

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 9, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 4, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2373

Introduced by Assembly Member Gray

February 18, 2016

An act relating to the Merced Irrigation District, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2373, as amended, Gray. Merced Irrigation ~~District~~ *District*.

The Irrigation District Law provides for the formation of irrigation districts with prescribed powers, including acting to put to any beneficial use any water under the district's control.

This bill would appropriate \$45,000 from the General Fund to the Merced Irrigation District for implementing *on-farm irrigation system* and water use efficiency ~~strategies~~ *improvements* for small communal farms in the County of Merced. The bill would require, on or before April 30, 2018, the Merced Irrigation District to report to the Legislature how the appropriated funds were spent, how the funds resulted in improvement to irrigation efficiency, and how the funds reduced energy, fuel, and water usage. The bill would additionally require the report, to the greatest extent possible, to evaluate the effectiveness of expanding the program to assistance on small farms statewide.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the County of Merced.

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares that the
2 implementation of irrigation and water use efficiency by farms
3 benefits the public as a whole, reducing greenhouse gas emissions
4 in the production of food and reducing the production costs of
5 food, helping to keep food prices affordable for all Californians.
- 6 SEC. 2. (a) There is hereby appropriated forty-five thousand
7 dollars (\$45,000) from the General Fund to the Merced Irrigation
8 District for implementing *on-farm irrigation system* and water use
9 efficiency ~~strategies~~ *improvements* for small communal farms in
10 the County of Merced. For purposes of this appropriation, small
11 communal farms may include a farm that is operated through an
12 informal agreement by one or more families. *For purposes of this*
13 *section, on-farm irrigation system and water use efficiency*
14 *improvements include, but are not limited to, any of the following:*
- 15 (1) *Water pump maintenance, repair, or replacement including*
16 *installation and drilling.*
- 17 (2) *Water well casing maintenance, repair, or replacement.*
- 18 (3) *Annual maintenance checks that may include either of the*
19 *following:*
- 20 (A) *Well cover or well cap maintenance, repair, or replacement.*
- 21 (B) *Slope and drainage construction or maintenance to counter*
22 *the effects of subsidence.*
- 23 (b) (1) For purposes of determining the effectiveness of the
24 appropriation in subdivision (a) on small communal farms, and
25 the cumulative impact on the County of Merced as a whole, on or
26 before April 30, 2018, the Merced Irrigation District shall report,
27 at a minimum, to the Legislature all of the following:
- 28 (A) How the appropriated funds were spent.
- 29 (B) How the funds resulted in improvement to irrigation
30 efficiency.
- 31 (C) How the funds reduced energy, fuel, and water usage.
- 32 (2) To the greatest extent possible, the report shall evaluate the
33 effectiveness of expanding the program to assistance on small
34 farms statewide.
- 35 (3) A report to be submitted pursuant to this subdivision shall
36 be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government
37 Code.

1 SEC. 3. The Legislature finds and declares that a special law
2 is necessary and that a general law cannot be made applicable
3 within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California
4 Constitution because many communal farms in the County of
5 Merced lack adequate economic opportunities as the county is
6 home to a disproportionate number of disadvantaged communities
7 with traditionally high levels of unemployment and poverty.

O