

SECTION 6 GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Note to the Reader: This is a working draft of Section 6. It is typically written after Section 1-5 are completed. It is provided now to give the TAC and Panel information on what is entailed in implementing the GMP. The Panel has yet to decide on a number of things in GMP Implementation, and therefore, this section will change after Panel discussions on Implementation. This section will be revisited as appropriate during or near completion of Section 5.

This section presents the approach, schedule, approximate cost and funding information for meeting the Plan BMOs including implementing planned actions identified in Section 5. The actions formulated for each management component are the foundation for meeting the Plan BMOs and Goal (Figure 6-1). Most of the planned management actions are currently unfunded, with the exception of the majority of core management components, the monitoring & modeling program and stakeholder involvement. Strategies for obtaining funding and prioritizing actions are discussed in Section 6.2.



Figure 6-1 Plan Management Components and Actions for Meeting Goals and Objectives.

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6.1 STRUCTURE FOR SANTA ROSA PLAIN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Note to Reader: The organization chart and components included in this section are preliminary and based only on very limited discussions of the Panel, and will be revised upon development of Section 4 Plan Components. The descriptions of the Lead Agency, Panel and TAC roles are taken from the existing documents that the Panel has developed and agreed upon.

Implementation of the Plan is structured in order to encourage an open, collaborative and cooperative process for conducting groundwater management activities, and optimizing coordination of the many actions envisioned by the Panel in the coming years. Plan studies, projects, and programs will be conducted under a lead agency (Agency), with advice and guidance from an advisory group and technical advisory committee. The Panel has expressed a strong desire to structure the Plan implementation to encourage and provide coordination of all directly and indirectly related actions listed in Figure 5.2, which summarizes the organizational structure for executing the seven Plan components.

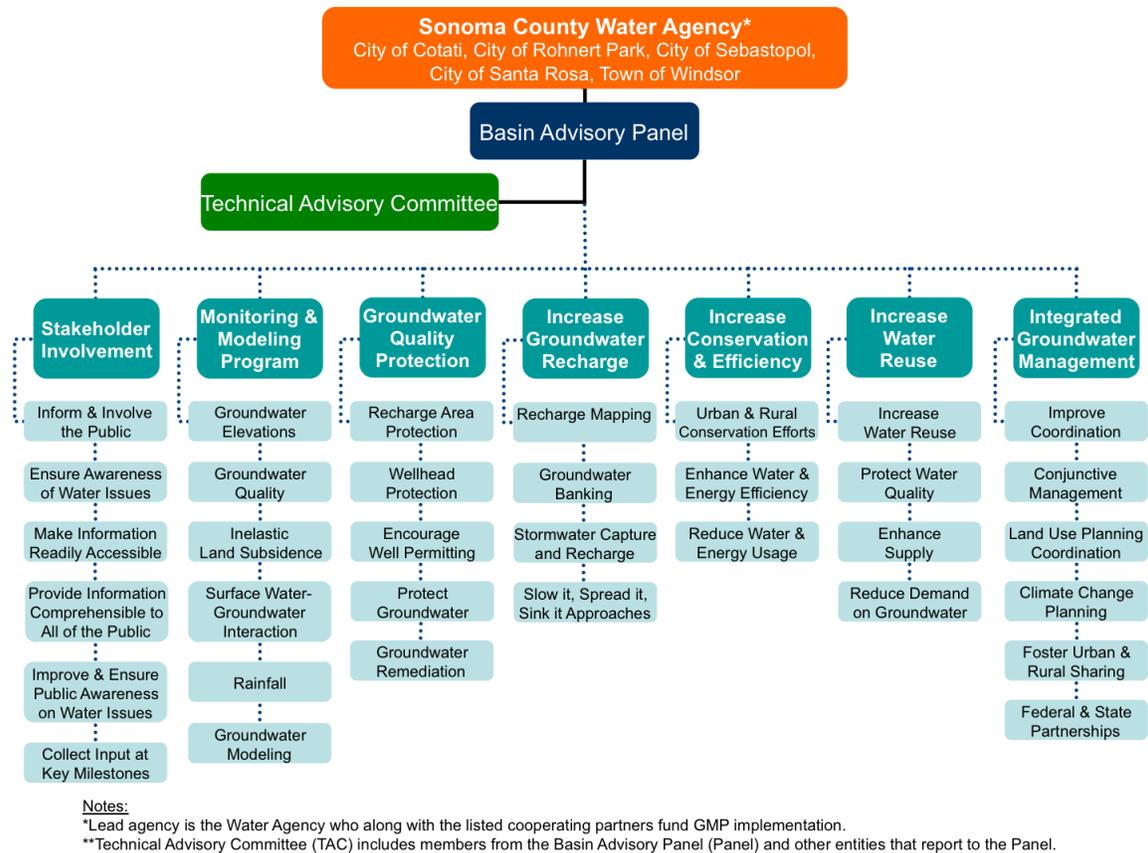


Figure 6-2 Groundwater Management Plan Implementation Organization Chart.

