

Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Technical Advisory Committee & Working Group

Meeting #22

Meetings held September 19, 2018

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

ACTION ITEMS

Who	What
Linda Dorn	Provide EKI with a list of inactive wells in Sacramento County
John Lowrie/EKI	Distribute a succinct list of TSS monitoring well requirements to GSAs
GSAs	Share TSS monitoring well candidates with EKI; contact EKI to partner on a monitoring project
EKI	Reach out to GSAs regarding candidate wells for TSS grant funding
EKI	Send GSAs an updated local data-collection survey.
GSAs	Consult GSA counsel regarding data collection survey; customize introductory paragraph and send survey.
CBI	Contact GSAs for information about GSA's local SGMA outreach and engagement plan
CBI	Revise assessment approach based on GSA feedback

DISCUSSION – KEY THEMES

Below is a summary of key themes discussed at the meeting. This summary is not intended to be a meeting transcript. Rather, it focuses on the main points covered during the group's discussions and any action items.

COSUMNES SUBBASIN SGMA TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES GRANT

[*View slides 1-7.*](#)

The Cosumnes Subbasin is currently in the queue to receive Technical Support Services (TSS) funds from the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Technical consultant Anona Dutton, EKI, explained that the Cosumnes Working Group could submit a TSS grant application to install one to five nested **monitoring wells** in areas of existing data gaps within the Basin. Monitoring wells will be sited and designed to function as dedicated monitoring wells; screen all principal aquifer units within the Basin; provide a refined understanding of groundwater recharge sources, vertical gradients, spatial/temporal trends in groundwater elevations, and impacts to pumping within each principal aquifer unit. While EKI can manage well design and write project-specific TSS applications, one or more GSA is needed to serve as a monitoring partner and local advocate. The local GSA will administer the monitoring.

Critical DWR specifications for a monitoring well include the following:

1. Dedicated monitoring well (an infrequently-used well is *not* eligible as a monitoring well in the TSS program);
2. Screened in a unique aquifer;
3. Known well construction details.

DWR allows identification of representative monitoring sites, which must meet DWR criteria. DWR's minimum requirement for well monitoring is twice a year for 20 years, though there may be reasons to conduct more frequent monitoring.

Additionally, the Working Group could submit a TSS grant application for **well video logging services** to retrofit existing well(s) for inclusion in the SGMA monitoring network. The Working Group/GSAs will need to identify "candidate wells" for video logging that are still intact (i.e., not destroyed); screen individual principal aquifer units within the Basin; could be converted into a permanent monitoring well; and can be accessed regularly by the GSAs and/or other SGMA monitoring entities.

The TSS fact sheet [[view pages 1-3](#)] outlines information that applicants must provide to DWR as part of the secondary request, including parcel level location, documentation of access, site constraints and well specifications.

Next Steps:

- EKI or John Lowrie will compile a succinct list of well site eligibility requirements (same well density requirements as CASGEM).
- Linda Dorn will provide a list of inactive wells in Sacramento County. GSA representatives will consider possible candidate wells (must be on a parcel with access) and contact EKI to partner on a monitoring project; EKI will conduct the technical design and develop the TSS application.

GROUNDWATER MODELING

[View slides 8-24](#). John Fio, EKI, provided an initial overview of numerical groundwater model options for the Cosumnes Subbasin. This discussion was not intended to develop a recommendation on a modeling approach for the Cosumnes Subbasin, but simply to seek TAC input on gridding density related to Woodard- Kern modeling efforts and to initiate conversations on possible modeling approaches.

Fio suggested that the Working Group will eventually need to determine whether to (i) repurpose and update an existing model or (ii) develop an entirely new model. Creating a brand-new model will cost more than updating an existing model, which in turn will cost more than using an out-of-the-box model. If using an existing model, considerations will include whether the model satisfies SGMA groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) requirements; how well the model conforms to the Hydrogeological Conceptual Model; the model calibration performance; and the level of model uncertainty and sensitivity. Fio noted that a model will improve as it is fed more data.

While the TAC previously determined that Eastern San Joaquin Integrated Water Flow Model (ESJM) is not a suitable option for the Cosumnes, Fio recommends that the TAC closely consider the Sacramento Valley Simulation Model (SVSim) and Sacramento Integrated Water Resources Model (SacIWRM) as options for the Cosumnes.

