

**Center for Collaborative Policy**  
California State University,  
Sacramento  
1303 J Street, Suite 250,  
Sacramento, CA

**Gina Bartlett, Mediator**  
*Phone:* 415-255-6805  
*E-mail:* gbartlett@pacbell.net

# **SONOMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER ISSUES ASSESSMENT**

*Prepared for the Sonoma County Water Agency  
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# Sonoma Valley Groundwater Issues Assessment

## GENERAL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) directed its staff to develop a work plan for a groundwater management program in the Sonoma Valley. As a first step, SCWA enlisted the Center for Collaborative Policy, Sacramento State University, (CCP) to conduct an impartial assessment of issues and concerns related to water supply and groundwater management and to learn if and how stakeholders might want to address these issues. CCP staff conducted 16 interviews involving 30 people representing a range of water-related interests and viewpoints on groundwater management. Based on the results of these interviews, CCP recommends that the Sonoma County Water Agency move forward with efforts to develop a groundwater management work plan by forming a Basin Advisory Panel to represent stakeholder interests and partner with SCWA to develop a groundwater management plan.

## INTRODUCTION

The Center for Collaborative Policy provides impartial mediation services as part of its mission to build capacity of public agencies, stakeholder groups and the public to use collaborative processes to improve policy outcomes. One helpful tool is the situation assessment, in which an independent mediator meets with interested stakeholders to identify parties and issues, analyze potential areas of conflict and agreement, and make recommendations on how to proceed.

CCP met with SCWA staff to identify an initial list of individuals to interview and then relied on interviewees for additional referrals to ensure a broad range of perspectives was presented. The mediator conducted interviews with individuals and small groups when appropriate. Two meetings were conducted with grape growers from the region.

Sample interview questions are attached in the appendix. Questions focused on concerns related to water supply, stakeholder involvement, and information needs. CCP staff received permission to share interviewee comments without attribution in this report. Everyone interviewed will receive a copy of this report. Every effort has been made to accurately represent the diversity of opinions, identify areas for substantive negotiation, and recommend steps for moving forward with groundwater management in the Sonoma Valley.

## INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Almost everyone interviewed agrees that groundwater shortages are on the rise. The primary question and dilemma is what to do about it. Since livelihoods and land values are often tied to water, knowing how much or little is available and used is sensitive information. The Sonoma Valley is largely rural, with people working the land and connected to the area for generations. Therefore, deciding who is appropriate to manage groundwater, something that, most perceive, has managed itself, is not a simple matter. While views differ about the information needed to make water management decisions, almost everyone agrees that water supply must be diversified and that the public needs to understand this.

### **Water Supply**

***Stakeholders from many perspectives suggest it is time for residents of Sonoma Valley and Sonoma County to change their attitudes about water.*** Many of those interviewed expressed the view that Sonoma residents must learn to “live” within the constraints the

Mediterranean climate of the Sonoma Valley naturally imposes. Lawns were mentioned repeatedly as out-of-sync with the climate and placing huge burdens on water supply. Several interviewees suggested lawns should be limited or eliminated for new housing. One interviewee reported that 50% of water in the Valley of the Moon Water District is used to irrigate lawns and that the district would not have water shortages for 20 years if lawn irrigation ended. Interviewees suggest that drains, holding cisterns and other innovations should be employed to capture water for appropriate uses.

Stakeholders are concerned that citizens do not really understand the issues of water supply, the threat of shortages, water quality issues, or the need for conservation. The lack of a "crisis" and "ignorance" were mentioned as problematic. Interviewees recommend changing water-use behavior and the need for education.

### **Groundwater**

#### ***Interviewees report that pumping existing quantities of groundwater is not sustainable.***

Users who rely on groundwater for their economic livelihood and suppliers responsible for providing water to households expressed concern that groundwater pumping cannot continue to increase at the same rate it has been increasing. These users and suppliers recognize that a more holistic water supply portfolio (surface water, groundwater, recycled water, and conservation) must be developed. Interviewees suggest that controlling extraction is not adequate groundwater management. Reliable scientific information coupled with a diversified water supply and curtailing extraction are necessary to manage groundwater effectively.

Interviewees readily shared anecdotes and observations documenting groundwater shortages throughout the Sonoma Valley and region. Tales of drilling new and deeper wells, only to find no water, creek beds going dry in recent years, and thermal intrusion were common. One interviewee noted that new wells, regardless of size, require no form of environmental review. Another person expressed concern that domestic well users who might need to drill a new (deeper) well to increase groundwater supply could run into substantial obstacles since many regulations have changed over the years.

