

Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group Meeting

Meeting #38

Meeting held April 15, 2020 [Online]

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute and the Water Forum

MEETING-IN-BRIEF

The Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group held its April 2020 meeting via Zoom Meeting in compliance with state social distancing requirements. The meeting began with updates on grants, CoSANA modeling and comments on a neighboring Subbasin's Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The Cosumnes Subbasin's technical consultant, EKI, presented on development of SGMA-compliant monitoring plans. The meeting concluded with a discussion of the preliminary phases of planning for the formation of a Surface Water Advisory Group, as part of Proposition 68 grant activities. The Working Group will next meet via webinar on May 20, 2020.

ACTION ITEMS

Who	What
CBI and GSAs	Connect by phone to confirm that GSA representatives have reviewed and approve the Comments on ESJ Final GSP
GSAs	Continue Site Access Outreach to Finalize/Confirm Monitoring Network
EKI and Working Group	For Monitoring Network development: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define Undesirable Results and Associated Sustainability Goals• Assign Management Criteria (Minimum Threshold, Measurable Objective, and Interim Milestones)• Assess Final Network and Identify Necessary Improvements
Linda Dorn, Sac County	Consider coordinating a subcommittee to work on monitoring network and well access issues
CBI	Solicit feedback on the Surface Water Advisory Group (SWAG) from Working Group and begin outreach in the next 1-2 months
CBI	Follow up with the outreach committee to see how to move forward with a public workshop in a socially distanced manner
Water Forum	Send response letter to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding GDE concerns

Meeting Documents

[Agenda](#) | [02 – Framework Agreement](#) | [03 – Response letter to CDFW](#) | [04 – Cosumnes Subbasin Comments to ESJ](#) | [05 – EKI Technical Presentation](#) | [06 – Draft TM#9](#) | [07 – SWAG Presentation](#) | [08 – Long Term Governance Committee Presentation](#) | [09 – Draft Governance Committee Guidelines](#) | [April DWR Updates](#)

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.

UPDATES

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN UPDATES

Status check

Framework Agreement	Sacramento County has forwarded the updated Framework Agreement to the Board of Supervisors. Working Group members suggested some minor edits, but the document had already been shared with the County Board of Supervisors, so the group will move forward with the version distributed in February. Link: Final Framework Agreement
Draft response letter to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	The Working Group confirmed sending a response letter to CDFW regarding groundwater-dependent ecosystems. Link: Draft response to CDFW
Outreach Workshop	Cosumnes Public Workshops are postponed due to COVID-19. Meeting participants suggested reviewing DWR resources for convening remote SGMA-related meetings held elsewhere in the state.
Grant status – Prop. 68, TSS	Paperwork related to Prop 68 grant has been submitted to the state by Sacramento County. Prop 1 reimbursements are moving forward. A DWR staff member present at the meeting noted that grant invoices should be submitted by May 3 rd to be paid out before the Fall.

ESJ / South American updates

Linda Dorn, Sacramento County, reported that on behalf of the Cosumnes WG, the County compiled comments on the Eastern San Joaquin (ESJ) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) ([Attachment #4 – Comment to Eastern San Joaquin GSP](#)). The comments centered on coordination and included a technical comment on a well near Dry Creek. Comments on ESJ Final GSP are due May 15. Bennett Brooks, CBI, requested that Julia Golomb call Working Group members after meeting to get their concurrence with submitting the comments.

Tom Gohring, Water Forum, reported that discussions in the South American subbasin related to developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are currently wrapping up.

GENERAL UPDATES

Financial/Grant Related Issues

No updates.

Relevant Updates from Subbasin GSAs

No updates.

Public Comment

A member of the public commented that they thought a property could not be perpetually accessible without an easement.

A staff member of the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced that DWR has written translation services available. CBI encouraged GSAs to think about how they'd take advantage of this service.

GSP TECHNICAL WORK IN PROGRESS AND PLANNING

[Refer to [Technical Presentation #16](#) for EKI presented schedules, CoSANA groundwater modeling updates, and information on the proposed SGMA compliant monitoring program development.]

Near-Term Priorities

[Refer to [slides 3-6 and 34](#)]

- **[Top Priority]** GSAs help identify and obtain well access agreements for the monitoring network; begin well sampling, geophysical studies, etc. in late June/July.
- Finalize repurposing the CoSANA groundwater model.
- Identify and install monitoring wells as needed (July-December)
- Starting in July, begin discussions to define Undesirable Results, associated sustainability goals, and Management Criteria (Minimum Thresholds, Measurable Objectives, and Interim Milestones)

Groundwater modeling – CoSANA

[Refer to [slides 7-18](#)]

Since January, the CoSANA model is being repurposed for the Cosumnes Subbasin based on the Basin Setting (describes land and water use, surface water, and groundwater). EKI has completed calibration work including streamflow comparisons and improved simulation of stream flows.

EKI also reported that the Water Forum performed a detailed parcel analysis for the purposes of improving estimates of outdoor water use by ag-res parcels. The analysis consisted of randomly selecting representative agricultural-residential parcels and digitizing green areas. EKI estimated annual extraction at 9,000 acre feet/ year, including indoor and outdoor water use.

Draft SGMA-Compliant Monitoring Program

[Refer to [slides 19-34](#) and [Technical Memorandum #9](#)]

SGMA requires GSPs to have a monitoring network that sufficiently demonstrates short-term, seasonal, and long-term trends in groundwater and related groundwater and surface conditions in the basin. EKI further described SGMA requirements for the monitoring network and proposed representative monitoring sites.

