

**Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee Meeting  
Via Zoom Teleconference: October 8, 2020**

**MEETING “MINUTES”  
KEY OUTCOMES MEMORANDUM**

**OVERVIEW**

The Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee (GSPAC or Committee), an advisory committee to the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), held its fourth meeting via teleconference on October 8, 2020. The goals of the meeting were to:

- Present and discuss the second draft of the GSP Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan
- Summarize responses to the survey regarding Draft Section 3 of the GSP and the Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan
- Introduce and discuss Draft Section 4, Basin Setting, and Draft Section 5, Monitoring Network and Program, of the GSP
- Receive a briefing from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife on Groundwater Planning Considerations for Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs)
- Identify future agenda items

**PARTICIPANTS**

The following Committee members participated in the meeting: Michelle Benvenuto, Garrett Buckland, Joy Eldredge, Geoff Ellsworth, John Ferons, Dave Ficeli, Alan Galbraith, David Graves, Jeri Hansen, Lester Hardy, Jim Lincoln, Amber Manfree, Beth Novak Milliken, Peter Nissen, Chris Sauer, Patrick Tokar, Suzanne Von Rosenberg, Paul Warnock and Robert Zlomke. The following Committee members were excused: Connor Bennett, Michael Dooley, Eric Fitz and Mike Hackett. The following Committee members were absent: Derek Rayner and Johnnie White.

David Morrison, Jeff Sharp, Chris Apallas, Lashun Fuller and Alexandria Quackenbush with Napa County participated in the meeting. Scott McCreary, Robert Twiss and Debbie Schechter with CONCUR served as neutral facilitators. Vicki Kretsinger, Reid Bryson and Nick Watterson with Luhdorff & Scalmanini Consulting Engineers (LSCE) participated as technical consultants. Jessie Maxwell with the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) and Frances Knapczyk with the Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD) also participated.

**MEETING MATERIALS**

Materials provided to the Committee for the meeting included:

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- Agenda and associated staff reports
- 2A Final Meeting Summary “Minutes” from September 10, 2020 GSPAC Meeting
- Correspondence from the Public
- 6A Second Draft of the GSP Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (CEP)
- 6B Survey Results for Draft Section 3 and Interim Draft CEP
- 6C Draft Section 4 of the GSP and Presentation on Draft Section 4
- 6D Draft Section 5 of the GSP, including Draft List of Acronyms and DWR GSP Elements Guide, Presentation on Draft Section 5,
- 6E Presentation from California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) on Groundwater Planning Considerations

The documents listed above and mentioned in this meeting summary were posted on October 1, 2020 and can be viewed by agenda item at this link:

<http://services.countyofnapa.org/AgendaNet/GranicusMeetingDocuments.aspx?id=6246>

### **KEY OUTCOMES**

Below is a summary of the main topics and issues discussed. This summary is not intended to be a meeting transcript. Rather, it provides an overview of the main topics covered, the primary points and options raised in the discussions, and next steps.

#### **1A. Call to Order, Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair David Graves. Roll Call was conducted by Lashun Fuller. D. Morrison informed the GSPAC that a resignation letter was received from GSPAC member Harvest Duhig, representing Coalition Napa Valley. Jeri Hansen was nominated by Coalition Napa Valley to replace H. Duhig and was appointed by the GSA on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

J. Sharp reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Chair Graves reviewed the charge of the GSPAC, which is to submit a recommended GSP to the GSA Board of Directors by November 1, 2021.

#### **2A. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the September 10, 2020 GSPAC meeting were approved unanimously with no changes.

### **3. Comments and Recommendations**

A member of the public made several comments. One addressed the challenge of reviewing and commenting on documents and gaining a clear picture as to how comments were considered and integrated. J. Sharp explained that the documents and the survey

instrument offer an opportunity for the public to comment on GSP sections. He noted that the GSA website, which will include a document library, is in development. Due to the County's emergency efforts, the website is delayed and will be available by the end of the year. Other concerns raised addressed the Subbasin boundaries and ensuring that the GSP appropriately considers current conditions regarding surface water depletion and impacts on fish.

#### **4. Review of Public Correspondence**

J. Sharp reviewed a letter from Patricia Damery requesting that the GSPAC consider the area near Dry Creek Road and Redwood Road for more focused groundwater monitoring. J. Sharp noted that this offers an opportunity to identify and monitor another well in this location and the County will follow up with the contact and resources provided in the letter to research the area to identify potential wells for monitoring. The wells described in the letter are at the edge but within the boundaries of the Subbasin. Chair Graves noted that County created the Northeast Napa Study Area and this same approach could provide extra scrutiny of groundwater in that area.

