

**Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group Meeting
Meeting #26**

Meeting held February 20, 2019

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute and the Water Forum

MEETING IN BRIEF

At its twenty-sixth meeting, the Cosumnes Subbasin Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Working Group adopted a **Subbasin Communication and Engagement Plan** as a living document to guide groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) outreach in the subbasin. The Working Group discussed options for participating in **regional groundwater modeling efforts** and ultimately directed EKI to continue collaborating with Regional Water Authority (RWA) as it pursues data collection, thereby postponing the Working Group’s final decision about groundwater model selection until October 2019. Participants reviewed and endorsed a plan for three **public workshops** to be held in late March and early April. The next Working Group meeting will take on place March 20, 2019 at Herald Fire Hall.

ACTION ITEMS

Who	What
Water Forum	Send landowner data request forms to survey respondents from Galt ID, Clay ID, Sacramento County, Amador County, SRCD (with customized cover letter provided by SRCD).
Water Forum	Follow up with Clay ID and City of Galt to determine their preference for distributing follow-up landowner data request forms.
SRCD and Sacramento County	Follow up with EKI regarding public water system data request.
Water Forum	Move forward with March groundwater classroom, open to public.
Water Forum, EKI, and Working Group	Continue to consider pros/cons and learnings through RWA collaboration.
Water Forum	Develop memorandum on anticipated GSA responsibilities and costs.
CBI	Add glossary and footnote on p. 2 (using language consistent with SGMA) to Communication and Engagement Plan; make additional changes, as needed, to appendices to ensure consistency.
CBI	Work with Communication and Engagement Committee on public workshop agenda; work with individual GSAs on public workshop timing, location, approaches and outreach.
CBI	Begin to fill in lay of the land table based on survey responses.
CBI	For March Working Group meeting, prepare slides on key themes from landowner survey responses.
EKI	Organize one-on-one meetings with GSAs at Sacramento County Farm Bureau.

OHWD and EKI	Work on TSS grant.
GSAs	Capture stakeholder contact information as they field inquiries.

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.

GENERAL UPDATES

Three-month look-ahead and groundwater sustainability plan updates

Anona Dutton, EKI, presented an **updated three-month look-ahead schedule** ([link](#)). EKI and the Working Group reported back on progress toward deadlines in the next three months:

- EKI developed a draft Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) Plan, which it will submit to the Working Group by the end of February.
- EKI imported data for 360 wells into the data management system (DMS) as of February 13. Water level data has not yet been imported.
- EKI will share an updated memo on numerical model selection by the end of March.
- EKI will import all data into the DMS by the end of May, after which EKI will conduct data gap analysis.
- Amador County, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District (SRCD), Galt Irrigation District (Galt ID), and Omochumne-Hartnell Water District (OHWD) sent data requests to public water systems in their jurisdictions.
- SRCD and Sacramento County will follow up with EKI on public water systems data.

Dutton also presented a revised **Cosumnes Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Schedule for Phase 1 and Phase 2** ([link](#)). The schedule tracks both the original schedule (light blue) as well as the Cosumnes Subbasin’s actual progress and due dates (dark blue). The document includes a breakdown of GSA, EKI, CBI and Water Forum due dates and responsibilities, by phase and task. In redesigning the project schedule, EKI aimed to account for how much time GSAs need to take information back to their jurisdictional bodies and return to the Working Group for discussion and decision-making.

EKI proposed to meet one-on-one with each GSA for an hour in February or March to discuss data that GSAs can provide EKI, as well as projects and management actions that GSAs are interested in.

Outcome: Water Forum will schedule one-on-one meetings between GSAs and EKI, to take place at Sacramento County Farm Bureau. EKI will send out a list of potential data requests to GSAs in advance.

EKI general stakeholder survey – status of distribution and responses

Stakeholder survey responses are due to EKI by the end of February. CBI and the Water Forum have been compiling responses. Ninety survey responses have been received to-date. Sixty-six survey respondents indicated that they are willing to share data. GSAs need to send EKI's data request forms to these stakeholders. Water Forum offered to do this mailing for GSAs.

Next Steps: Water Forum will send data request forms to survey respondents willing to share data for Amador County, Clay ID, Galt ID, Sacramento County and SRCD (with a cover letter from SRCD). OHWD already mailed data request forms. Responses are due to EKI by the end of March.

