

Petaluma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency Advisory Committee Meeting Meeting Summary

Meeting date/time: September 11, 2019 | 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Location: Petaluma Community Center,

Contact: Ann DuBay, GSA Administrator

Email: ann.dubay@scwa.ca.gov | Phone: 707.524.8378

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

Action Item	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Send comments to Ann regarding meeting format, timing, etc.	AC members	October 15
Send out survey to AC members regarding meeting format, etc.	Staff	October 15
Submit comments to Marcus on Current and Historic Groundwater Conditions figures	AC members	September 30

Next meeting: November 13, 2019 | 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Petaluma Community Center, 320 N. McDowell Blvd. Petaluma

Website for meeting material posting: <http://www.sonomagroundwater.org/pv/>

MEETING SUMMARY

GSA Staff Updates

Ann DuBay, GSA Administrator, provided the Administrator update: Rich Wilson, facilitator, is working in Siskiyou County and has several other contracts that are keeping him on the road. Staff worked with the Consensus and Collaboration Program to find a replacement, and are happy that Sam McGill will now serve as the facilitator for both Petaluma Valley and Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Sustainability Agencies. DuBay and Andy Rodgers, Chairman, spoke with several facilitators, and agreed Sam was a good fit for both GSA's.

Updates

Marcus Trotta, Plan Manager/technical staff, noted that the GSP subsection on current and historical conditions is updated with Advisory Committee comments and now awaiting USGS data.

The information used in the subsection is from the draft USGS report, and is not likely to change from the final USGS report, which should be released by end of year. The model is almost ready for staff to review. Montgomery Associates is a sub-consultant that will help with modeling and assessing the model for SGMA requirements.

California Department of Water Resources is providing technical support services for construction of shallow groundwater well monitors near stream gauges. Contract is almost in place with DWR. Currently in process with permits.

Staff is tentatively looking at October 7 for drilling to begin on shallow wells. Once schedule is confirmed, there might be a site visit that we can coordinate with the Advisory Committee.

DWR will be opening up a new grant funding opportunity for the GSA. There will be up to \$1 million for each basin. Funding can be used for planning to help complete the GSP or to provide information that will help implement the GSP (recharge projects/ pilot projects). We will figure out what is needed in this basin and find a good project for which to apply. It is possible that some of the grant funds could be used for planning and community outreach.

Ann DuBay, noted that the proposed flood zone field trip has been postponed. Please save December 11 on your calendar for an all-basin Groundwater Recharge workshop. It will be held in Santa Rosa but open to all basins and public. A speaker from the state and someone doing local recharge will present on the work that is being done. This workshop is geared for Advisory Committee members and the Board to ask lots of questions.

Andrea Rodriguez, Outreach, shared that the Sonoma Valley GSA is holding a community open house at El Verano Elementary School on September 23. The event will be bilingual and family friendly in support of outreach efforts in identified disadvantaged communities.

Comment: The Climate Commission in Petaluma is forming and would be a good opportunity for involvement.

DuBay provided a short update from the previous Board meeting, in which they supported an RCD recharge grant request and received a technical presentation on Agricultural Water Conservation by Sonoma Resource Conservation District on water-saving innovations and practices.

Andy Rodgers, Chair, asked the Advisory Committee for feedback about what works best for meetings and what people aren't happy with. Now that a new facilitator is coming on board we have an opportunity to make some changes. How can we make the meetings better?

Question: Is it possible to restructure the advisory committee meetings to include more time for discussion and breaks to help process information and talk amongst each other?

Response: We can send out a survey monkey to get feedback. We can ask for feedback on format, time/days/ length between now and next meeting before new facilitator is on board. Please send general comments to Ann DuBay and Andy Rodgers.

Comment: What works well is the level of professionalism and technical work - it is huge and many compliments to all of your efforts. The information and packets are great.

Leah Walker, Petaluma Environmental Services Manager, said the City of Petaluma was selected for IWRM group funding for expanding tertiary program. In the application, they asked for a letter of support from the local GSA that supported the application. It was great to show how well we work together.

Next meeting: Permit Sonoma and Chris Dillis from North Coast Regional Water Quality Board will present cannabis water use and what they are seeing in the basin.

Current and historical groundwater conditions

Marcus Trotta shared the overall schedule for GSP and noted that we are in the basin setting section, and will discuss historical water conditions. Next will be the water budget. Then moving into Sustainable Management Criteria. It is important to start this section early, as it's critical to the GSP development.

Question: What is a groundwater dependent ecosystem? Is Petaluma a wetland area? Is that an ecosystem?

Response: Yes, very likely. It is all related, the marsh and wetlands, tidal area.

Question: Is there a size that matters?

Response: We can send out a link to the Nature Conservancy's work on groundwater dependent ecosystems and the mapping they did, <https://groundwaterresourcehub.org/> and <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/NCDatasetViewer/>.

Marcus reviewed the draft table of contents, and the climate conditions- map of distribution of rainfall.

Question: Do you use the local weather stations? Or personal use weather stations?

Response: No, not for this model. Data may or may not have users that calibrate instruments, or the information does not go back far enough. Also, individuals don't always report info to <https://www.wunderground.com/>

Climate Conditions: Discussed historical groundwater level elevations and how water moves throughout basin. No significant changes to seawater groundwater interface. Sparse data set.

Long term groundwater level elevation trends: Conditions are generally pretty stable. Although some wells show decline near basin boundary -- about 50 feet over 25 years.

Land Surface subsidence: DWR provided data set on satellite measurements: recent land surface – free data we can use to help comply. It appears that surface movements correlate with seismic activity.

Groundwater quality: Generally adequate. There are some constituents – arsenic, boron, chloride – that are higher area near San Pablo Bay. Nitrates are higher near Wilson Grove. Mostly deeper wells and nitrates gather in shallow wells.

