible, like mowing, fencing, and park maintenance, to the less visible, like pipeline video inspections, sediment removal, and rodent abatement, the District's facilities maintenance programs are essential to the long-term health and safety of our flood control system and represent a year-round commitment to responsible public service and environmental stewardship. As the District continues to prepare for changing weather patterns and increased development across the region, we remain focused on maintaining the infrastructure that protects our communities; one task, one basin, and one season at a time.

Wings over water: Students track birds in ponding basins

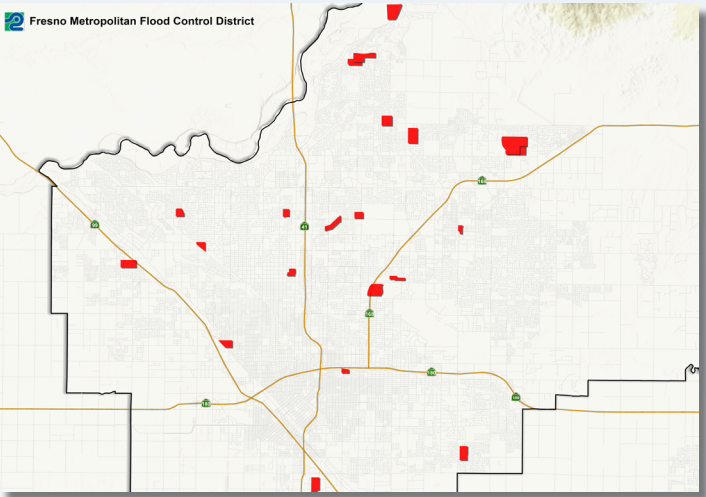
In a collaboration involving The Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) and California State University, Fresno (Fresno State), a year-long study is exploring how the District’s ponding basins are providing more benefits than originally intended by supporting migratory bird populations. Funded through the District’s Clean Stormwater Grant Program (the Grant Program), this project is led by Fresno State graduate student Patrick Kong under the mentorship of Dr. Steve Blumenshine, a Fresno State professor and the Water Advocacy Towards Education and Research affinity group’s (CSU-WATER) Interim Executive Director. The project focuses on surveying migratory waterbirds that use California’s Central Valley as a critical stopover and wintering area along the Pacific Flyway (a major North American bird migration route). While this region has historically supported millions of migratory birds, the Central Valley has lost approximately 90% of its wetlands over the past century. Similar wetland losses have occurred across the country, prompting farmers, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations to increase efforts in identifying alternative habitats, such as flooded agricultural fields. Likewise, this District grant-funded project is investigating a big question: can stormwater basins pull double duty as makeshift habitats and offer prime real estate for migratory birds?



Students collect project data at District basins

To test this hypothesis, high school students from CART, along with students from Fresno State, have surveyed twenty District-managed stormwater basins throughout the Fresno-Clovis area. By utilizing District ponding basins as living laboratories, students are able to gain valuable hands-on experience in conservation science, strengthen their technical skills and environmental awareness, and learn how urban infrastructure can support both human and ecological communities. Once bird abundance and biodiversity data are collected, they are compared to similar data from natural wetlands at Merced National Wildlife Refuge. Thus far, student researchers have been able to find some promising information: during migratory

(fall/spring) and winter seasons, there have been seasonal increases in both the numbers of birds and species observed in the ponding basins compared to the non-migratory summer season. In many cases, the diversity of bird species in the basins mirrored that of the natural wetlands, suggesting that District ponding basins may be functioning as an important habitat for a wide variety of migratory waterbird species, especially during critical times of the year when suitable habitat is scarce. Additional research is exploring whether certain management practices, such as vegetation type or basin size, also influence bird use.



Map of basins surveyed in the study

These findings highlight another crucial fact: while District ponding basins may provide valuable habitat for migratory birds, it’s important not to feed these wild animals. Feeding can disrupt natural migration patterns, contribute to poor nutrition, increase disease transmission, and upset ecological balance. With wild bird populations already in decline, minimizing additional risks is essential for their long-term survival.



Pelicans wading in Basin 3G (Barstow & Locan, Clovis)

So, the next time you take a walk near your neighborhood ponding basin and catch a glimpse of a majestic pelican gliding in for a landing, or a black-necked stilt tiptoeing through the shallows, remember: these feathered tourists have flown in from far-off places, stopping here to rest their wings. Just like any seasoned traveler, they need space, peace, and a quick departure to their next destination, so think of the ponding basins as a layover, not a lounge. Give them space, not snacks, and help protect the wild wonder of waterbirds.

Funding the future: 2025-2026 District budget approved

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\$1,005,000 for the maintenance of dams, channels, and detention basins, \$425,000 for pump operations and maintenance, and \$786,500 for fence repair, drain line operations, flood flight expenses, vehicle operations, other operations expenses, and environmental management.

