

MEETING MINUTES

Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Western Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin January 27, 2021

A SPECIAL meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Western Management Area (WMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Wednesday, 27 January 2021. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20.

GSA Committee Directors Present: Chris Brooks, Meighan Dietenhofer (Acting as Alternate), Steve Jordan, Kristin Worthley (Acting as Alternate)

Alternate GSA Committee Director Present: Katherine Stewart

Staff Present: Joe Barget, Bill Buelow, Amber Thompson, Kevin Walsh, Matt Young

Others Present: Bryan Bondy, Doug Circle, Maygan Cline (GeoSyntec), Connor Emrick, John Fio (EKI), Karen Kistler, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Tim Nicely (GSI), Anita Regmi (DWR), Steve Slack (CDFW), Steven Valle and 1 member of the public

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

GSA Committee Director Brooks called the meeting to order at 10:01 am and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. Two Committee Directors and two Acting Alternate Directors were present providing a quorum.

II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone attendees.

Mr. Buelow reviewed history of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requirements and what has been completed so far in the Santa Ynez River Basin including: the creation of the three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Basin (EMA, CMA, WMA), coordinating efforts between the eight agencies participating in the three GSAs, establishing a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) in each of the Management Areas of the Basin and Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) development milestones. The GSPs are due in January 2022. The WMA GSA Committee has so far prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, a Data Management Plan, and a Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model, which is currently open for public review and comment.

III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda

No additions or deletions were made.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Receive and Discuss Received Correspondence from Santa Ynez Water Group

Correspondence dated September 16, 2020 received from the Santa Ynez Water Group was introduced and discussed.

VI. Workshop on WMA Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model

Mr. Curtis Lawler, (Stetson Engineers) presented the January 2021 Stakeholder Workshop. They discussed the Groundwater Conditions Tech Memo, Water Budget Tech Memo, Groundwater Model Update and Sustainable Management Criteria example thresholds. They requested detailed comments and questions be made via the portal at SantaYnezWater.org.

There was public comment, GSA Committee Member, consultant, and staff discussion following each section of the presentation.

- GSA Committee Director Chris Brooks asked if SkyTEM survey data is in this Groundwater Model update. Curtis Lawler (Stetson) explained that the data is still being processed so it will need to be added in future refinements of the Groundwater Model due to deadlines in place to finish SGMA GSP in time.
- GSA Committee Director Chris Brooks asked if feedback on plan sections is being received through the web portal. Mr. Buelow replied that not many comments have been received in the portal. However, we anticipate more comments with more documents being open for public comment.
- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director Meighan Dietenhofer asked about how we can increase public outreach. Mr. Buelow reported that a lot of public participation will happen during the CAG meetings that are open to the public in addition to Newsletter #2 which will be sent to public soon. He stated that we have seen an increase in public interest and traffic to the website since distributing the Newsletters. He asked everyone to call or email him if they have more ideas. Karen Kistler (CAG member) reiterated that the in-depth discussion of topics during the CAG meetings has been very helpful.
- Kristen Stewart asked about the process for creating the Minimum Threshold, and Measurable Objective for the Sustainable Management Criteria. Mr. Lawler (Stetson) explained that is work yet to be done and the plan is to have additional GSA meetings and CAG Meetings in 2021.
- Kristen Stewart asked why Land Subsidence is not an issue. Mr. Lawler (Stetson) explained the reason and gave WMA geological details.
- Kristen Stewart asked for clarification on when we expect to release Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Mr. Lawler (Stetson) discussed planned schedule in detail and stated the plan is to submit Draft GSP in January 2022.
- Bryan Bondy stated that the presentation he downloaded and reviewed is slightly different than he one presented today. He requested that if presentation slides change

prior to the meeting that an email to Interested Parties list be sent announcing that changes were made. He said that he noticed on the Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) slides were changed and now reflect a more conservative management. He asked, why? Mr. Lawler (Stetson) explained that the earlier version of presentation slides needed fixes for typos and better clarifications and that the graphs for SMC are only hypothetical examples only. The changes reflect more attainable levels and are not super highs and lows.

- Bryan Bondy asked if there had been significant and unreasonable levels in historical highs and lows? Mr. Lawler (Stetson) explained that the GSA committee and public need to decide what levels they decide are “Significant and unreasonable”. Bryan Bondy replied that historical lows may not actually be “Significant and unreasonable” that level could be lower. He hopes the GSAs avoid indicators that don’t control/constrain the resource and focus on controlling indicator and address issues relative to that controlling indicator.
- Steve Slack (CDFW) asked about thoroughness of the water monitoring program and if there were any data gaps that would need further monitoring. Mr. Lawler (Stetson) explained that he does not think so for the WMA since there are many wells with available data.
- Steve Slack (CDFW) asked if data includes shallow wells along river. Mr. Lawler (Stetson) stated that we will have to discuss further.

VII. Next Regular WMA GSA Meeting: Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 10:00 AM, location TBD

Mr. Buelow announced that the next WMA GSA Committee Meeting will be Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 10:00 AM, location TBD. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it may be held via teleconference call.

VIII. WMA GSA Committee requests and comments

GSA Committee Director Brooks and GSA Committee Director Jordan asked Mr. Buelow for verification on quorum requirements for WMA GSA Committee meetings.

IX. Adjournment

GSA Committee Director Brooks adjourned the meeting at 11:42 am.



Chris Brooks, Chairman



William J. Buelow, Secretary