A GSPAC member commented that the GSP should protect groundwater for the future and serve as an example for others to follow. This member noted that the process is a challenge in terms of providing constructive input without data on water resources. Chair Graves noted that the Alternative Plan can be a helpful resource to understand the framework of what's been done in the past.

#### **5. Secretary-Director's Report**

D. Morrison expressed appreciation for GSPAC members' attendance in the midst of the persistent fire threats and recovery and noted that the Phase 1 cleanup of the Hennessey Fire and the damage assessment of the Glass Fire will be completed the week of October 12. He introduced the idea of an ad-hoc subcommittee, or Workgroup, of the GSPAC to begin developing ideas and potential actions that may later be included in the GSP.

The CONCUR Team (S. McCreary, R. Twiss and D. Schechter) explained the Workgroup purpose, charge and approach. The Workgroup responds to a request from the GSPAC to be engaged in developing policy options. This ad hoc group would meet for approximately two months to brainstorm and begin to consider a list of potential tools and policies that will be needed for implementation of the GSP. Examples of potential tools include well monitoring, yield management/control and policies for new wells.

The Workgroup will be asked to develop a comprehensive list and identify a few tools and policies for further analysis including a clear description of how each tool works, scientific support for use of the tool, potential implications for stakeholders, geographic differences, timing for use of the tool, and implementation issues such as cost and enforcement. The

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Workgroup's role is to develop the list and bring back options for consideration by the full GSPAC.

Any GSPAC member can request to be considered for the Workgroup, which will include five to seven members representing the full range of interests of the GSPAC. GSPAC members are asked to express interest in serving on the Workgroup before the November GSPAC meeting. At its meeting on November 12<sup>th</sup>, members will be appointed by the GSPAC. The Workgroup will be asked to work collaboratively to integrate multiple stakeholder perspectives and will be supported by the County and LSCE. This will be an action item on the November 12<sup>th</sup> GSPAC meeting agenda.

A GSPAC member asked how representation on the Workgroup of the different interests of the overall GSPAC will be assured. S. McCreary explained that a cross-interest group is needed and the aim is to compose one at the next GSPAC meeting. As GSPAC members express interest, the Chair and Vice Chair, along with County staff, will be asked to opine on the representativeness of the Workgroup at the November meeting.

Another member asked how the Workgroup relates to the overall charge to of the GSPAC. R. Twiss explained that the Workgroup is not being asked to decide what to do but will instead bring a concrete list of potential ideas and actions back to the full GSPAC. The Workgroup is to develop options; it is not charged with either reaching a consensus nor making a final recommendation to the GSA. This effort will support achievement of the GSPAC's charge to help put together the GSP and recommend steps to implement it.

J. Sharp noted that County staff and technical consultants will support the Workgroup by providing information on possible tools and policies. A GSPAC member asked whether there are limits on the potential policies to be considered, given DWR's requirements for the GSP. J. Sharp explained that the intent of SGMA is to provide local control over groundwater. As such, DWR provides guidance and a path forward while the GSA's role is to develop policies and actions will be taken at the local level to make sure undesirable results do not occur.

### **6A. Presentation on 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft of GSP CEP and Recommendation for Adoption by the GSA**

D. Schechter presented the second draft of the Stakeholder Communications and Engagement Plan (CEP), highlighting the substantial input received from GSPAC members and the RCD and describing how it was incorporated into the second draft. Input was received from GSPAC members at the September meeting and in the subsequent survey. The survey requested suggestions on potential key partners that the County can collaborate with on outreach and engagement, topic areas for education and input, and additional comments on the CEP. Sixteen responses to the CEP survey questions were received. Regarding key partners, survey respondents listed a number of additional

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partners and stakeholders including Latinx organizations, agricultural associations, business and community groups, and environmental and religious organizations.

A key message was the importance of partnering with municipal agencies, as was the need to engage the full spectrum of stakeholders and ensure balanced engagement. Regarding topic areas to address, survey respondents underscored the need to provide background information on SGMA and basic information on groundwater. Other key topics to address include the implications of groundwater sustainability for community members, current groundwater conditions and the connection between groundwater and surface water. Commenters mentioned the need to provide a tiered approach to education and engagement that recognizes varying knowledge and interest levels of stakeholders. Additionally, commenters emphasized the need to ensure all stakeholders and diverse perspectives are considered.