SVSim - Pros	SVSim - Cons
Developed by DWR.	Cosumnes is modest portion (Southern portion) of the entire model area.
Mesh designed to support surface-water groundwater interconnections, which is important for the Cosumnes Subbasin.	Cannot easily modify mesh and therefore mesh refinement is likely impractical.
Water and storage properties based on geology (texture).	Not available until "1st Quarter 2019," however this date could get pushed back.

SaciWRM - Pros	SaciWRM - Cons
Improved geographic focus relative to other existing models (SVSim, C2VSIM, etc.).	Possible loss of autonomy and control.
Long development history and use.	Transparency requires rigorous coordination, which can be a time sink.
Can participate from the beginning in the current update for North American GSP (e.g., mesh refinement).	Possible loss of autonomy and control.

Fio suggested that the Cosumnes subbasin could participate in the SaciWRM mesh update, and then test the updated model to understand limitations for use in the Cosumnes. By being closely involved, the Cosumnes could access the developers' input datasets, which would in turn support greater exchange of information across basins. TAC participants agreed that the Cosumnes Subbasin should participate in the SaciWRM mesh update, so as to maintain flexibility and maximize future options.

The discussion also generated a number of topics Working Group members would like to better understand. **Specifically, participants asked that Fio respond to the following questions at the October TAC meeting:**

- Is there a difference among models with regard to autonomy and ability to use the model independently?
- Is there an unsaturated zone layer?
- How do the outputs from either of these two models (i) interface with other basins' models and (ii) help understand movement of water between basins?
- It would be useful to have a better understanding of the role of mesh in the model.
- How does these models fit with the Cosumnes' deadlines?
- How do you add new conductivity data to the model?
 - Response: Relatively easily, with foresight to know all boundaries that may be relevant in the future. The TAC would need to brainstorm hypothetical boundaries to include in the model.
- What is the cost difference between these? What is the opportunity cost (i.e. how would remaining funds be allocated)?
- What is the best quality of representation for the Cosumnes Subbasin?

Next Steps

- In the coming week, GSAs are asked to send any additional questions for EKI

- At the October TAC meeting, John Fio will respond to participants' questions
- EKI will ask Woodard-Kern to develop a more refined model/mesh

COSUMNES SUBBASIN DATA NEEDS

[View slides 25-33.](#)

Anona Dutton, EKI, provided an overview of data needs, timeline and a recommended strategy for gathering data from GSAs and others. Dutton noted that the subbasin needs to start data collection as soon as possible, in order to assemble a “critical-mass” of data to better inform thinking about model development and identify critical data gaps.

GSP Data Needs

- Exact well locations
- Well construction information
- Primary well use
- Screened intervals
- Well depth
- Measuring point elevation
- Well construction logs, geologic logs, geophysical logs
- Groundwater level data
- Monthly pumping rates and units of measure
- Groundwater quality data
- Aquifer pumping test data and analyses/reports
- Wastewater disposal plans

Step 1 – Compile publicly available data

- DWR's website: “Sustainable Groundwater Management – Data, Tools, and Reports”
- Download all public data available Y Groundwater levels, well data, etc.
- Download public statewide and federal public data sources
- Land use data, topography, geology, etc.

Step 2 – Compile data from GSAs (history of water use, etc.)

- The GSA aims to engage with diverse stakeholders to best represent their interests in the GSP development process
- The GSAs will send out data requests to the public water systems and landowners.
- Need to determine who the GSA point of contacts will be.
- Stakeholder survey and data requests will also be available to download on the Cosumnes Subbasin website (cosumnes.waterforum.org).

Step 3 – Compile local and basin-specific data

- Data needed from local sources (public water suppliers)
- More detailed information on hydrogeologic characteristics, land use, etc.
- Will help identify drivers of local groundwater conditions
- Local data sources include management plans, databases (water levels, wells, water quality, etc.), local scientific studies, wastewater plans, etc.
- Public Water Supply Data Request email

Step 4 – Compile stakeholder data

GSA's will need to help interface with local data sources, first by distributing the request and then by compiling information received.