Lead Agency

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The Sonoma County Water Agency, as the Lead Agency, has ultimate responsibility for Groundwater Management Plan implementation and funding, including studies, projects, and programs it directly or indirectly funds. The Lead Agency role is to:

- Adopt and implement the Groundwater Management Plan consistent with Panel input and consensus decision-making
- Participate in the Panel
- Sponsor the Panel by providing project support, coordination, and facilitation as needed
- Coordinate and garner funding to implement the Groundwater Management Plan
- Be accountable and responsible to implement the Groundwater Management Plan in accordance with the Water Code and to remain eligible for state funding
- Provide in-kind staff support via a project manager to support Plan implementation
- Contract with technical consultants as necessary to support implementation of the Plan
- Coordinate, as appropriate, with the cooperating funders to ensure continued support and involvement in implementing the Groundwater Management Plan
- Develop and adopt proposed rules or regulations where necessary to achieve the objectives of the Groundwater Management Plan as provided by AB 3030 only in collaboration with and with the concurrence of the Panel
- Explore options for funding groundwater management activities. In exercising this role, the Water Agency would propose fees and assessments only if the Panel recommended and approved
- Amend the Groundwater Management Plan with the concurrence and recommendation of the Panel

Basin Advisory Panel Role

The Basin Advisory Panel (Panel) develops the groundwater management plan and guides its implementation and will remain in existence as long as the plan is being implemented. The Panel discusses, provides input, and develops consensus recommendations for all activities that move forward to implement the plan. The Panel will be responsible for recommending amendments to the Groundwater Management Plan for approval by the Water Agency's governing board.

The Panel has a collaborative governance structure: the lead agency and other agencies with jurisdiction within the Santa Rosa Plain will join with community organizations, business associations, and individuals to determine the best way to implement the Groundwater Management Plan. All activities associated with implementing the Plan will be subject to Panel approval consistent with its charter.

Panel meetings will be open to the public. The Panel's agenda will be posted prior to meetings and actions will be recorded in the meeting summary, including Panel member attendance. Members will be responsible to attend in person or request

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that an alternate or Panel member represent his or her viewpoint in decision-making.

Basin Advisory Panel (Panel) Composition

Upon approval of the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Management Plan, the Panel will continue to provide guidance for its implementation and any amendment of the Plan. The Panel will continue to make decisions through the collaborative approach of the Plan with representatives from each of the identified stakeholder or interest groups. Each interest group will select their representative(s) for the Panel who must be able to commit to the working agreements in the Panel Charter regarding process and defined consensus decision-making. The Panel can modify its charter using its decision-making protocols.

Panel members must either live or have jurisdiction in the Santa Rosa Plain watershed. Panel members will typically serve 2-year terms. Members could serve multiple terms. The Panel will formally revisit its membership each fall when planning its work plan for the following year. An effort will be made to avoid having all new members in any one year.

The exact continuing composition for implementation will be similar to the Panel during plan development. The Panel will identify the panel composition by interest group, continuing to seek a wide diversity of representation as part of plan development and prior to plan adoption. The Panel will be composed of representatives of the Lead Agency, General Public, Agricultural Groundwater Users, Business & Developers, Residential Groundwater Users, Government (Tribal, County and City), Environmental Organizations, Natural Resources Management Organizations, Water Suppliers, and Groundwater Technical Expertise.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Role

The Panel will designate an ad-hoc Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to work on specifics of implementation of the Plan goals and objectives; advise the Panel on technical matters; and to develop recommendations on general Plan implementation for the Panel’s consideration. TAC participation is not limited to Panel members; others with groundwater or technical expertise can also participate. The TAC will assist the Panel on the following activities:

- Working with the technical consultant on Plan implementation,
- Reviewing technical data and analyses and/or recommending data analyses,
- Determining if data is adequate to address the basin management objectives, and
- Reviewing annual reports on Plan implementation.

6.2 IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIZATION AND FUNDING

Planned actions identified in Section 4 are summarized with their relative cost in Appendix F (**to be developed**). Planned actions identified as “currently funded” have

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funding currently earmarked or set-aside for the project, or are being accomplished by ongoing programs of one of the implementing agencies.