***Quality is also a concern.*** Interviewees sighted water quality issues with their wells, including the presence of boron and saltwater and thermal intrusion. Interviewees also report a northward migration of saltwater intrusion and the presence of minerals in groundwater not seen historically. One interviewee is alarmed because once an aquifer is compromised by saltwater, correcting it takes a very long time.

### **Recycled Water**

***Recycled water is viewed favorably and expanded use is encouraged.*** Generally, interviewees view recycled water as a major part of the solution in overcoming supply shortages in the face of increasing demands. Interviewees mostly feel positive about the soon-to-be-available tertiary-treated water. However, interviewees view infrastructure as major constraints: both moving the water from the treatment facility through the Valley and storing it so water is available in the dry season. Interviewees feel that recycled water needs to become available immediately. There's "no need to keep studying groundwater, just start providing recycled water".

Concerns about using recycled water also exist, but no one seems to suggest they are insurmountable. Growers do not want to lose groundwater rights if they shift to recycled water. Some are concerned about reliability and contract certainty since once they start using the water,

they will be more dependent on it. The cost of the water, including treatment and transport, is another factor. Most project that costs will be much greater than pumping groundwater and express hope that cost sharing can be arranged (rather than the user bearing the full burden).

Another factor is public perception that recycled water might not be that "safe". One stakeholder urged that data on safety and quality be readily available and be part of a major public education effort. One interviewee felt that liability associated with public safety concerns would need to be addressed before widespread use begins.

## **Land Use**

***Linking land use and water, including housing and new vineyards, is an area of concern that should be considered as part of the groundwater management process.*** Many interviewees discussed the growth of vineyards in the area, and several mentioned visitor tasting rooms and large venues for consideration. Growth and development in the region are also a concern. An analysis by the University of California at Irvine and the Greenbelt Alliance, however, suggests that Sonoma County is growing responsibly. One interviewee felt strongly that water should not be used to limit growth. Rather, growth and development questions should be decided as part of a larger water supply strategy. Others urge that zoning ordinances and the location of new housing be integrated into water supply projections more directly (which is starting to occur under new Sonoma County ordinances). One interviewee mentioned that development had affected the watershed and led to increased flooding.

The draft General Plan is striving to address water issues through its water element, including quality, public water supply, conservation and reuse, export/import and watershed management. Jurisdictional issues complicate decisions and coordination between land use and water. For example, the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD), responsible for the General Plan, is responsible for land use, but water purveyors and land owners are ultimately responsible for the water underneath.

Interviewees repeatedly express concern about impervious surfaces on recharge areas, the need to identify recharge areas, and the role of open space.

The connection between water supply and land value is also an overarching concern. Since supply directly affects land value, interviewees hesitate to make well data public.

## **Diversify Supply**

***Interviewees who supply water or deal with water policy expressed strong support for the need to diversify the water supply.*** Some interviewees identify the impetus against building new surface storage facilities as an impediment to supply diversification. Several mentioned that water supply operations might need to shift due to climate change. One agency representative reported that Sonoma County has over 400 water purveyors; efforts need to be made to understand the long term supply plans for each. One interviewee hopes that conjunctive use in the Valley would improve his wells in the hills. One interviewee stated the groundwater management should be implemented through a wide context of curbing groundwater extraction demands through increased supply of recycled water, imported water, and water conservation.

## **Information Gathering and Data Analysis**

***Any efforts at managing groundwater in the Sonoma Valley will have to negotiate issues related to well monitoring and data analysis.*** Data gathering and sharing is an area of major

concern for well users. They are concerned about the impact of public data on their relationships with neighbors, property values, and water rights. While many think data gathering should be voluntary, some feel regulations may be necessary to ensure adequate information is made available about groundwater in the Valley. These interviewees are more likely to say "information is a tool" or "information is power". The existence of wells, plans for new wells, well depth and the amount pumped are suggested variables.

***Interviewees feel that conducting an objective hydrologic assessment could provide a framework for planning.*** Understanding and agreeing on data can also be challenging and important. The assessment could clarify water availability, identify and study recharge areas, and document the height and depth of water tables. Some think the region's geological complexity with its volcanic formations make it difficult, if not impossible, to do a hydrologic assessment. Several interviewees reported drilling wells just several feet apart, with one hitting and the other missing water at similar depths. It was noted that the assessment could also help everyone understand sustainable yields for the basin. Despite sensitivities about monitoring, interviewees suggest that groundwater quantities pumped by residences, agriculture, and the golf course should be documented as well as water quality and saltwater intrusion issues. The U.S. Geological Survey study on the Sonoma Valley, to be released in early 2006, might answer some of these questions.

