

Cosumnes Working Group Meeting

November 18, 2020

Meeting-in-Brief

The November 18th Cosumnes Working Group (WG) meeting focused on the technical work progress and planning for developing the Cosumnes Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The GSAs have been discussing how they plan to move the subbasin on the path towards sustainability given groundwater conditions (chronic decline in groundwater levels and a preliminary estimate for the projected annual storage decline of approximately 10,000 acre feet per year, AFY, in the Basin Plain). The WG has been exploring potential management approaches that could be adequately proactive to avoid/minimize undesirable results, while also providing sufficient flexibility and time to establish, fund, and implement projects/management actions.

Collecting data for GSP development: **Monitoring Network Field and “Desktop” Investigations.**

The monitoring network is nearly finalized. Relevant GSAs were asked to obtain final site access agreements for monitoring to begin in 2021 (monitoring must begin in 2021 for the first GSP annual report, due April 2022). Sites for installing new monitoring wells (funded by Prop 68) have been identified (installation anticipated in spring/summer 2021). The GSAs agreed to initiate monitoring in 2021 and will form an implementation committee to help oversee subbasin monitoring.

Several Prop-68 funded field investigations are done or underway. Completed tasks include the geophysical investigations which, among things, may help to characterize the transition zone between connected and disconnected reaches of the Cosumnes River. The isotopic recharge characterization study sampling results are currently being analyzed. At least one additional site for the voluntary groundwater extraction instrumentation network is required to fulfill DWR’s Prop-68 contract; an aquaculture site is strongly recommended. Groundwater-dependent ecosystems (GDE) verification is underway, starting with a desktop study to review existing information, which will inform the approach for forthcoming on-site field verifications and remote evaluations (e.g., remote sensing).

Defining “sustainability” for the subbasin: Sustainable Management Criteria – Interconnected Surface Waters. The Working Group received an update on and confirmed initial sustainability management criteria (SMCs) for interconnected surface waters (ISW) using the magnitude and ranges of historical water levels to set measurable objectives (MOs) and minimum thresholds (MTs). For example, interconnected or transitional reaches (areas groundwater levels are sometimes above the streambed

GSP-Related Decisions

(Refer to the forthcoming meeting summary for additional context)

- Confirmed GSAs will initiate monitoring in 2021 in accordance with TM #9 Protocols to meet annual report needs. GSAs will form a monitoring implementation committee by 2021.
- Confirmed initial Sustainable Management Criteria for Interconnected Surface Waters.
- Confirmed its approach for considering and incorporating feedback from the Surface Water Advisory Group Meeting #2 materials.
- Confirmed approach to request SWAG to share thoughts on possible quantitative goals (e.g., specific values) to evaluate undesirable results related to interconnected surface water (after reframing previous input as explorative questions rather than statements).
- GSAs support P/MA subgroup and Ad Hoc Committee continuing to identify/refine viable P/MAs for final review at the Dec WG meeting.

elevation; other times groundwater levels are below) could be treated similarly when establishing the MO and MT. SMCs for Disconnected reaches could be treated the same as Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Level SMCs. The Surface Water Advisory Group (SWAG) had offered general feedback at its second meeting on Undesirable Results; the Working Group agreed with the approach to ask the SWAG for its thoughts on possible quantitative goals to evaluate Undesirable Results. The Working Group indicated the discussion needs to be evidence-based to define appropriate Undesirable Results.

Understanding groundwater dynamics to inform planning: [Groundwater Model and Water Budget](#).

The Working Group received preliminary example estimates from the CoSANA model for the baseline water budget. For the Basin Plain, preliminary estimates indicate the projected storage decline (2,700 AFY) is probably less than the historical storage decline (10,100 AFY); however, climate change may exacerbate the projected annual storage decline (increases from 2,700 AFY to about 10,000 AFY). The model and associated analyses continue to be refined to better represent the Cosumnes River and adjacent areas as new information becomes available.

Identifying options for obtaining groundwater sustainability: [Projects and Management Actions \(P/MAs\)](#).

The Working Group Ad Hoc Committee has been discussing viable P/MAs and received a presentation from Sloughhouse RCD members (who are part of a SRCD P/MA subgroup) on a conceptual framework to identify potential P/MAs that could collectively address the subbasin's deficit. The framework calls for two phases, starting with an initial 5-year Phase 1 with P/MAs (e.g., fallowing, flow augmentation, recharge, etc.); Phase 2 would continue/expand the P/MAs from Phase 1 and include additional projects (e.g., dry well recharge, treated water reuse, etc.). To help decrease estimated costs to the landowner, the framework includes selling excess water (captured from winter flood waters). The Working Group supported continued evaluation of the conceptual framework and other potential P/MAs. The P/MA subgroup will meet to refine the P/MAs and coordinate a groundwater banking presentation from RWA consultant Rob Swartz (and consider providing a presentation to the Ad Hoc). GSAs will submit completed P/MA forms by the next WG meeting (December 16).

Other Committees:

[Surface Water Advisory Group \(SWAG\)](#). The next SWAG meeting (December 4th) will focus on SMCs for interconnected surface waters (reframed per WG discussion), historical water budget update, GDE investigation, and P/MAs.

