MEETING MINUTES

Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin
February 25, 2021

A regular meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Eastern Management Area (EMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, 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.

EMA GSA Committee Members Present: Meighan Dietenhofer (Acting as Alternate), Mark Infanti, Brad Joos, Brett Marymee

Alternate GSA Committee Member Present: Cynthia Allen

Member Agency Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Paeter Garcia, Amber Thompson, Matt van der Linden, Kevin Walsh, Matt Young

Others Present: Steve Anderson, Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions), Bryan Bondy, Mike Burchardi, Russell Chamberlin, Doug Circle, Elizabeth Farnum, Tim Gorham, Mary Heyden, Gay Infanti, Stewart Johnston, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Mike Matthews, Jim McCord (IRP Water), Kevin Merrill, Tim Nicely (GSI Water Solutions), Anita Regmi (DWR), Steve Slack (CDFW), Margot Smit, and four additional members of the public whose names were not registered.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

GSA Committee Member Brett Marymee called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. Three GSA Committee Members and one Acting Alternate were present. A quorum was met.

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

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone/video 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 achieving certain milestones in developing the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). The GSPs are due in January 2022. Thus far,

the EMA GSA Committee has prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, a Data Management Plan, and a Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model including Groundwater Conditions. All documents are accessible on SantaYnezWater.org.

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

No additions or deletions were made.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Review and Consider Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the GSA Committee meetings on November 19, 2020; December 10, 2020; and January 21, 2021 were presented for GSA Committee approval.

GSA Committee Member Brad Joos made a MOTION to approve the minutes of November 19, 2020; December 10, 2020; and January 21, 2021 as presented. GSA Acting Alternate Committee Member Meighan Dietenhofer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

VI. Receive EMA GSA financial update and approve EMA Warrant Lists

The GSA Committee reviewed the financial reports of FY 2020-21 Periods 4 through 6 (through December 31, 2020) and the warrant lists for October, November, and December 2020. Mr. Buelow noted that expenses were fully covered by the DWR Prop 1 Grant reimbursements received on behalf of the EMA GSA.

GSA Committee Member Brad Joos made a MOTION to approve the financial reports and the Warrant List for October, November, and December 2020 as presented (No. 1018-1022) totaling $12,098.35. GSA Committee Member Mark Infanti seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

VII. Receive Report from the EMA Citizens Advisory Group on the Draft EMA HCM

Tim Gorham reviewed the February 25, 2021 Memorandum summarizing EMA Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) meeting held on February 17, 2021 regarding the EMA Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model. Memo attached.

Discussion followed.

- Alternate Committee Member Meighan Dietenhofer asked what happens with data gaps and who will pay for extra studies. Mr. Buelow stated the GSA intends to pursue only "must have" studies for the SGMA GSP not "would like" studies.
- Committee Member Brad Joos pointed out that surface water and groundwater are continuously mixed-up by the public and stated that the GSA should really explain the differences between surface water and groundwater in this SGMA process. All agreed.

- Committee Member Brett Marymee noted that the CAG commented on oil/gas fields and asked what other entity should be tracking water quality there. Mr. Buelow explained that the SGMA statute does not require the GSA to remediate what has already happened but states the GSP implementation cannot make water quality worse and that County of Santa Barbara tracks oil field operations. Mr. Barry added that the USGS along with State and Federal agencies are conducting a study called California Oil and Gas Groundwater (COGG) Program to investigate impacts to groundwater in the vicinity of oil fields throughout the state.

VIII. Receive Presentation from GSI on the Draft Water Budget and Sustainable Management Criteria

Ms. Amber Thompson (SYRWCD) presented a live demonstration on how to provide Public Comments to open GSP documents via SantaYnezWater.org. Discussion followed.

Mr. Tim Nicely and Mr. Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions) presented the Draft Water Budget for the EMA and a look toward developing Sustainable Management Criteria.

Public comment, GSA Committee Member discussion, and follow-up from the consultants and staff from the GSA member agencies occurred during and after the presentation.

- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked why 1982 was determined as the starting point for historical data rather than going back further in time. Mr. Nicely stated that 1982 was chosen in coordination with CMA and WMA, the period represents long-term average of hydrology in this area, is deemed a long enough period and is a period with good data. He confirmed that other basins are also using similar time periods thus it can be considered a norm for GSPs.
- Committee Member Brad Joos asked who provided the historical commercial, domestic, and agriculture pumping amounts and if amounts were metered amounts or estimations. He stated he would prefer to see accurate numbers from users not use numbers provided by the state. Mr. Nicely confirmed the data came from a variety of sources. For areas outside of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) boundary, land use surveys were used (compiled by DWR). For areas within the SYRWCD boundary, data was provided from self-reported groundwater production statements. He also confirmed that irrigation efficiency is accounted for in the numbers. Mr. Buelow added that most SYRWCD data comes from metered wells, calculated by electric usage or estimated with given factors plus all municipalities, river diverters and many producers within SYRWCD boundary use meters.
- Mrs. Gay Infanti asked how the variability in the imported water allocations are addressed. Mr. Nicely confirmed actual delivery amounts were used in the historical data for the Draft Water Budget and estimates will be used for the projected data in the Draft Water Budget.
- Mrs. Infanti asked if the Cachuma Project has an impact on the EMA sub-basin. Mr. Nicely said the Draft Water Budget shows no Cachuma Project water since 1998 but shows state water. Cachuma Project water is shown as an average for the period.

- Ms. Anita Regmi (DWR) commented and asked the following:
    - Ms. Regmi stated that annual report submissions are due to DWR on April 1st every year after the GSP adoption. Thus, a GSP adopted in December 2021 will have the first report due on April 1, 2022.
    - Ms. Regmi advised that well information and well data is expected to be submitted to DWR by January 2022.
    - Ms. Regmi asked for clarification on surface water vs. groundwater within the SYRWCD and water from wells in the river alluvium categorized as surface water. Mr. Buelow explained the State considers these wells as diverting river flow. Mr. Nicely added the river flow is already managed as surface water by the State Water Resources Control Board and does not fall under SGMA regulations even though water production in that area is reported to SYRWCD. Mr. Barry read the definition of groundwater from Water Code, Division 6, Section 10721, (g): "Groundwater" means water beneath the surface of the earth within the zone below the water table in which the soil is completely saturated with water but does not include water that flows in known and definite channels unless included pursuant to Section 10722.5". Since the Santa Ynez River flows in known and definite channels, it is defined as surface water and is regulated as surface water.
    - Ms. Regmi also asked for clarification on the term Santa Ynez River alluvium. Mr. Buelow directed her to the Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model as it provides much of the information she requested.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked how upland groundwater pumping was determined. Mr. Nicely stated the data came from a variety of sources. For areas outside of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) boundary, land use surveys were used (compiled by DWR). For areas within the SYRWCD boundary, data was provided from self-reported groundwater production statements.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy requested clarification on Draft Groundwater Conditions Tech Memo hydrographs about the Paso Robles formation during late 1990s to early 2000 where the water levels are considerably higher than 1982 level. He asked why the water levels in storage chart is not reflective of that difference. Mr. Barry explained the change in storage levels since 1991 was coming back up and hydrographs show it took a long time to return to the 1982 water in storage levels. He clarified that the numbers used reflect an overall average change for all wells in the whole EMA.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee suggested that future water budget assumptions and percentage rates be documented in the presentation and supporting tech memorandum.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked about the basis for the large increase in pumping assumed in the future water budgets, particularly for agriculture and asked what method or assumption was used for projecting future land use. Committee Member Brett Marymee stated he has same concern about large increases in pumping with the model showing the magnitude of increased outflow in 2042 and again in 2072 but does not address any mitigation.

- Mr. Nicely advised that total acreage from land use category was projected forward. Discussion continued regarding magnitude of outflow.
- Mr. Barry added a list of required assumptions was followed. He noted the plan is required to project the future as if nothing changed with no plan in place and that mitigation will be addressed later in the SGMA GSP process.
- Mr. Barry proposed that consultants revisit the land use surveys, acreages, water usage to confirm future projections.
- Mr. van der Linden stated that over time water conservation measures have reduced municipal and agriculture demand thus levels should not trend upwards as much as imagined.

- Mr. Doug Circle shared that in the early 2000s large vineyard planting occurred in the area, but this is not a continuing trend and suggested increases in labor rates may make agriculture not be as viable as is estimated in the graphs.
- Mr. Steve Slack asked if the model accounted for an explosion of cannabis cultivation in area as there is a significant rise in permit requests in Santa Barbara County.
- Mr. Buelow reiterated that the Draft Water Budget presented at this meeting is only a preview of the technical section of the GSP that is pending and will be released in the next few weeks to months for public review and comment, the first of three opportunities for written comments to be addressed to the document.

IX. Receive Update on Aerial Electro-Magnetic Survey of EMA

Mr. Bill Buelow provided an update on the Aerial Electro-Magnetic Survey of the EMA conducted by SkyTEM. He reported that flights were successful, the survey has been completed and the raw data has been delivered to Ramboll for processing and interpretation. Ramboll will work with the Stetson team to integrate the final data into the existing Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model. No Discussion followed.

X. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments

There were no Committee Member requests or comments.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business, GSA Committee Member Marymee adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Brett Marymee, Chairman

William J. Buelow, Secretary

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILTY AGENCY FOR THE EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA (EMA)
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN

OCTOBER 2020 WARRANT LIST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL

NUMBER	DATE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION		AMOUNT
		NONE		**$**	**-**
			MONTH TOTAL	**$**	**-**

NOVEMBER 2020 WARRANT LIST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL

NUMBER	DATE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION		AMOUNT
1018	11/23/220	Bartlett, Pringle & Wolf	Consulting - Grant Financial	$	22.50
1019	11/23/20	Stetson Engineers	August & September 2020 Engineering Service (Basin Coordination)	$	7,739.85
1020	11/23/20	Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District	Legal Counsel - EMA GSP Preparation Agreement	$	3,274.50
1021	11/23/20	Valley Bookkeeping	FY 2019-20 4th Quarter Bookkeeping (July, August, September 2020)	$	150.00
			MONTH TOTAL	**$**	**11,186.85**

DECEMBER 2020 WARRANT LIST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL

NUMBER	DATE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION		AMOUNT
1022	12/17/20	Stetson Engineers	October 2020 Engineering Service (Basin Coordination)	$	911.50
			MONTH TOTAL	**$**	**911.50**

TOTAL THIS QUARTER: $ 12,098.35

EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA
CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP
MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 25, 2021

TO: EMA GSA Committee

FROM: EMA Citizen Advisory Group

SUBJECT: Draft Communication and Engagement Plan for the EMA

Eastern Management Area (EMA) Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) Members

Gay Infanti, Sam Cohen, Mary Heyden, Elizabeth Farnum, CJ Jackson, Tim Gorham, Kevin Merrill

Introduction

The EMA GSA Committee requested staff for the GSA agencies to coordinate meetings of the EMA CAG. Through a coordinated effort, the CAG held a meeting on February 17, 2021 via teleconference due to COVID-19 restrictions. The EMA CAG reviewed the Draft Hydrologic Conceptual Model (HCM) for the EMA prepared by the consultant GSI.

Below is a summary of the CAG's comments and recommendations regarding the Draft HCM.

CAG Comments to the Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model for the EMA:

- Several members of the CAG discussed that groundwater in the EMA is already sustainable and emphasized not trying to fix what is working now. Members of the CAG commented that the GSA should use data that is currently available and not to spend unnecessary money on acquiring additional data.

- Members of the CAG recognized that the GSP is a "living document" and it would be updated during the SGMA process.

- There was discussion about possible costs to be incurred by the stakeholders after the GSA is submitted and the need to minimize future expenses such as river flow meters and additional monitoring wells that might not be necessary.

- Several members of the CAG asked who will be responsible for paying to resolve any data gaps that are identified in the GSP.
- The CAG asked whether Lake Cachuma is within the EMA boundary.
    - Staff indicated that Lake Cachuma is not within the EMA.

- Members of the CAG emphasized the need to make the Draft HCM as public as possible. CAG members asked about the possibility of putting notices about the GSP in local newspapers to make sure that all stakeholders are aware of the SGMA process.
    - Staff indicated that the two SGMA Newsletters have been distributed throughout the Basin in various ways, such as including them in water utility bills. Staff noted there has been a substantial increase in visits to the SGMA Website.

- Members of the CAG suggested that potential hydrocarbon contaminates from nearby oil and gas fields should be included in the water quality assessment.

- Members of the CAG asked about the results of the SkyTEM study and its contribution to the HCM.
    - Staff indicated that the results are forthcoming.

Various additional comments were provided from members of the public that were in attendance, including a consultant representing the Santa Ynez Water Group. Below are several examples of the comments provided.

- Questions were asked about expenses to fill data gaps and it was stated that a data gap is defined as "data necessary to determine groundwater sustainability." A recommendation was made that costs should not be incurred to gather unnecessary data.

- A suggestion was made to group the Careaga aquifer with the Paso Robles aquifer, and to group the Tertiary Alluvium aquifer with Older Alluvium aquifer, as that would simplify SGMA monitoring and reporting, which would reduce future costs.

- There was also discussion regarding the Tributary Alluvium in the Santa Ynez Uplands and a suggestion was made that it should not be included as a "principal aquifer" under SGMA.
    - The Consultants clarified that in the Santa Ynez Uplands, water flowing in tributaries is surface water but water in the underlying Tertiary alluvium is groundwater. Furthermore, the underflow of the Santa Ynez River and the Santa Ynez River Alluvium is considered surface water regulated by the California State Water Resources Control Board.