## **Groundwater Management Planning**

***Motivation for groundwater management planning exists.*** Interviewees are aware that shortages exist, and pumping at current or increased levels is not sustainable in the long term. Some feel the need to be proactive before a crisis situation emerges. Others want to avoid adjudication that would remove control from local users. For others, maintaining quality is also an issue. The threat of saltwater intrusion gradually moving northward from the Bay, by some accounts, illustrates a detrimental impact that is not easily reversible. The overarching motivation for any type of groundwater management is that almost every person interviewed has a long-term commitment to the area and wants their livelihoods preserved for their descendants.

## **Goals and Scope**

***If a groundwater management plan were to move forward, some offered hopes it would prevent further depletion of the aquifer, limit quality or shortage issues, and increase recharge.*** Most anticipate that a groundwater management plan would provide a "fact-based" way to deal with groundwater. A few suggest that the ecological and biological issues all be considered.

Interviewees believe that a groundwater management plan could provide a comprehensive view of groundwater issues in the area, potential recharge areas, and identify a sustainable yield for the basin. One interviewee suggested that the plan should only be descriptive and not be used to direct policy. Most seem to think that any groundwater management plan would set some direction; however, the nature of that direction is up for negotiation. Some growers might support the Farm Bureau groundwater policy of 1) no infringement on another, 2) compensation for groundwater damage, and 3) no state control. Several others suggested strongly that users would be concerned about the impact of a management plan on their water rights.

Several suggest that regulation or mandatory reporting might be necessary at some point in the future, but express a willingness to explore a voluntary approach as long as measures were in place to remedy the situation if it "did not work out." Measuring success or lack of it is clearly a critical item for discussion in the early stages of exploring a groundwater management plan. More than one interviewee suggested that all management options should be considered by a groundwater

management plan. It was also suggested that a phased approach might be helpful in addressing these dilemmas.

Several interviewees suggest that analyzing groundwater conditions only in the Sonoma Valley is not really adequate; a more comprehensive water plan for the County needs to be developed.

### **Jurisdictions and Leadership**

***Multiple agencies have jurisdiction in the Sonoma Valley and an interest in water issues there.*** Relevant jurisdictions include the City of Sonoma, PRMD and the Board of Supervisors for Sonoma County, SCWA, and the Valley of the Moon Water District.

The Sonoma County Water Agency is viewed primarily as a forward thinking agency. A few interviewees feel that SCWA and its Board of Directors (the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors) have a conflict of interest because SCWA is both a water seller and water planner. In addition, SCWA operates the sanitation agency. Hesitancy is expressed in terms of SCWA serving as an “engine of growth,” i.e. they have much to gain from selling more water. SCWA has a great deal of technical credibility among stakeholders, and the agency is characterized as politically astute. Overall, most interviewees support SCWA’s active role in this effort.

Most suggest that the Board of Supervisors must provide leadership on these issues while acknowledging that dealing with water is politically risky for board members. Interviewees differed on their opinions related to who should lead groundwater management efforts, the county or land owners.

### **Water Resources Education**

Most interviewees noted that there is a great deal of misinformation related to water supply and management and groundwater in Sonoma Valley. Interviewees expressed frustration that most citizens do not think about water supply or conservation issues. Nearly everyone suggested the need for widespread education on water supply issues (e.g., the water budget) generally in Sonoma County and specifically in the Sonoma Valley. Several interviewees urged focused and transparent information sharing about groundwater management as planning moved forward.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Use Collaboration to Address Groundwater Management**

The primary purpose of this assessment is to make a recommendation on whether development of a groundwater management plan for the Sonoma Valley should proceed, and if so, how that work might be structured. Based on results of interviews with key stakeholder representatives in the Sonoma Valley, CCP recommends moving forward using a collaborative process and forming a Basin Advisory Panel to guide this effort. In making this determination, CCP has identified conditions necessary to sustain a collaborative.

Almost all interview participants recognize that groundwater shortages exist and that current groundwater practices are not sustainable in the long term. Most groundwater users who participated in the interviews want to have a role in groundwater management decisions and would prefer not to relinquish control to any agency or to adjudication. As such, a role for the key stakeholders must be identified.