Discussion/ Questions

Comment: Great information, impressive material.

Please submit comments to Marcus Trotta by end of month.

Sustainable Management Criteria

Discussion/ Questions

Comment: We need to get an understanding of how SGMA defines words. We need to figure out what the words mean to us and continue thinking about that. We have to explain meaning to others- how can we help staff explain to the community?

Response: Sustainable Management Criteria are the heart of the GSP, goals and objectives, for the basin to determine if the basin is managed and sustainable. Depending on how we set the Sustainable Management Criteria, DWR does let the local GSA define criteria. DWR reviews regulation. But once the Sustainable Management Criteria is set, that is the plan. We have a year to establish Sustainable Management Criteria.

Question: What is the onus to the community?

Response: It depends, in this community it might not be significant like in Central Valley. We will be required to identify thresholds.

Response: DWR is looking for overall engagement. County has very engaged communities - we are probably doing more. You must engage disadvantaged communities, but in Petaluma Valley there isn't an identified area of the community (but we know that economically disadvantaged people are in the basin).

Question: What capacity do we have to enforce and regulate? Is that what we are getting to?

Response: The GSA can regulate pumping.

Comment: We have the capacity to regulate not just fluff with fees, but to take action and to make something happen.

Response: It has to be the political will of GSA. You are going to be seeing a lot of water market type activities for critically over-drafted areas.

Comment: In part in the Central Valley there is a moratorium on drilling wells. The impact on our county is that people are drilling wells now but not using them in case they can't drill later down the line.

Comment: It could garner good community will if they know we are taking this seriously and let folks know that the State has the authority to come in and stop pumping.

Comment: People are concerned where a meter will go in and how much it will cost. My well - my water. There is push back from homeowners after they paid the \$20k for infrastructure.

Comment: An informational flyer would help inform drillers and customers

Comment: It is important to get the word out and to work with everyone. Everyone who has a well has groundwater. Would they really care? Lots of seniors who are land rich and money poor? We have to decide who are economically disadvantaged. Who are the impoverished we have to reach? Why are they spending so much time working with apartments and renters? Who is really impacted by groundwater?

Comment: We can identify when we design the outreach. We should identify those who can influence behavior and who have wells. It should be a thoughtful plan.

Comment: We should ask to install meters to help consumers gauge their water use.

Marcus discussed the six indicators defined by DWR- we need to look at all six. There are five general steps, and it is an iterative process with engagement along the way from stakeholders. Draft examples of significant and unreasonable effects were shared from other basins.

Question: The Undesirable Results - are these dire circumstances?

Response: Yes, that is a good way to think about it.

Question: Will we have to define Undesirable Results?

Response: Yes - our model will help with projections for Undesirable Results.

Trotta described Minimum Threshold, which is usually at well or stream gage and Measurable Objective, which is designed to give you operational flexibility. Interim Milestones - 5 year objectives - set projects to meet objectives.

The metrics are defined by GSP regulations. Representative Monitoring Site: Wells set with thresholds and objective. A certain number of wells should be included as monitoring sites, but not all wells. Can measure more than one objective at same well location.

Question: Do they put wells in for this purpose or were these existing wells?

Response: For first part we may use what is available - then we can find funding for new wells.

Comment: We can enlist private landowners, or any new wells can opt in to monitoring program. Are we going to require well uses to monitor? How am I being impacted by this by using these terms? There is a little bit of fear factor here.

Comment: There are well owners who want to help the GSP.

Comment: It's best to use monitoring wells and build out that program. But worth pursuing private well owners as a bridge to get better data.

Trotta noted that there is an iterative path to develop SMCs. Staff would like input on this in the near future, for both the handout for data needs/ information and on sustainability indicators.

Question: At what point can we tie these things together?

Response: Would like to get a sense on which of the indicators are the bigger lift in this basin and prioritize them, and then see how they can be grouped instead of going through one-by-one.

SMC Outreach

Will be presented to you as a more specific plan at the next meeting – would love your input on it.

Significant and Unreasonable Effects

Ann DuBay asked the group what a significant & unreasonable effect is to them, and which sustainability indicators were of most concern.

Comment: Declining groundwater levels- submitted email to Ann DuBay.

Comment: Lower ground water level, - climate change- sent email to Ann DuBay.

Comment: From city perspective, decrease in storage and groundwater level and water quality are the top three important indicators are to us.

Comment: Agree - if we saw significant reduction on ground water level - that would be a concern.

Comment: Same, sodium intrusion in the river and growth of new housing in city limits and the impact are a concern. Overall, water consumption growth for next 30-40 years.

Comment: Salinity along the river is a concern. Majority are not using groundwater in that area because of saline intrusion.

Comment: For agricultural consumers, water volume and storage capacity and quality. When water quality deteriorates, it affects crops. It would be problem. A priority would be to capture surface water or something to promote or recycle water.

Comment: There is a need for management zones. There could be up to four in this basin with issues like salt water intrusion, water quality, nitrogen shallow wells and on the east side with long term vineyard growth. As more vineyard expansion occurs in the Lakeville Highway corridor to here, the hillsides will be covered with vines. Water storage is a big issue on that side of valley.

Comment: Agree with committee. The water levels paired with storage and water quality indicator / saline intrusion is important. We all know it's connected.

Comment: Synthesis comments and send with presentation to group and get more feedback.

Response: No one said land subsidence - it's not a big issue in this basin right now.

ATTENDEES:

Advisory Committee Members

Andy Rodgers, Chairman

Eugene Camozzi, Vice-Chairman

Drew Buechly

Heidi Bauer

Gray Mickelsen

John Shribbs

GSA & Member Agency Staff

Ann DuBay

Andrea Rodriguez

Marcus Trotta

Leah Walker