

## **Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group**

March 12, 2021

Environmental Council of Sacramento  
Attn: Ralph Propper and Sean Wirth  
PO Box 1526  
Sacramento, CA 95812

To: Environmental Council of Sacramento and Habitat 2020

SUBJECT: Response to February 16, 2021 Letter and March 11, 2021 Email

Thank you for your letter to the members of the Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group (Working Group) with recommended principles to be included in the development and implementation of the Cosumnes Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). We appreciate the time and effort that went into developing thoughtful input on the region's Projects and Management Actions (PMAs) and dedicated participation on the Working Group's Surface Water Advisory Group (SWAG). The Working Group has been working diligently over the past six months to map out a portfolio of Projects and Management Actions to reverse the historical decline in groundwater conditions and to address projected deficits.

Your comments have been shared with all Groundwater Sustainability Agency representatives and will be given serious consideration as we move through the next stages of our GSP. Many of your suggestions align with our recent thinking and approaches. We seek to balance short- and long-term measures, use shorter term projects to contribute to our long-term goal of reaching our Measurable Objectives and developing multi-objective projects that will provide shared benefits to our region. While some of the principles that you identified do not directly show up in our GSP, we believe that the long-term net result of our PMAs will result in environmental uplift.

Some of our PMAs do directly address environmental goals, such as the Omochumne-Hartnell Water District Flow Augmentation PMA. Others we expect will have an indirect effect. The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency's Flood-MAR program's main goal is to improve flows and temperature conditions in the Cosumnes and American Rivers. As a main financial supporter of this program, our contribution to the program will result in greater management flexibility and improved aquatic habitat. In addition, the Working Group specifically adopted a common regional numeric model, CoSANA, to facilitate future data sharing and potentially participating in a regional water bank. As previously indicated, the portfolio of Projects and Management Actions that will be included in the GSP are multi-beneficial, collaboratively developed, and driven by science. We anticipate there will be a net benefit to the environment as a result, and we will continue to seek opportunities to advance environmental goals whenever possible.

## Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group

When developing the Cosumnes Subbasin GSP Project and Management Actions, the Working Group had the following priorities in mind:

- Protect groundwater for all uses including residential, tribal, agricultural, and environmental.
- Minimize the fallowing of agricultural land in order to retain the rural culture and economic base.
- Minimize the cost to our constituents by sharing costs equitably and finding solutions to offset the costs with non-user revenue.
- Incentivize participation by finding creative solutions rather than punish water users.
- Develop projects that have multiple benefits, including benefits to the environment.

In regard to interconnected surface waters and the prime focus of the SWAG discussions, our team of technical consultants will be finalizing a Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) report for the Cosumnes Subbasin soon. We anticipate that this report will provide a clearer understanding of how GDEs will be addressed in our GSP. The report is scheduled to be discussed at the June Cosumnes Subbasin Working Group meeting scheduled for June 9, 2021. We encourage your participation in that meeting.

We look forward to continuing this conversation with you and other stakeholders. If you have any questions, please contact Austin Miller, Cosumnes Subbasin SGMA Working Group External Communications Representative, at [Austin@SloughhouseRCD.org](mailto:Austin@SloughhouseRCD.org) or at 916-526-5447.

Sincerely,



Austin Miller

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