

Proposed Projects to reach sustainability in the Cosumnes Subbasin

March 2021

Groundwater in the Cosumnes Subbasin has been declining for decades, with recent estimates suggesting that an average of more than 10,000 acre feet annually are pumped out of the basin than are returned to the aquifer. In compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, a state law passed in 2014, groundwater stakeholders and local agencies have identified proposed projects and management actions to stop the overuse of groundwater. This factsheet provides the most recent information for potential projects and management actions under consideration. These are still in early phases of development and may be refined as the Subbasin does more work to more fully flesh out these projects and engage in discussions with water users in the Subbasin.

Groundwater Sustainability Project Principles

- Minimize the amount of fallowed farmland
- Minimize fees to rural residential and agricultural properties
- Emphasize a voluntary approach to management

Proposed Projects & Management Actions

DEMAND REDUCTION

Reducing the amount of groundwater that is pumped

Voluntary Actions

- Fallowing land for compensation
- Cutting back on water use



SUPPLY AUGMENTATION REVENUE GENERATION

Recharging the aquifer through smaller, local projects and participating in the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) managed aquifer recharge program

Proposed Projects

- Using treated wastewater from the City of Galt on agricultural properties
- Benefitting from recharge projects on the north side of the Cosumnes River
- Obtaining winter floodwater in partnership with SAFCA

Proposed projects will create additional revenue to fund conservation efforts in the basin

Sale of Water

- Selling water to an urban water purveyor, when excess water is available, to generate revenue to fund projects within the subbasin



For more information, go to
Cosumnes.WaterForum.org



Tell us what you think!

Complete a survey on the proposed projects and management actions:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/CFLH6KD



Project Spotlight: Working with SAFCA

Over the past few decades, SAFCA – the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency – has played a major leadership role in multi-billion dollar water projects like improving Folsom Dam and shoring up levees in Natomas, the Pocket area along the American River. They know how to take big projects and turn them into reality.



The FloodMAR project – MAR stands for Managed Aquifer Recharge – takes advantage of winter floodwater on the American River. Projections show that in 4 out of every 10 years, the federal Bureau of Reclamation is going to see 125,000 acre/ft of excess winter floodwater flowing out of the American River and off to the ocean. That’s water the federal Bureau of Reclamation, which operates Folsom Dam, can’t use to meet its environmental and contractual obligations.

Under FloodMAR, the excess winter floodwater would be diverted down the Folsom South Canal for aquifer recharge in the South American and Cosumnes subbasins to be stored until it is needed. The Bureau’s incentive to approve the FloodMAR project is that they would get a portion of the stored water for their use to address conditions in the Delta. The incentive for the Cosumnes Subbasin to participate is that there would be enough water to eliminate a large part of our annual overuse of groundwater.

It is exactly the type of multi-beneficial project that state and federal officials are looking for as solutions to California’s ongoing water woes. During dry times, it would provide more water for ag users, urban water purveyors, and environmental purposes. Both state and federal grants to help construct different parts of the infrastructure will likely be available.

Monitoring Groundwater Conditions

Knowing what is going on deep underground in the Cosumnes Subbasin is vital, both to creating a credible groundwater management plan now and to implementing it effectively over time. That meant it was important early in the planning process to establish a network of monitoring wells, including one off Keating Road in Wilton (pictured at right).

To determine if we are working successfully toward our goal of returning the water table to 2015 levels, we need to monitor groundwater regularly. A series of wells have been selected throughout the basin to make that assessment. In some cases, new, dedicated monitoring wells have been constructed, using grant funds obtained by local agencies, to ensure that all areas of the basin are represented.



Newly constructed monitoring well, to be used in the Cosumnes monitoring network.



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