[Technical Memorandum #9](#) details the proposed monitoring network for the Cosumnes Subbasin's Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

EKI noted that they currently only have access approval (either verbal or written) to a small proportion of the recommended sites. EKI underscored the monitoring network is essential for defining sustainability criteria, emphasizing the need for GSA outreach to land- and well owners.

Monitoring Network Needs – Status of Permissions

Purpose of Monitoring	Target # of Sites	# of Access Confirmed Sites	# of Sites Still Needing Access Permission*
Water Levels	20	10	10
Water Quality	14	9	5
Interconnected Surface Water	7 wells & 5 gauges	1 wells & 0 gauges	6 wells & 5 gauges

**In some cases, the same site may be able to serve multiple monitoring purposes.*

These sites will help monitor Sustainability Indicators identified in SGMA and are relevant to the Cosumnes Subbasin:

- Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels
- Reduction of Groundwater Storage
- Degraded Water Quality
- Land Subsidence
- Depletions of Interconnected Surface Water

Discussion:

- A Working Group member asked Linda Dorn, Sacramento County GSA, if she would be willing to coordinate a subcommittee to work together on monitoring access. Dorn agreed. Water Forum offered to share resources for hosting such a group.
- John Lowrie, Water Forum, noted that he has been working directly with some GSAs to support their efforts to secure access permissions.
- An SRCD representative stated that water use analyses should consider conservation/reuse strategies employed by some fish farms (e.g., reusing fish farm water to support irrigation),
- An Amador County GSA representative inquired if the wells displayed in EKI’s technical presentation near Dry Creek are the only area wells in the monitoring network currently. EKI responded in the affirmative. Dorn expressed interest in working to install an additional well near Dry Creek.

Next Steps

- Water Forum and Sacramento County will discuss best approaches for identifying and obtaining remaining well access agreements.
- GSAs, with support from EKI and Water Forum, will outreach to well owners to obtain access permissions to the monitoring network

WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

Surface Water Advisory Group (SWAG)

[Refer to [SWAG presentation slides](#)]

Introduction and Purpose: Bennett Brooks, CBI, described the purpose of the SWAG is to develop mutual understanding of the technical basis for sustainable management criteria related to groundwater / surface water interactions, consistent with Prop. 68 application. He emphasized that the SWAG is an advisory group to the Working Group and will not make management decisions. Tom Gohring, Water Forum, underscored that the SWAG process will improve the Working Group's knowledge about the basin and the knowledge of interest groups that might otherwise be unaware of the work we are doing.

Representation: The SWAG composition is proposed to include representatives from the Working Group (SRCD, O-H, and Sac County), NGOs (Cosumnes Coalition, TNC, EDF, and ECOS), state and federal agencies (CDFW, US FWS, and NMFS), South American Subbasin SCGA, and tribes (Wilton Rancheria). The final composition is to be determined in discussion with and confirmation by the Working Group.

Timing: Per Working Group approval, CBI and Water Forum will reach out to potential SWAG members and aim to convene the group in early summer. The SWAG will meet three to four times between summer 2020 and early spring 2021.

Anticipated Outcomes: Presentations to the Working Group summarizing key perspectives and recommendations and information to inform GSP development. Working Group has final decision on management actions reflected in the GSP.

CBI asked the Working Group to give big-picture feedback on the purpose and approach, as well as refinements and input on proposed outreach and SWAG composition.

Discussion:

- All GSAs gave their approval to move forward based on the information presented by CBI.
- Working Group members suggested the following additional representatives for the SWAG:
 - Reclamation District 800
 - Sacramento-Amador Water Quality Alliance
 - Sport Fish Alliance.
- An SRCD representative suggested his organization have two representatives on the SWAG, given that interests and needs differ on either sides of the Cosumnes River.
- The group also discussed the response letter to CDFW, as it is related to the SWAG. Working Group members asked that the Water Forum sign the letter on behalf of all the GSAs.

Next Steps:

- CBI will solicit feedback and begin outreach in the next 1-2 months.
- CBI will follow up with the outreach committee to see how to move forward in a socially distanced manner.

- CBI and Water Forum will prepare to form the subcommittee by beginning outreach to potential SWAG members.
- Water Forum is to send the response letter to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife,.

NEXT MEETING

The Working Group will next meet on March 20, 2020, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, via Zoom Meeting: <https://cbuilding.zoom.us/j/95582571206> | Join audio by phone: +1-669-900-6833 | Meeting ID: 955 8257 1206

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Darrel Evenson, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
Gary Thomas, Amador County Groundwater Management Authority
Austin Miller, Sloughouse Resource Conservation District
Barbara Washburn, Sloughouse Resource Conservation District
Jay Schneider, Sloughouse Resource Conservation District
Mike Wackman, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Mark Stretars, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Michael Selling, City of Galt
Kerry Schmitz, Sacramento County
Linda Dorn, Sacramento County
Rodney Fricke, Sacramento County
John Fio, EKI
Anona Dutton, EKI
Kristyn Lindhart, EKI
Bennett Brooks, CBI
Julia Golomb, CBI
Stephanie Horii, CBI
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
CoSANA	A groundwater model being developed by Woodard & Curran which covers the Cosumnes, South American and North American subbasins.
DTW	Distance to water, or the depth at which the ground is saturated.
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
QAQC	Quality Assurance and Quality Control Plan (link)
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Qualification
Prop. 1	Proposition 1
SGMA	California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (link)
SRCD	Sloughouse 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)

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

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