[Long-Term Governance Committee](#). The WG briefly reviewed highlights from the most recent Long-Term Governance Committee, at which Sacramento County presented a potential county-wide fee program for the Cosumnes Subbasin to help distribute GSP implementation costs. Committee members had expressed general interest in learning more, and Sacramento County plans to work with its consultant to provide more information at the next Committee meeting.

[Outreach & Engagement \(O&E\)](#). The WG received an overview of past and forthcoming basin-wide O&E activities. GSAs will need to submit information on their GSA-specific O&E to be included in the GSP. The O&E Committee will continue its efforts to provide outreach materials and coordinate the upcoming January public workshop. WF and CBI are aiming to meet with SRCD consultant Holly Roberson to discuss potential near-term tribal engagement approach.

GSA in Attendance

- Amador County
- Sacramento County
- Clay Water District
- City of Galt
- Galt Irrigation District
- Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
- Sloughouse Resource Conservation District

Priority Next Steps for GSAs

- Support well installation process, as needed
- Identify well for meter installation (ideally aquaculture; additional agriculture well would be beneficial)
- Compile all access agreements
- Initiate work to conduct monitoring from representative monitoring well network (e.g., identify who will serve on Implementation Committee)
- Refine P/MA list and complete P/MA form by 12/16

Action Items

Topic	Who	What
Monitoring Network	Barbara W & Mike W	[HIGH PRIORITY] Secure aquaculture well for voluntary groundwater extraction meter installation (need one more well per Prop-68 grant requirements)
	GSAs	If possible, identify additional agriculture well for voluntary groundwater extraction meter installation.
	GSAs	[HIGH PRIORITY] Secure remaining well access agreements
	GSAs DEADLINE Wed. Nov 25	[DEADLINE] Nov 25 – Identify representatives (seeking 1 per GSA) to serve on Implementation Committee
	EKI	Secure well drillers for meter installation
	DECISION	GSAs will initiate monitoring in 2021 in accordance with TM #9 Protocols to meet annual report needs. GSAs will for a monitoring implementation committee by 2021.
SWAG	FEEDBACK / GUIDANCE	GSAs approved approach to request SWAG to provide quantitative input to evaluate Undesirable Results (after reframing to reflect the Nov 18 WG discussion)
	EKI	Modify description and framing for seeking quantitative goals for describing Undesirable Results related to interconnected surface waters. Circulate with the WG for review.
P/MAs	DECISION	GSAs support P/MA subgroup and Ad Hoc Committee continuing to identify/refine viable P/MAs for final review at the Dec WG meeting.
	P/MA subgroup	Continue efforts to refine framework for P/MAs, including meeting with RWA consultant. Consider having Rob Swartz give groundwater banking presentation to Ad Hoc (Barbara in lead to schedule subgroup meeting).
	GSAs	[HIGH PRIORITY] Connect w/ P/MA subgroup with additional promising P/MA suggestions for consideration.
	GSAs DEADLINE Wed. Dec 16	[DEADLINE] Dec 16 – Submit completed P/MA forms for WG discussion and decision for final list of P/MAs. (P/MA form example form)
Outreach & Engagement	GSAs	[HIGH PRIORITY] Submit information on GSA-specific outreach completed to date and going forward: Logging GSA-specific outreach efforts
	O&E Committee	Develop and share outreach materials (e.g., factsheet / update), and coordinate January public workshop
	WF/CBI	Schedule separate briefing with Holly Roberson on tribal engagement.

December WG topics (subject to change)

- Final Projects & Management Actions.
- Public Workshop planning / outreach update and January date
- Long-term governance for the subbasin
- Tribal engagement (scheduling separate focused meeting)

Meeting Materials

[Agenda](#) | [2a – WG Updates](#) | [2b – DWR SGMA Update \(11-16-20\)](#) | [3a – EKI Technical Presentation \(updated\)](#) | [3b – Draft PMAs Spreadsheet](#) | [4 – SWAG Mtg #2 Comments](#) (Note: Comments were compiled and reviewed similarly to the process used for [SWAG Mtg#1 Comments](#)) | [5 – Sac County Groundwater Fee Proposal Presentation](#) | [6 – Long-Term Gov Committee Nov 3 Notes](#) | [7 – Outreach & Engagement Committee Update](#)

Post-Meeting Resources:

The following resources were mentioned during the meeting:

- Groundwater modeling classroom: <https://youtu.be/N65PQcUWA0U>
- Geophysical Workshop materials:
 - [ETS for Hydrologic Studies introduction](#)
 - [Geophysical studies presentation to WG 8/21/2019](#)
 - [Workshop video recording](#)
- Sloughhouse RCD PMA Subgroup Meeting
 - [Presentation Slides](#)
 - [Download spreadsheet with supporting data](#)
 - [“Other P&MA” descriptions](#)
- [RCD of Santa Cruz Net Metering Pilot Project](#)
- [Cosumnes Subbasin PMA Stakeholder Survey](#) (developed by SRCD)
- For GSAs – [Logging GSA-specific outreach efforts](#)