

Colusa County Groundwater Commission

February 10, 2021

Public Forum: Colusa Groundwater Authority SGMA update

Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)

The major task of the Colusa Groundwater Authority (CGA) continues to be development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) in the Colusa and Butte Subbasins. GSPs are due January 31, 2022 in the local groundwater basins. (Plans in the critically overdrafted basins were due January 31, 2020). Work in the Colusa Subbasin is the main focus for the CGA. The Colusa Groundwater Authority is working with the Glenn Groundwater Authority to develop a single GSP for the Colusa Subbasin. The CGA also manages a very small portion of the Butte Subbasin and they are working with ten other GSAs in the Butte Subbasin to complete a single GSP.

Meetings

There are A LOT of meetings happening now which will continue through the end of the year. The Colusa Groundwater Authority/Glenn Groundwater Authority **Joint Technical Advisory Committee** meets monthly on the second Friday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

The **Colusa Groundwater Authority Board** meetings monthly on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

Meetings are currently being held remotely via Zoom, due to COVID-19. Public participation is critical to successful GSP development, and this has been challenging since the CGA has been limited to remote meetings since last March. The CGA Board has sent a letter to Governor Newsom requesting an extension to the GSP deadline due to these limitations on public outreach. Other local GSAs have sent, or are considering, similar letters.

All meeting are open to the public, and meeting materials can be found on the CGA website:

<https://colusagroundwater.org/meetings/agendas-and-minutes-2021>

Sustainable Management Criteria

The Sustainability Goal and Undesirable Results statements have been adopted for the Colusa Subbasin. These components of the GSP are foundational to Plan development and have been adopted by the GSA Boards as drafts, recognizing that they will not be finalized until the full GSP is adopted and submitted to DWR.

Evaluation of potential minimum thresholds (MTs), measurable objectives (MOs), and other quantitative criteria continues and this has been an ongoing topic at the Joint TAC meetings. MTs and MOs will be set at each monitoring site. These criteria will address the Sustainability Indicators (groundwater levels, groundwater storage, groundwater quality,

land subsidence, and groundwater/surface water interaction) and will define significant and unreasonable conditions.

Development of draft MTs and MOs is anticipated in early 2021 (soon).

Well Monitoring Pilot Program

This program will enlist willing landowners to voluntarily monitor well production and groundwater levels and report those numbers to the GSAs in the Colusa Subbasin, in both Colusa and Glenn Counties. A public workshop to roll out this program was held on January 25. The workshop provided a description of the program, including an overview, description of funding, program objectives, program activities and timeline, eligibility criteria and selection process, and next steps.

An application to participate in the program is currently available and the deadline to submit applications is February 26. Once received, projects will be screened and a formal agreement between the GSAs and selected participants will be required. There is a three-year commitment required to participate in the program. More information about the program, and the program application can be found on the CGA website:

<https://colusagroundwater.org>

Projects and Management Actions (PMAs)

The GSP will include a list of applicable projects and management actions. A database to house the list of potential PMAs has been developed and criteria to complete initial screening of potential PMAs for inclusion in the GSP is being developed. Additionally, a form to gather stakeholder input and ideas regarding potential PMAs was finalized and distributed through interested parties lists and social media. Formats for submitting PMA ideas include MS Word, Adobe pdf, and a Google web form. As PMAs ideas are received, they will be incorporated into the database to support further evaluation. Stakeholders interested in submitting project ideas can do so at the following:

- Download forms on the CGA website: <https://colusagroundwater.org>
- For those with a Gmail account, you can fill the form out here: <https://forms.gle/GSsFZ2MkUgKkjdqU9>

Management Areas

A lot of discussion has been taking place regarding Management Areas. GSAs can designate certain Management Areas in the GSP if they will help with managing the basin sustainably. There are still many questions about whether or not Management Areas will be helpful in the Colusa County portion of the Colusa Subbasin. The Colusa Groundwater Authority will hold a Special Meeting on **February 17 at 1:00 p.m.** that will include a focused discussion on Management Areas.

Public Outreach

Two public workshops were held on December 9 and 10 to provide information to the public about GSP development. Topics for the public workshops included (1) an overview of SGMA, the GSP development process and timeline; (2) current understanding of the hydrogeology and groundwater conditions of the subbasin; (3) draft historical, current, and projected water budgets for the subbasin; (4) Sustainable Management Criteria, including the Sustainability Goal, potential Undesirable Results, Minimum Thresholds, and Measurable Objectives; (5) Projects and Management Actions that could be considered to maintain or achieve sustainable conditions moving forward; and (6) a brief overview of the well monitoring pilot program.

Additionally, an official logo and branding were developed for the Colusa Subbasin for use in future outreach materials and as part of social media:



The Colusa Subbasin has new facebook and Twitter pages. Recordings of workshops are available on the facebook page.

- Colusa Subbasin SGMA Facebook Page: <https://facebook.com/ColusaSubbasin>
- Colusa Subbasin SGMA Twitter Page: <https://twitter.com/ColusaSubbasin>

Interbasin Coordination

GSA Staff and Consultants in the groundwater basins in Colusa, Butte, Glenn, Tehama, Sutter and Yolo have been meeting and coordinating to ensure that Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) development in these neighboring basins is in alignment, especially related to the technical aspects of the Plans such as representation of interbasin flows and stream-aquifer interaction. Early indications are that the models are generally consistent in the direction of flow between subbasins, though additional coordination is underway to ensure that the preliminary comparisons are based on consistent methodologies. It is anticipated that additional details will be made available as the water budget information in each basin is developed. Currently, the status of modeling and associated water budget information within each basin varies, and it is anticipated that the process to coordinate with neighboring basins will evolve as more definitive information becomes available to support comparison and potential refinements to ensure consistency

in estimates of subsurface interbasin flows and stream-aquifer interaction within the region.

The next planned meeting of this group is tentatively scheduled for March 2, at which point it is anticipated that additional information from neighboring subbasins will be available.

Meeting summaries, maps of participating basins, and a spreadsheet comparing the different models being used can be found on the Butte County Water and Resource Conservation website here: [Inter-basin Coordination \(buttecounty.net\)](http://buttecounty.net/inter-basin-coordination)