Another reason for recommending collaboration is that stakeholders articulated concern about sensitive issues, such as data collection and monitoring, while demonstrating room for negotiation about how to address these tasks. Although these issues could prove challenging, generating mutually acceptable and beneficial outcomes is most likely through direct, interest-based negotiation among stakeholders. Further, California Assembly Bill 303, the Local Groundwater Assistance Program, provides some funding for technical expertise and facilitation to support the work of stakeholder collaborative to reach the desired outcomes of this overall effort.

### **Convene a Basin Advisory Panel**

The primary vehicle for stakeholder input would be a Basin Advisory Panel. The Panel would engage actively in planning and making decisions on the development of the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan. The plan would be developed under the Groundwater Management Act (Assembly Bill 3030).<sup>1</sup> AB3030 processes are non-regulatory and voluntary. Developed in phases, the plan would include agreed-upon management objectives, protocols for monitoring and data collection, and implementation or adaptive management techniques.

The Basin Advisory Panel membership should meet a range of criteria through all its members (no one member is meant to meet all criteria). Members would represent the following interest groups:

- Economic interests
- Environmental interests
- Groundwater users: landowners, growers, dairies, water districts/suppliers, and domestic well users
- Government with jurisdiction in Sonoma Valley and expertise in water supply, land use and zoning

In addition, stakeholders would represent the following perspectives:

- County-wide perspective
- Geographic distribution throughout Valley
- Located in Sonoma Valley
- Political acumen
- Technical understanding

The Center for Collaborative Policy would work with interested parties to identify panel members in the next few months. The Basin Advisory Panel would review and finalize its initial membership at an early meeting.

CCP recommends that the Basin Advisory Panel be a consensus-building body. The Panel will strive for consensus (agreement among all participants) in all its decisions. Reports or products of the Basin Advisory Panel would reflect the outcome of the stakeholder discussions. All negotiated agreements, documented in reports, would be forwarded to the SCWA Board of Directors.

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<sup>1</sup> Sections 10750-10756 of the California Water Code

## **Design and Implement a Public Outreach Plan**

Given the level of interest in groundwater and the importance of the Basin Advisory Panel's work, local citizens, decision-makers and elected officials must stay abreast of Panel deliberations and decisions. At the beginning of this effort, CCP recommends that the Basin Advisory Panel and appropriate staff or consultants design a public outreach plan to keep interested parties informed and educated about decisions moving forward through the Basin Advisory Panel. The Panel would play an active role in implementing the public outreach plan. Panel members could help identify interested parties and conduct briefings with constituents and elected officials. Other outreach tools might include meetings and workshops, newsletters, and public information materials.

## **Develop a Phased Approach to the Work Plan**

Developing a phased approach to the work plan frames stakeholder discussion, creates clear milestones for briefing constituents and encourages the stakeholder group to evaluate progress and make a conscious decision to continue. For this reason, a phased approach to the work plan is recommended. As described below, it presents a preliminary framework for the negotiation: group organization, education and understanding, management objectives, a monitoring plan, and implementation. Schlumberger, the technical consultant, will develop the actual work plan with a timeline to complement the phased approach presented in this assessment report. The Basin Advisory Panel would meet regularly to carry out the tasks defined below and in its work plan.

### **Phase 1: Group Organization and Work Plan**

The primary purpose of the group would be to develop a groundwater management plan, as defined above. In this first phase, the Basin Advisory Panel would agree on its decision making, membership, relationship to decision making entities, responsibilities for communicating with constituents, media relations, and overall work plan, including objectives and schedule. As mentioned above, the Basin Advisory Panel would also develop recommendations on the public outreach plan. The Panel would grapple with some decisions over the first few months of its work in parallel with technical work to be performed under Phase 2 for the basin assessment report. Some of these questions would include:

- What subcommittees or technical work groups might best support the Panel's work?
- What is the best method to educate the broader community on water supply issues?
- What types of financial resources are available through the California Department of Water Resources and how might the group obtain them?
- What structure would best support implementation of a groundwater management plan (Lead Agency, Joint Powers Agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding)?
- What is the binding nature of decisions reached in the groundwater management plan?

The Panel might determine that some of these questions would be better answered in a later phase once the group has a better understanding of the basin or once the basin management objectives are defined, for example. If so, the group may choose to defer those questions until the necessary information becomes available.