Technical Support Services Grant

EKI is waiting to hear from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) about the approved Amador County submissions. OHWD plans to apply but has not yet had time to reach out to EKI.

Near-term coordination: Eastern San Joaquin and South American Subbasins

On February 12, Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater (ESJ) Authority hosted its third informational meeting to provide groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) updates and seek feedback regarding the Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The meeting was well-attended. ESJ Groundwater Authority has identified a 100,000 acre-feet overdraft in the subbasin. Modeling is being redone to accommodate jurisdictional boundaries and support development of per-GSA water budgets. EKI sees a learning opportunity to inform development of the model mesh for the Cosumnes Subbasin.

No updates were given for the South American Subbasin. Representatives from OHWD, SRCD and Sacramento County hoped to have draft terms to share in March. They will not meet this timeline but intend to soon arrive at draft terms.

Financial/Proposition 1 grant-related issues

Kerry Schmitz, Sacramento County, reported that she has a draft of the first Proposition 1 grant reimbursement covering September through November and is working with accountants to finalize the reimbursement.

GROUNDWATER MODELING

Groundwater Modeling Classroom

Tom Gohring, Water Forum, provided an update on the timing and focus of a **groundwater modeling classroom**. Working Group members had provided input on topics to cover during the groundwater modeling classroom, and Gohring summarized this input and shared it with EKI to develop curriculum. The Water Forum and EKI signed a contract extension to enable the groundwater modeling classroom. The classroom will be open to the public.

Next Steps: GSA representatives will receive a scheduling email from Ana Ayala, Water Forum availability. The Working Group hopes to schedule the groundwater modeling classroom to take place in the next 1-2 months.

Limited Regional Coordination Option for Groundwater Model Development

At its January meeting, the Working Group directed the planning team to further explore the viability of participating in a **regional groundwater model** and to clarify issues around cost, Cosumnes Subbasin autonomy and schedule implications. In response, the Water Forum, RWA, EKI and Woodard & Curran met to begin sketching a more formal approach. In advance of the February meeting, Gohring shared a **memorandum** ([link](#)), jointly developed by EKI, RWA, Woodard & Curran and the Water Forum, which outlines an approach for moving forward with Cosumnes Subbasin model preparation that preserves the independence of the Cosumnes Subbasin while maintaining the option of using a proposed regional model.

This approach would provide a window of coordination through September 2019 that would allow EKI to collect data required for GSP development and model preparation. At the same time, EKI, RWA and Woodard & Curran would conduct a number of coordination activities (e.g., sharing data and regional modeling files) that support collaborative model development. These “no regrets” and “no extra cost” activities are required regardless of which model approach the Working Group ultimately selects. In October 2019, the Working Group would choose among four options for model preparation: 1) EKI continues to work with RWA, 2) EKI takes possession of the regional model at that point and uses it for the Cosumnes Subbasin, 3) EKI takes whatever data it has collected and extracts it from the shared drive with RWA, or 4) EKI takes the data and develops a model more similar to the nested model previously described. The collaboration period between now and October will help demonstrate the viability of working with RWA and Woodard & Curran beyond this period.

Discussion:

- The proposal defers to October 2019 the Working Group’s decision regarding whether and how it will collaborate with RWA to develop a groundwater model. GSA representatives and the planning team affirmed the merits of deferring a decision as it allows EKI to move forward with data collection and other tasks it