Capital Projects

As a special purpose agency, the District continues to prioritize implementation of its Storm Drainage and Flood Control Master Plan. The FY 2025-2026 budget includes \$13,413,026 for capital projects that enhance public safety and environmental benefit. Of that amount, \$11,857,500 is allocated for system upgrades of inlets, pump retrofits, and streets, \$850,000 is reserved for authorized contingency and economic development projects, \$412,500 supports land acquisition and appraisals, and \$293,026 funds environmental planning and engineering. Grant funding has assisted in reducing the cost of many of these capital improvement projects while also delivering co-benefits, such as groundwater recharge and public recreation.



Pump station at Basin RR1 (near the 99/180 Interchange, Fresno)

Stormwater Quality Management

The District’s Stormwater Quality Management Program is funded at \$1,015,100 this year. This program ensures compliance with state and federal Clean Water Act regulations, including mandates to reduce trash and pesticide pollution in stormwater runoff. This program also supports community education and funds our Clean Stormwater Grant Program, which is awarding record

funding this year for community water projects.

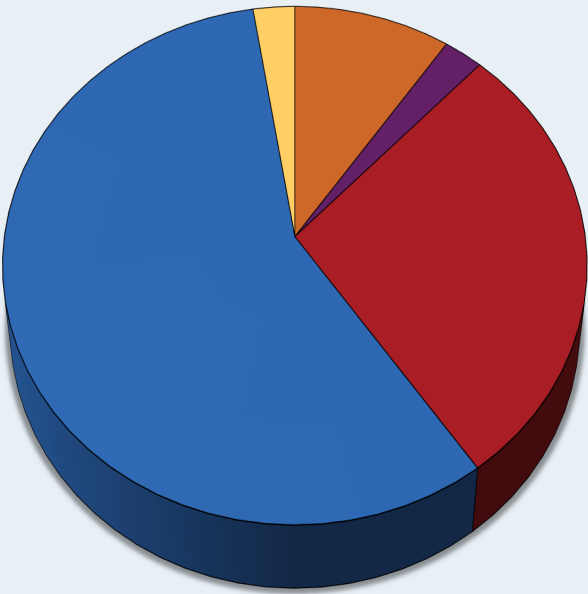
Partnerships

The District collaborates closely with many agencies, including the County of Fresno, the Cities of Fresno and Clovis, and the Fresno Irrigation District, to ensure services remain efficient and responsive to the evolving needs of the region.

Funding Sources

The projected revenue for FY 2025–2026 is \$30,124,139. The majority of revenue comes from property taxes (57%) and benefit assessment taxes on land within the District’s service area (28%). Other sources include interest and rentals (10%), grants (2%), and miscellaneous revenue (3%).

2025-2026 Revenue



- Interest & Rental Revenue (10%)
- Income From Grants, Loans, & Contributions (2%)
- Assessment Tax Revenue (28%)
- Property Tax Revenue (57%)
- Miscellaneous Revenue (3%)

Learn More

To view the full 2025-2026 District Budget, including program-by-program allocations and historical context, visit www.fresnofloodcontrol.org. The Budget is a living document that guides District operations and reflects our mission to protect people, preserve water, and plan for the future.



Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District

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Mailing info - If your mailing information has changed or if you prefer to receive *Flood Line* by regular mail, e-mail, or both, please contact Natalie Rose Wilcox at nataliew@fresnofloodcontrol.org or (559) 456-3292.

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Close Up: Mary Gin

Finance guru Mary Gin has worn many hats, handling numbers for medical groups, casinos, and even country clubs. But her favorite experience so far? Serving the public here at the District (Scout's honor—she said that all on her own). With a background in computer science and business, Mary brings precision, logic, and a calm sense of order to her role as an Accountant III.

Expanding from a payroll-focused position in the healthcare industry to a more well-rounded accounting role at the District, Mary plays a critical role in the District's annual budgeting process and keeps busy by managing financial statements, monthly and quarterly reports, general ledger postings, public records requests, and assessment tax funds. The cyclical rhythm and variety of accounting work constantly keeps her engaged, especially during the challenging budget and audit season. Mary's favorite part of the job? Always learning something new. That, along with the steady supply of laughter generated by the small-but-mighty Finance Department, comprised of four employees, all of whom she can count on to brighten her day, is what makes her job so fulfilling.

When she's off the clock, Mary enjoys taking her daily 15-minute walk around the District's campus, watching *Friends*, losing herself between the pages of books authored by the likes of Patricia Briggs and James Patterson, or trying to dominate one of her three daughters in a game of Mario Kart. She also swears by spontaneous family road trips, especially those that end at Monterey Bay, where she can take in the view of the

Pacific Ocean from her favorite lookout at the aquarium.

Her advice for aspiring accountants: Sharpen your time management skills, stay flexible, and never overlook the details. Mary believes the ability to switch between tasks is an essential skill, and that attention to detail not only makes her a better accountant but also helps her dodge those sneaky bananas in Mario Kart with a higher success rate.



A quetzalcoatlus dinosaur observes Mary (left), her husband, and their three daughters

Mary's goals for the future include learning all she can about District finances, taking more work off her supervisor's plate, and finally beating her oldest daughter (the undefeated champion) in Mario Kart, all while mastering the art of multitasking—whether it's in a ledger or on Rainbow Road.