D. Schechter explained that the CEP was modified to:

- integrate topics proposed by commenters
- highlight the importance of accessible information and ways to accommodate diverse stakeholders
- add information about the role of municipal officials in outreach and engagement
- expand the description of opportunities to use social media
- expand the stakeholder list in Appendix B to include agriculture, environmental, business, community, public health, and social service organizations, and news media suggested by GSPAC members
- add figures including the Subbasin map, DAC map, a conceptual graphic and a chart showing the GSP development process.

J. Sharp stressed that the CEP is a required deliverable under the County's grant from DWR and is due in December 2020. In design and execution, it is not a static plan: it will be reported on annually and will be updated at least every five years as part of the update of the GSP.

J. Sharp introduced Frances Knapczyk with the Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD), which will partner with the County on outreach and engagement for the GSP. For the last five years the RCD has helped with groundwater monitoring, including the Do-It-Yourself program, met with stakeholders, and conducted outreach to schoolchildren and adults.

F. Knapczyk provided a brief overview of a promising grant proposal to support CEP implementation that the RCD is submitting under the Department of Conservation's (DOC) sustainable groundwater management program. The proposal is due on October 15<sup>th</sup>. If successful, the grant would fund two half-time positions to work on groundwater sustainability issues related to the GSP for one and a half years. Half of the grant funding would support well monitoring, groundwater-dependent ecosystems assessment and conservation practices for groundwater sustainability. The other half would fund CEP

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implementation activities including education and engagement of a broad range of community members. This includes developing outreach materials, social media posts, videos, website information, and holding meetings. The grant will help the RCD build partnerships to serve different audiences and help bring more people into the process including Latinx and tribal members.

A GSPAC member emphasized the importance of including metrics for implementation. D. Schechter and J. Sharp confirmed that this is the intent. The RCD will provide advice to inform the incorporation of metrics to the CEP, as metrics are a requirement of the DOC grant.

A member of the public noted that the organization she represents, ICARE (the Institute for Conservation Research & Education), which has collected relevant data on the Napa River, should be included as a stakeholder organization.

Another public comment suggested outreach to landowners in the Milliken-Sarco-Tulucay (MST) area that is east of Petra Drive and the Northeast Napa area. The CONCUR facilitation team and J. Sharp agreed that the CEP will be revised to incorporate implementation metrics and to include ICARE on the list of stakeholder organizations in the plan. J. Sharp noted that all stakeholders are welcome to participate in the outreach efforts, including those outside of the Subbasin boundaries.

The GSPAC considered and unanimously adopted a motion to endorse the draft CEP with the additions listed above and to bring the revised CEP document back for final review at the November GSPAC meeting. J. Sharp noted that the CEP will then go to the GSA for approval in early December and then submittal to DWR at the end of December 2020.

### **6B. Presentation on Survey Results**

R. Bryson with LSCE summarized the results of the survey on Section 3 of the GSP under item 6B in the agenda (along with the responses about the CEP). Twenty-three responses were received, up from just 13 for the previous survey on Sections 1 and 2.

R. Bryson expressed appreciation for the survey responses, especially given the competing priority of the fires. The summary presents responses to closed-ended questions, provides a summary paragraph for responses to each survey question and recaps responses to the open-ended questions. Responses identified additional programs and networks to be incorporated into Section 3, clarified descriptions of local and municipal water supplies and refined text describing how programs relate to groundwater management and SGMA implementation.

LSCE will continue review comments, integrate changes in the text of Section 3, and prepared a revised draft prior to the November GSPAC meeting. LSCE will summarize how the comments improved the revised document. S. McCreary noted that GSPAC members'

comments are helping to improve and strengthen the GSP sections and that the survey process and integration of responses will continue for subsequent GSP sections.

A public comment raised the question as to how Section 3 describes the status of the Napa River 303(d) water quality listing. Chair Graves recommended that LSCE check with the Region 2 Regional Water Quality Control Board to derive the appropriate language regarding the 303(d) status of the Napa River.

#### **6C. Presentation on Draft Section 4**

Nick Watterson, Supervising Hydrogeologist with LSCE, introduced draft Section 4, Basin Setting, which provides a foundation for groundwater conditions and sustainability. The basin setting is described using a descriptive, physical Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM) to inform the interpretation of data, future mathematical modeling and support further policy and management recommendations. It describes the physical setting, groundwater inflows and outflows to and from the Subbasin and the interaction between groundwater and surface water. These topics will also be addressed in more detail in subsequent sections.

N. Watterson described the hydrogeology of the Napa Valley, including geologic units in which groundwater is found. He presented elements of the HCM, built on a body of scientific work including data from USGS, previous reports and well logs. Seventeen geologic cross-sections have been created for the area. The HCM depicts how well yields relate to the geologic units and includes groundwater recharge and discharge processes and areas. For example, groundwater can discharge to surface water and streams can recharge groundwater. Groundwater pumping is a prominent discharge from the basin, as well as groundwater outflow from the bottom of the basin and discharges via seeps and springs at the surface.