- must accomplish and to make a more informed recommendation for model development to the Cosumnes Subbasin at a later date.
- GSA representatives and the planning team believe that the groundwater classroom will help the Working Group make a more informed decision on groundwater model selection in October.
 - The Working Group posed questions to EKI and the Water Forum to clarify the four options for collaboration between EKI and RWA.
 - John Fio, EKI, explained that both EKI and Woodard & Curran need to develop certain datasets simultaneously; the four options describe different approaches that EKI could follow after collecting these datasets. In option 1, EKI and Woodard & Curran would build all datasets together. In option 2, they would work together to build datasets, but EKI would finish the model before using it for the GSP. In option 3, EKI would use the datasets developed together and take the piece covering the Cosumnes Subbasin out of the shared model to finish, while using a larger regional model for flows in and out of the basin. In option 4, EKI would take the data out of the shared model and complete model calibration.
 - Fio provided a helpful analogy: If two friends were building a car together, option 1 would represent building and driving the car together. In option 2, one friend would want to put another engine in the car so they would take the car and finish building it. In option 3, one friend would take the car and another would keep the engine. In option 4, they would design the car together but ultimately build separate cars.
 - At the January meeting, the Working Group discussed collaboration with SAFCA. Gohring noted that this is not mentioned in the memo because the proposal is for a relationship between EKI and RWA. If SAFCA participates in the regional modeling effort, it will do so through its own relationship with RWA.
 - A GSA representative asked what area RWA represents and what its interest was in developing a regional groundwater model. Gohring responded that RWA has member areas which include all of Sacramento County and parts of Yolo and Sutter Counties. RWA's interest in groundwater modeling is to support SGMA North of the American River and to support groundwater banking for its entire coverage area.
 - A GSA representative asked about the relationship between RWA and Sacramento Groundwater Authority (SGA). SGA is developing the GSP for the North American Basin. RWA is a separate entity which supports SGA and shares some staff, including Rob Swartz, Manager of Technical Services at SGA and RWA. SGA has decided to use the regional groundwater model developed by RWA to support its GSP.
 - A GSA representative asked about groundwater modeling development by Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority (SCGA). SCGA is developing the

Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the South American Basin, which has decided to use the state model, C2VSim. SCGA has allocated a small budget for modeling. Although SCGA will not be contributing to the regional model, its member agencies will.

- EKI will design the model grid with Water Forum funding. This grid will accommodate jurisdictional boundaries, giving all parties involved maximum flexibility to extract out data for their jurisdictions.
- A GSA representative raised concern related to legal interpretation of the memorandum. Gohring responded that the memo outlines informal ground rules for engagement between now and the end of September 2019. If the parties involved determine that a formal memorandum of understanding is needed, terms would need to be reviewed by legal counsel.
- A GSA representative asked about modeling south of the Cosumnes Subbasin. Dutton responded that EKI presented in May about the Integrated Water Flow Model (IWFM) that the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin is using. Dutton also referred to her update, noting that ESJ must redo its water budget to accommodate jurisdictions. The model developed for the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin covers the Cosumnes Subbasin as boundary conditions.

Outcome: Representatives from all GSAs present at the meeting expressed support for EKI moving forward with the proposed approach for regional coordination.

Next steps: EKI will move forward with data collection while providing available Cosumnes Subbasin data and model specifications to Woodard & Curran to support regional model input data set development. In October 2019, the Working Group will choose among four options for model preparation. In the meantime, EKI and the Working Group will consider pros/cons and learning through regional collaboration.

Public comment:

- A member of the public inquired about the platform the groundwater model will use. Fio responded that the platform would be a computer application that assumes use of IWFM, the State of California DWR flow model, but which could also be switched to MODFLOW, the USGS flow model.
- A member of the public asked what sample size of stakeholder data EKI hoped to gather. Dutton responded that EKI does not have an express target because stakeholder data request is a supplemental effort to engage directly with the public. EKI and the Working Group noted the encouraging (and unexpected) volume of responses to the stakeholder survey.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Cosumnes Working Group Communication and Engagement Plan

The Working Group’s Communication and Engagement Committee discussed the draft Cosumnes Subbasin Communication and Engagement (C&E) Plan during its January 23 phone meeting. The revised **draft Communication and Engagement Plan** ([link](#)) reflects Committee members’ feedback. Working Group participants received a copy of the revised draft Plan in advance of the February Working Group meeting, with the aim of confirming the Plan at the February Working Group meeting.

Julia Golomb, CBI, emphasized that the C&E Plan is a living document. Several sections of the C&E Plan are deliberately left blank as they require ongoing input. Appendix A: Cosumnes Subbasin Stakeholder “Lay of the Land” will require additional information and Appendix D: Completed Outreach Activities and Meetings will require GSA tracking of outreach activities via the outreach tracker ([link](#)).

The C&E Plan is intended to guide GSA outreach activities and to support stakeholder involvement in groundwater sustainability planning in the Cosumnes Subbasin. SGMA requires a C&E Plan as one component of GSP submission.

Discussion:

- A GSA representative advocated for the importance of Appendix G: Anticipated GSA Outreach Tasks and asked that a list of GSA responsibilities including associated costs be shared with the Working Group by next month. John Lowrie, Water Forum, responded that he is drafting a list of GSA responsibilities and costs projected out as far as possible.
- A GSA representative requested that the C&E Plan be edited to include a footnote defining “beneficial uses and users of groundwater” consistent with SGMA (SB 1168, 10723.2.)
- A GSA representative raised concern that language in the document could be construed to imply water rights to stakeholders. Another representative clarified that SGMA does not give or take away water rights.