- Request for local groundwater data from landowners (not publicly available)
- Well locations and construction
- Groundwater Elevations
- Pumping Rates
- Water quality Testing
- Provide data as far back as possible
- More data received will result in more informed decisions
- Landowner Data Request Forms

Stakeholder Survey

Dutton shared a data collection survey, which EKI recommends GSA's adapt as needed (with advice from GSA counsel) and distribute to water users for local data collection.

- Local stakeholder involvement ensures beneficial uses of water and water users are adequately considered throughout the process
- The stakeholder survey will help consider the needs and concerns of all groundwater users in the area.
- GSA's will need to designate a GSA point of contact for local data collection.
- EKI requests GSA feedback on whether the Landowner Data Request form ([view pages 6-10](#)) would effectively elicit landowner response.

All data must be submitted to GSA's by December 31, 2018 in order to be included in GSP development. Data will be publicly available and potentially submitted to DWR.

Discussion

- Participants agreed that each GSA will use its own logo on the survey header, as each GSA should become well known to local water users as the local governing agency for that area. As well, each GSA can customize the letter accompanying the survey to be fully consistent with its own GSA protocols.
- Driller logs, which are publicly available via DWR, may serve as valuable sources of information, though the quality may be poor (i.e. might not include clear locations). Drillers may be reluctant to directly share their logs; however, GSA's with active counsel could look into submitting a public records request. DWR redacts well owners' names in publicly available data.
- EKI has a small budget for snapshot water quality sampling, as part of a specific data-gap activity. The TAC will need to decide what areas are a high priority in order to develop a snapshot of water quality across the basin.
- Dutton explained that it is useful to know net consumptive use of water, how and where wastewater is being treated and discharged, and in what form, because this impacts groundwater recharge.
- Under SGMA, there is an expectation that much of the information that flows through a GSA will be transparent and publicly available. EKI has not observed much local resistance in to data sharing other basins. EKI recommends that GSA legal counsel reviews the approach to confidentiality.
- Participants agreed to the importance of collecting as much good, credible data as possible while simultaneously respecting individual landowners' privacy.

Next Steps: Dutton will send GSAs an updated data collection survey. GSAs will consult their respective counsels on approach to confidentiality, customize the introductory paragraph accordingly, and send out the survey.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- An attendee commented that transparency and openness are central tenets of SGMA and that the Working Group has a public duty to follow SGMA's spirit and intent.

COSUMNES SUBBASIN SGMA WORKING GROUP

GENERAL UPDATES

Status of Framework Agreement and Cost-Share Agreement

Since the August Working Group meeting, six of the seven GSAs have approved the Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group's Cost-Share Agreement, Framework Agreement, and EKI's work plan. These materials are to go before the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors (the seventh GSA) on September 25 for its review and approach. The item was pulled as a consent item and will instead be treated as a timed item. Kerry Schmitz noted that Supervisor Nottoli welcomes all to attend and relay their thoughts on the agreements.

Linda Dorn noted that the EKI contract and DWR Prop. 1 grant agreement are nearing finalization.

Near-Term Coordination: Eastern San Joaquin and South American

Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin: EKI attended the previous week's Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (ESJ) meeting. ESJ initially conducted much work on sustainability criteria, and has recently paused these efforts in order to turn attention to modeling work, which projects a continued annual deficit of 30k acre-feet. ESJ is facing hard decisions regarding how to rectify this deficit and move into sustainable management. The Subbasin is (i) considering an allocation-based approach, which garnered strong dislike among local stakeholders and (ii) looking at projects and management actions to rectify the overdraft. On October 10, ESJ is holding a workshop to begin brainstorming alternatives to cutting demand by 12 to 15%. Linda Dorn plans to attend the workshop.

South American Subbasin: Parties are still participating in ongoing trilateral meetings. SCGA awaits word on the failure or success of its alternative submittal and is budgeting to work on a GSP if needed.

GSA Updates

Sloughouse RCD passed a resolution to establish itself as a SGMA defined management area. It has not yet designated any management or scientific tasks. As the GSP development process proceeds, there will be greater clarity regarding which tasks should be undertaken by management area.