Surface water-groundwater interconnections are described in the HCM. The County has worked to evaluate surface water-groundwater connections and they vary in space (within reaches of streams) and time (seasonality). Five existing monitoring sites for surface water-groundwater were installed in 2014. Four new sites will be installed to better understand the interconnections. Unreasonable stream depletion, where seepage from groundwater is induced, is an impact the GSP needs to consider. Groundwater-dependent ecosystems (GDEs) and where they occur are also a consideration as they rely on shallow groundwater. GDEs will be characterized and discussed (Section 6), including how to manage them.

The survey includes a question on Section 4, requesting feedback on whether the section provides a general understanding of the basin setting.

#### **6D. Presentation on Draft Section 5**

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R. Bryson introduced draft Section 5, Monitoring Network and Program. The objective of this section is to develop monitoring networks to characterize groundwater and related surface water conditions in the Subbasin. The monitoring networks are intended to indicate progress towards plan objectives and monitor impacts to beneficial users of groundwater, changes in groundwater conditions relative to thresholds and annual changes in water budget components.

This section includes descriptions of nine existing monitoring networks in the Subbasin including sites monitored by the County and other agencies (USGS, RCD, etc.) and data gaps. Networks include land-based sites (wells, surface water sites, survey benchmarks) and remote sensing platforms showing land subsidence and vegetation indicating groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs).

CDFW has noted a need for monitoring GDEs and LSCE is proposing a GDE monitoring approach/network. Section 5 also describes data gaps in the current monitoring network (spatial, temporal, data quality-related). The County plans to address these data gaps including installing eight additional monitoring wells at four sites next year. LSCE and the County are following up with well owners who have volunteered to participate in monitoring in order to fill six additional spatial data gaps in the Subbasin.

LSCE particularly seeks feedback from the GSPAC on ways to simplify the structure of Section 5. LSCE also requests that the GSPAC review the monitoring networks and provide input on any additional data gaps including the nature of the data gaps, beneficial users affected by data gaps and parameters that should be monitored to fill the data gap. LSCE will provide maps of the monitoring network that GSPAC members can mark up. Feedback on monitoring networks and data gaps is welcome as soon as possible through the Spring 2021.

As well, the current survey includes a specific question on Section 5, asking whether it sufficiently characterizes the beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the design of monitoring networks. Survey responses are due by October 19.

One commenter noted that climate change should be addressed by GSP modeling, as SGMA requires that climate change be considered. A member of the public commented that in the northern part of the Subbasin there is a large low-temperature geothermal section from the surface down to 800 feet. This impacts groundwater water quality and should be discussed. LSCE noted that the geothermal area will be discussed in Section 6 of the GSP.

### **6E. Presentation from CDFW<sup>1</sup>**

Jessie Maxfield, Water Rights Coordinator from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), Bay Delta Region, provided a presentation on Fish & Wildlife Groundwater

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<sup>1</sup> In order to respect the time of the guest speaker, this item was presented prior to agenda item 6D.



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Planning Considerations (the link to the presentation is available under item 6E at this link: <http://services.countyofnapa.org/AgendaNet/GranicusMeetingDocuments.aspx?id=6246>). As Trustee for fish and wildlife resources in California, CDFW's goal is for GSPs to avoid adverse impacts to fish and wildlife beneficial users of groundwater. CDFW intends to engage as a stakeholder and represent the groundwater needs of groundwater-dependent ecosystems (GDEs) and fish and wildlife users of groundwater.

J. Maxfield provided the following CDFW-recommended planning considerations for groundwater managers:

- Scientific: GSPs should follow best available science practices to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife. Connectivity between surface water should be evaluated and understood. GDEs and their habitats should be identified, monitoring systems put in place to understand impacts on GDEs, and data quality should be addressed.
- Management considerations: GSPs should detail how management actions consider fish and wildlife uses. GSPs should incorporate adaptive management as resource conditions change. They should prioritize where monitoring and management resources are allocated (e.g., areas of higher habitat value) and design projects and management actions to serve multiple users of groundwater.
- Legal, regulatory and policy considerations: Related laws and regulations that protect species and habitat should inform development and implementation of GSPs.

J. Maxfield provided key questions that groundwater planners should consider regarding GDEs and interconnected surface waters including:

- How will GSPs determine whether depletion of interconnected surface waters is attributable to groundwater extraction?
- How will GSPs determine if GDEs are impacted?
- How will GSPs facilitate monitoring and response actions?