Public Comment:

- A member of the public recommended that the C&E Plan clearly distinguish between stakeholders versus water rights holders.
- A member of the public expressed appreciation for the C&E Plan as a document that can successfully guide outreach without dictating what messages GSAs will communicate to stakeholders.
- A member of the public requested that the C&E Plan include a glossary.

Decision: GSA representatives unanimously approved adoption of the C&E Plan, pending discussed edits, as a living document to guide SGMA outreach in the Cosumnes Subbasin.

Next Steps:

- CBI will add a glossary and footnote on p. 2 (using language consistent with SGMA) of the C&E Plan.
- CBI will begin to fill in the Lay of the Land table from survey responses.
- GSAs will continue entering outreach activities into the Outreach Tracker, which will be recorded in Appendix D: Completed Outreach Activities and Meetings.
- The Water Forum will develop a memorandum regarding anticipated GSA responsibilities and costs and share a draft with the Working Group at the March meeting. Once approved, this memo will be included in Appendix G of the C&E Plan.

Public Workshops

In advance of the February meeting, CBI shared a **draft proposal for three Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Public Workshops in Spring 2019** ([link](#)). CBI requested direction from the Working Group on public workshop timing and focus.

The C&E Committee advised holding the workshops in late March and early April 2019, so as to allow adequate time for workshop planning while not conflicting with growing season, to better accommodate the agricultural community.

Three workshops will be held at locations spread throughout the Cosumnes Subbasin with appropriate groups of GSAs present:

1. Amador Workshop (GSA host: Amador Groundwater Management Authority)
2. Wilton Workshop (GSA hosts: OHWD, SRCD, Clay ID, Galt ID)
3. Galt Workshop (GSA hosts: City of Galt, Galt ID, Clay ID, Sacramento County)

Julia Golomb, CBI, will reach out to groupings of GSAs via phone to organize the public workshops. CBI will solicit input regarding:

- Outreach approach for the workshop (i.e. how to most effectively raise awareness about the meeting);
- Physical location where the workshop will be held;
- Dates that GSA representatives will be available;
- Time of day that will be most useful for people who need to attend;
- Any creative approaches for the workshop that GSAs would like to employ.

Discussion:

- GSAs and the planning team agreed that GSA representatives will take an active role in planning and hosting the public workshops. The Water Forum will support GSAs

with scheduling workshops and some agenda items, however GSA representatives will serve as the event hosts.

- GSA representatives discussed the importance of proactively reaching out to the public to educate and solicit input on GSP development, while clearly communicating that the subbasin in the early stages of the GSP development process and outlining GSA authorities.
- GSA representatives reported that they have had conversations with stakeholders who expressed concern that they will be metered or taxed.
- GSA representatives discussed the merits of sharing potential management actions at workshops to quell stakeholder's worries. Representatives concluded that Working Group should not outline potential management actions until modeling is completed and the magnitude of overdraft is known.
- A GSA representative encouraged the group to not assume that there will be curtailments and to seek creative solutions once the problem is better understood.
- Bennett Brooks, CBI, suggested sharing examples from other basins that are ahead of the Cosumnes Subbasin in GSP development, as one method of informing stakeholders about potential management actions.
- A GSA representative advocated for identifying *de minimus* users and defining what potential effects regulation could have on these users.

Next Steps:

- CBI will work with the C&E Committee to develop the public workshop agenda.
- CBI will coordinate with GSAs to determine public workshop timing, location, approaches and outreach.

Public Comment:

- A DWR staff member announced that DWR will host a **GSA Forum on March 21, 2019** in West Sacramento. The forum will include a panel discussion focused on addressing how GSAs have approached communication, coordination, engagement, and outreach. Interested GSA members and stakeholders must register to attend ([link](#)).
- A member of the public requested maps or other resources to show how water moves across systems, potential courses of action, water use priorities and a snapshot of historical data.
- A member of the public spoke to the varying needs of residents and GSAs. There has been more development in some areas of the subbasin than in others. One size does not fit all with regard to sustainable groundwater management.
- A member of the public advised the Working Group to focus on asking for stakeholder assistance in ensuring that GSAs address stakeholder concerns, while avoiding speculation about overdraft or potential actions.