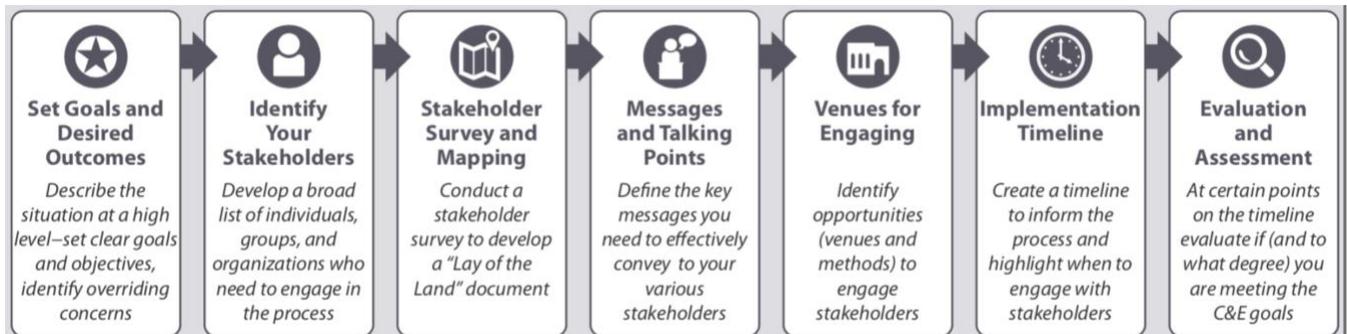
Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Strategy

[*View slides.*](#)

Bennett Brooks, CBI, reviewed the following key themes from CBI's July Working Group presentation on DWR requirements for stakeholder outreach and engagement.

- Throughout the GSP development process, the Working Group needs to involve and collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders. A standing stakeholder advisory body could be a component of the public engagement process.
- DWR developed a set of best practices for stakeholder Communication and Engagement. GSPs are **required** to have a communication section that outlines what GSAs heard from stakeholders and members of the public and how this input informed the plan.

DWR outlines seven steps of community engagement:



CBI previously developed a preliminary Outreach and Engagement Plan for the Subbasin. To fill the gaps in the Outreach and Engagement Plan, CBI recommends conducting a stakeholder assessment consisting of 15 to 20 interviews with stakeholders representing key water user groups and integrating assessment findings into a revised version of the Outreach and Engagement Plan. To this end, prior to the Working Group meeting, CBI solicited names of potential stakeholder interviewees from GSAs and compiled a list of possible interviewees across DWR’s stakeholder categories. The stakeholder assessment is intended to inform the required Outreach and Engagement Plan and to shape a tailored, targeted and effective approach to communication and outreach. These assessment interviews are **not** designed to impact the GSP.

The Prop. 1 workplan describes two levels of outreach: (i) basin-wide and (ii) GSA-led within the GSA service area. It’s imperative that GSAs conduct their own outreach and engagement and include a description of these efforts in the GSP Outreach and Engagement Plan.

Discussion

GSA representatives offered a number of comments related to public outreach. Some focused on the proposed assessment itself. Many others focused more generally on outreach approaches and strategies. Below is a summary of key discussion points and individual comments.

Stakeholder Assessment

- Some comments – some from GSA members, others from the EKI, CBI, Water Forum team – focused on providing detail on the assessment purpose and approach. Key points included:
 - While the EKI mailing will get word out about SGMA, CBI can simultaneously conduct focused conversations to identify the baseline level of knowledge about SGMA and targeted pathways for engagement across stakeholder category.
 - It will be helpful to hear whether stakeholders have heard about SGMA and where they receive information from, in an effort to better understand what information conduits are working well.

- There are a lot of unknowns and misrepresentations around SGMA; as such, it will be helpful to learn (i) how interested water users perceive SGMA and (ii) their baseline level of knowledge about SGMA. As such, the background/contextual questions posed at the outset of the stakeholder assessment are designed to help gauge the interviewee's baseline level of understanding.
- The assessment is intended to be a bounded set of conversations, focused on knowledgeable parties from each of the relevant water user groups identified in DWR guidance documents.
- Other comments centered on suggestions for revising or amending the proposed assessment. These included:
 - Simplify the assessment to streamline the questions and make it more accessible (avoid jargon, unfamiliar acronyms, etc.)
 - Abbreviate the upfront section related to SGMA understanding
 - Consider incorporating questions intended to elicit perspectives on the GSP as these types of topics are likely to get people more actively engaged. Others noted that, while a helpful suggestion, the assessment is intended to focus on outreach only and not yet the GSP.)
 - Make clear there is a process to develop a GSP and include in-depth stakeholder input.
- Finally, there was a suggestion to incorporate questions pertaining to outreach and engagement approaches into EKI's data collection survey (to be distributed by GSAs) as that will be distributed widely throughout the subbasin.