J. Maxfield explained that CDFW will work with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to provide significant input during the GSP development process. Some specific concerns regarding the Napa Subbasin include the importance of the Napa River and its tributaries in supporting steelhead and a variety of plants and animals. More analysis as part of the GSP is needed to understand the impact of groundwater pumping on surface flows. Reduced surface flows can degrade water quality which can impact resources.

CDFW has noted several concerns with other GSPs including the use of groundwater elevation as a proxy for streamflow depletion. In addition, the baseline for GDEs should not be 2015 or another point in time but should instead be based on habitat and streamflow conditions that are appropriate. Finally, many plans have insufficient monitoring.

J. Maxfield noted that there are many CDFW resources to help protect GDEs and habitat. The County should do a local biological review and CDFW can review, interpret and provide guidance. She underscored that groundwater is a critical component of functional

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resources and stated that she looks forward to continuing to be involved in the GSP process. She indicated that she would be available to interact with the Workgroup and the staff team and would help coordinate with other agency staff from CDFW and NMFS.

In the interest of time, GSPAC members and the public were asked to note and email any follow-up questions that would be conveyed to J. Maxfield or addressed in a future meeting.

### **7. Future Agenda Items:**

Topics to be covered in the next meeting's agenda will include:

- Activate the ad hoc Workgroup and select members
- Presentation and recommendation for GSA approval of the third draft of the Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan
- Revisions to draft Section 3 in response to survey comments
- Presentation from the Department of Water Resources on SGMA and climate change considerations
- Survey responses and feedback on draft Sections 4 and 5
- Table of Contents for draft Section 6<sup>2</sup>

J. Sharp presented a table of pending issues/potential topics for future meetings. This table will help to track the issues and note their status. The table is included as Attachment A to this meeting summary.

### **8. Review of Meeting – Next Steps**

Based on the Team deliberations, the following next steps were identified:

#### **Committee Members:**

- Respond to the survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QL2N57V>) on Draft Sections 4 and 5 by Monday, October 19 (survey was emailed to GSPAC members on October 6).
- Review draft meeting summary and provide suggested edits by 2 pm on Friday, October 23 (meeting minutes were emailed on October 16).
- Review the Workgroup charge and, if interested in serving, email J. Sharp in advance of the November 12<sup>th</sup> GSPAC meeting OR express interest at the November 12<sup>th</sup> GSPAC meeting itself (Workgroup charge was emailed on November 2).
- Email questions regarding J. Maxfield's presentation to J. Sharp by November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> During the October meeting, it was inadvertently forecasted that LSCE would present draft Section 6 in November. Due to the complexity of Section 6 and the other items already planned for the November meeting, draft Section 6 will be presented in December.

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**Facilitation Team/Conveners:**

- County to email Workgroup charge to GSPAC members by November 2
- LSCE to clarify the Napa River 303(d) status with the RWQCB
- County staff to follow up with Patricia Demery for additional well monitoring in the area between Dry Creek Road and Redwood Road
- In the updated CEP, CONCUR to include ICARE and incorporate metrics

Questions regarding this meeting summary should be directed to S. McCreary (scott@concurinc.net) or Jeff Sharp (jeff.sharp@countyofnapa.org).

**ATTACHMENT A**

**GSPAC Pending Issues/Future Agenda Items and Status**

**Draft List as of October 8, 2020**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Feedback on outreach to Latinx community	10/8 meeting and ongoing	Part of CEP implementation and partnership with RCD
Drought Contingency Plan	Need to schedule	
Municipal Service Report/State Water Project Contractual Obligations for water (North Bay Aqueduct Presentation), Water Availability Analysis Policy presentation	Not scheduled at this time	Could be a white paper for Nov. or Dec. mtg., Also covered in future Sec. 7 (land use, water supplies) and Sec. 11 (policies, mgmt. actions)
Groundwater law, groundwater-surface water connection, other GSPs, etc.	Need to schedule	Considering speakers and need to make contact
Baseline for GDEs	Beginning 10/8 mtg	
Upper watershed connection to groundwater	Beginning 10/8 mtg	Also covered in future Sec. 8 (model, water budget inputs)
Subcommittee/workgroup creation on policies and management actions	In process-11/12 mtg appointment	Supports future Sec. 11 (goals, policies, mgmt. actions)
GDE presentation by CDFW	10/8 meeting	Also covered in future Sec. 6
Climate change presentation by DWR	11/12 meeting	DWR confirmed. Also covered in future Sec. 8.