Review of Appendix F shows that except for a few projects, most of the planned actions for the core components, the Stakeholder Involvement and Monitoring & Modeling Program, are currently funded and ready to proceed. Planned actions are identified as “ready to proceed” if there is sufficient information to proceed. “Ready to Proceed” actions are included in the first three years, although funding may not be available. Part of the first years’ efforts will be to prioritize and to begin to identify funding for currently unfunded projects.

The plan components contain many more planned actions that are not funded and will require studies, more data, feasibility analysis and pre-design before funding can be obtained. Implementation of many of these unfunded actions are preliminarily planned for a number of years in the future.

Plan actions proposed for implementation over the three years following adoption of the Plan, as well as an approximation of the relative cost of each action are provided in Table 6-1 (to be developed). The preliminary implementation schedule is based on the priorities that the PANEL identified during preparation of the Plan. The primary areas identified by the PANEL as most important include:

TO BE DEVELOPED WITH PANEL INPUT – INCLUDED ONLY AS EXAMPLES

Figure 6-3 Groundwater Quality Protection Studies, Actions, and Projects.

Figure 6-4 Groundwater Recharge Studies, Actions, and Projects.

Figure 6-5 Conservation & Efficiency Studies, Actions, and Projects.

Figure 6-6 Water Reuse Studies, Actions, and Projects.

Figure 6-7 Integrated Groundwater Management Studies, Actions, and Projects.

Studies and pilot projects to better understand and define groundwater quality variations, recharge and discharge, to increase conservation & efficiency and reduce demand, and to expand recycled water supply are included in the first ___ years of Plan implementation. Actions under Integrated Management that improve coordination of water resources and land use planning, climate change planning and fostering rural and urban sharing of information and building on state and federal agency partnerships are either already in progress or planned for early program implementation. The Panel also identified the monitoring program (Figure 5-8), data management, and keeping current the groundwater flow model, a critical tool for groundwater basin management, as key priorities and recommended that these elements should be designed to carry out the other primary actions.

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Figure 6-8 Monitoring Program Studies, Actions, and Projects.

First Year of Plan Implementation

Stakeholder Involvement and the Monitoring and Modeling Program form the core components and foundation for the Plan, and the basis for decision-making in the Plan Area. Stakeholder involvement and the Monitoring Program are required Plan components under the Water Code to be eligible for state funding for groundwater projects. These core components are funded by the Water Agency, through cooperative partnerships, and existing or new funding sources. The preliminary implementation schedule for the three years following Plan adoption (Table 5-1 to be developed) therefore focuses on creating the forums and mechanisms for involving basin stakeholders and gathering additional data about the groundwater conditions through monitoring, studies, and the establishment of a comprehensive monitoring program.

The first year of Plan implementation includes ...TO BE DEVELOPED These studies and projects will need to be further prioritized and additional funds will be sought – including applying for grants, or utilizing cooperative partnerships – in order to implement these studies.

At the start of Plan implementation, the Water Agency and the Panel will further prioritize, develop, and finalize a schedule for studies, projects, outreach, coordination, and partnerships. Implementation of these actions are anticipated to be funded from a variety of sources including the Water Agency, funding and/or in-kind services by member agencies, state or federal grant programs, and partnerships at the local, state, and federal level.

6.3 IMPLEMENTATION REPORTING

Note to Reader: This is an example of Implementation Reporting and will need to be decided by the Panel.

The Water Agency will report on implementation progress periodically to summarize groundwater conditions in the Plan Area and accomplishments of the Groundwater Management Program. These reports will include the following information:

- Activities and progress made in Plan implementation
- Groundwater conditions and monitoring results and trends of groundwater levels and quality
- Information on the improved Plan Area characterization through continued data collection and analysis
- A discussion, supported by monitoring results, of whether management actions are meeting BMOs

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- Any plan component changes, including modification of BMOs during the period covered by the report
- An outline of future Plan Area management actions

Implementation reports will be developed on an annual basis initially, and will change to a five-year basis after 3 years with brief annual data and progress summaries. The Water Agency will provide copies of the reports to the implementing agencies, the Panel and TAC, and make these reports available on the website for stakeholder access.

6.4 FUTURE REVIEW OF PLAN

The Plan is a living document that will continually evolve as more information about the Plan Area becomes available. Additional actions may be identified as the Panel continues to evaluate all of the actions and objectives to determine how well they are meeting the overall goal of the Plan. The Panel will summarize any resulting updates to the plan in the annual implementation report, which will be provided to the Water Agency Board for review and approval.

Review of the Plan will occur at a minimum every five years to ensure its continued relevance as a tool to manage, protect, and enhance groundwater resources in the Plan Area for future generations. Plan reviews will be documented in the implementation reports.