General Outreach and Engagement

- Some participants affirmed that it is critical for outreach and engagement to also occur locally, via the local GSA. It was noted that, under SGMA, each GSA is required to have its own outreach and engagement plan.
- Perhaps the Cosumnes Subbasin/SGMA Working Group needs a brand identity.
- The Working Group and GSAs need to make a concerted effort to push out information, such as through a bulk mailer to everyone in the basin (with simple, straightforward language). The Working Group may want to consider a periodic (e.g., quarterly) newsletter to keep stakeholders informed.
- Useful to consider which forms are best for introducing the message of data collection to the public. Public workshops may be an effective way to engage the public around data collection.
- Important to identify and describe landowners who will be most impacted by SGMA.
- Need to emphasize that SGMA regulations include de minimus users.
- Messaging (i.e. on the website) should say "Get involved!" and offer pathways for involvement, as accessible information, and a clear discussion of impacts to affected water users.
- A participant commented that there are many ag-res users in the subbasin. Workshops may be a good way to ag-res users, because they are not represented by an organization.
- A participant suggests advertising the mailer on the radio (e.g. via Jackson radio station in Amador).
- Some Working Group participants encouraged use of the internet and social media for outreach and engagement, as well as to inform the outreach and engagement plan. For example, a basin developed and distributed an online survey that was very well received among ag-res users.

- To the extent CBI and the Water Forum conduct informal outreach conversations with stakeholder groups, it is important for CBI/Water Forum to reach out to all groups to ensure stakeholders are being equally engaged.
- Consider holding outreach public workshops sooner than later to spark interest in the topic,

Next Steps: In advance of the October Working Group meeting, CBI will speak with each GSA about its outreach and engagement plan within its own jurisdiction. At the October meeting, CBI will present a refined approach to completing the outreach and engagement plan.

NEXT MEETING

The Working Group and TAC will next meet from 9-12 p.m. **on Wednesday, October 17** in the Community Room at the Galt Police Department. The Working Group will follow the TAC; specific meeting times to be determined.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Damon Wykoff, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
Darrel Evenson, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
Gary Thomas, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
Gene Mancebo, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
Herb Garms, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
Jay Schneider, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
Barbara Washburn, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
Rick Wohle, Clay Water District
Sue Wohle, Clay Water District
John Mulrooney, Galt Irrigation District
Leo VanWarmerdam, Galt Irrigation District
Leland Schneider, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Mark Stretars, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Mike Wackman, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Kerry Schmitz, Sacramento County
Linda Dorn, Sacramento County
Rodney Fricke, Sacramento County
Tom Gohring, Water Forum
John Lowrie, Water Forum
Anona Dutton, EKI
John Fio, EKI
Bennett Brooks, CBI
Julia Golomb, CBI

GLOSSARY

Below is a list of commonly used terms:

CBI	Consensus Building Institute - The organization that facilitates SGMA implementation in the Cosumnes Subbasin
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EKI	The firm that currently serves as independent technical consultant for the Cosumnes Subbasin
Galt ID	Galt Irrigation District (link) - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
OHWD	Omochumne-Hartnell Water District (link) - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Qualification
Prop. 1	Proposition 1
SGMA	California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (link)
SRCD	Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
SSCWA	Southeast Sacramento County Agricultural Water Authority (link)
TAC	Cosumnes Subbasin Technical Advisory Committee – An advisory body, with representatives from each of the seven GSAs, that develops recommendations for approval by the Working Group.
WF	Sacramento Water Forum (link)
Zone 13	

For questions regarding this meeting summary, please contact Tom Gohring at the Water Forum or Julia Golomb at the Consensus Building Institute.

Visit cosumnes.waterforum.org for the latest meeting information and materials.