Outreach Meetings

CBI shared a **draft plan for Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Outreach Meetings, Spring 2019** ([link](#)). Golomb developed a plan for an initial round of targeted meetings with key organizations across different interest areas convened by the Water Forum, with support and participation from GSAs. The document proposes potential organizational participants, describes the purpose of the meetings, and sets forward a draft agenda.

Golomb asked GSAs a few questions to stimulate discussion:

- Do GSAs want to be part of these outreach meetings?
- Do GSAs have suggestions on groups to meet with?
- Are we better off meeting with several groups at once or holding one-on-one meetings?

Discussion:

- A GSA representative asked why the Cattlemen's Association and the Farm Bureau were not included. Golomb explained that she did not include these groups in the initial round of outreach meetings because these groups are well-represented at the Working Group.
- A GSA representative asked why the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water was included. Gohring explained that he wanted to include environmental justice interests represented and the EJ Coalition for Water had reached out to the Water Forum. If others have suggestions for additional environmental justice organizations in the subbasin, they should bring those to the Working Group or CBI.
- A GSA representative expressed concern that some stakeholders might feel excluded by small outreach meetings. Instead of holding one-on-one outreach meetings, he suggested instead asking organizations to attend public workshops or holding meeting with several groups at once. This suggestion was echoed by several other Working Group members.

Outcome: The Working Group will table outreach meetings for the time being, with the aim of maximizing transparent public engagement.

Public Comment:

- A member of the public suggested posting physical flyers for public workshops to raise awareness and requested that the input from organizational meetings be shared back at Working Group meetings.

NEXT MEETING

The Working Group will next meet in person from 9-12 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20th at the Herald Fire Hall, 12746 Ivie Rd., Herald, CA. After the March meeting, the Working Group will resume meeting at the Galt Police Department.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Darrel Evenson, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
 Ed Gonzalez, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
 Gary Thomas, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
 Gene Mancebo, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
 Rick Ferriera, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
 Herb Garms, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
 Barbara Washburn, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
 Jay Schneider, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
 Mark Stretars, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
 Mike Wackman, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
 Gary Silva Jr., Clay Water District
 Leo Van Warmerdam, Galt Irrigation District
 Kerry Schmitz, Sacramento County
 Rodney Fricke, Sacramento County
 Bennett Brooks, CBI
 Julia Golomb, CBI
 Anona Dutton, EKI
 John Fio, EKI
 Tom Gohring, Water Forum
 John Lowrie, Water Forum
 Katherine Perkins, Water Forum

Additionally, members of the public and DWR attended the meeting.

GLOSSARY

Below is a list of commonly used terms:

CBI	Consensus Building Institute - The organization that facilitates SGMA implementation in the Cosumnes Subbasin
DMS	Data Management System
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EKI	The firm that currently serves as independent technical consultant for the Cosumnes Subbasin
ESJGA	Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority
Galt ID	Galt Irrigation District link) - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin

GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
OHWD	Omoichumne-Hartnell Water District (link) - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
QA/QC	Quality Assurance/Quality Control
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Qualification
Prop. 1	Proposition 1 (state grant funding for sustainable groundwater planning and projects)
SCEP	Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan
SGA	Sacramento Groundwater Authority
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.
TM	Technical Memorandum – Summary documents produced by EKI to inform Working Group discussions and decision-making
WF	Sacramento Water Forum (link)
WG	Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group
CBI	Consensus Building Institute - The organization that facilitates SGMA implementation in the Cosumnes Subbasin
DMS	Data Management System
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EKI	The firm that currently serves as independent technical consultant for the Cosumnes Subbasin
ESJGA	Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority
Galt ID	Galt Irrigation District (link) - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan

OHWD	Omoichumne-Hartnell Water District (link) - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
QA/QC	Quality Assurance/Quality Control
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Qualification
Prop. 1	Proposition 1 (state grant funding for sustainable groundwater planning and projects)
SCEP	Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan
SGA	Sacramento Groundwater Authority
SGMA	California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (link)
SRCD	Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District - One of the seven GSAs in the Cosumnes Subbasin
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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.
TM	Technical Memorandum – Summary documents produced by EKI to inform Working Group discussions and decision-making
WF	Sacramento Water Forum (link)
WG	Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group

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.