### **PHASE 1 PRODUCTS: GROUP CHARTER AND WORK PLAN**

### **Phase 2: Basin-Wide Understanding**

Shared information is the place to start building agreement. In early 2006, the U.S. Geological Survey will release a study, underway for several years, on the Sonoma Valley. This will prove a good starting point for understanding the geology, quality, and historical and projected uses as well

as the methodology used to measure and quantify information. Activities in this phase would be designed to address the basin's complexity frequently mentioned during interviews. Workshops by technical experts or learning about successful basin management programs would be possible activities. The agreed-upon information, i.e. "what we know," would be put together in an easy-to-read document entitled the "Public's Guide to Water Resources in the Sonoma Valley," for widespread circulation. The Basin Advisory Panel might want to hold meetings or educational forums to inform the general public about the basin assessment.

At the end of this phase, the stakeholder group would evaluate its progress to date, revisit its work plan, and decide to move to Phase 3.

#### **PHASE 2 PRODUCT: PUBLIC'S GUIDE TO WATER RESOURCES IN THE SONOMA VALLEY**

##### **Phase 3: Basin Management Goals & Objectives**

Once the stakeholder group has sophisticated understanding of the groundwater basin, the next phase would be to develop basin management goals and objectives. Basin management objectives could incorporate measures related to local control, long-term sustainability and reliability, groundwater quality, the economy, and the environment. These objectives could define the acceptable range of groundwater level fluctuations that would be allowed to occur within the management area and the acceptable range of groundwater quality change. The basin management objectives could be considered criteria for deciding what action would be taken if the basin management levels were exceeded. (White Paper, Toccoy Dudley, Department of Water Resources, Northern District, 9/18/2000)

SCWA or appropriate technical consultants would provide support for drafting the basin management objectives on behalf of the stakeholder group.

The group would likely need to conduct a series of briefings with local elected officials and interested organizations. The purpose would be to educate about and seek support of the basin management goals and objectives, including how they were developed and their content and purpose. Based on the briefings, the group might choose to revise the basin management objectives to reflect insights gained through the briefings, but no major changes would be anticipated.

The Basin Advisory Panel would review its goals and work plan, evaluate its progress to date, and decide to move to the next phase.

#### **PHASE 3 PRODUCT: SONOMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN MANAGEMENT BRIEF**

##### **Phase 4: Monitoring and Data Collection**

Well monitoring and data collection, instrumental for understanding groundwater basin levels and storage capacity, were clearly identified as big issues for most private landowners who rely upon groundwater. For this reason, the way that monitoring and data collection moves forward would be subject to careful negotiation among the Basin Advisory Panel. During this phase, the Basin Advisory Panel would develop protocols and a system for groundwater monitoring and data management.

Further, the outcome of any negotiated agreement would have to be coordinated and approved with other landowners in the basin. Participation would likely be voluntary; however, the negotiation

could establish conditions upon which actions might be taken if certain conditions are not met. This is subject to negotiation and political feasibility.

The Basin Advisory Panel would again decide whether to move to the final phase of the work plan.

#### **PHASE 4 PRODUCT: MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOL AGREEMENT**

#### **Phase 5: Implementation and Adaptive Management**

The final phase would concentrate on implementing the groundwater management plan and deciding what actions would be taken in response to changing circumstances in the groundwater basin. Agreements would be linked to external decision making and be monitored for compliance. The group might need to modify agreements in response to changing conditions. The Basin Advisory Panel would likely want to agree to some form of dispute resolution mechanism should conflicts arise. The implementation plan and management activities would be documented in the groundwater management plan. For example, the plan might address local agencies' construction or operation of recharge, storage, conservation, or water recycling. The plan could facilitate conjunctive use operations or measures to control saltwater intrusion. The plan would ultimately be a culmination of all the work completed during the different phases. Public outreach would take place to inform members of the public about the overall effort documented in the plan.

#### **PHASE 5 PRODUCT: SONOMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **CONCLUSION**

The overarching goal of this effort would be to find innovative solutions to the complex policy dilemmas of groundwater management and build broad support for implementation. The keys to success for this effort are:

- Common understanding of basin geology, water supply and demand, and conjunctive use;
- Addressing basin management objectives, monitoring and data gathering;
- A diverse group of stakeholders collaborating on the Basin Advisory Panel to make planning decisions;
- Educating local citizens, decision-makers, and elected officials throughout; and
- An implementation and adaptive management plan to respond to changing conditions.

## **APPENDIX A: PERSONS INTERVIEWED FOR ASSESSMENT REPORT**

1. Tom Atwood
2. Larry Barnett
3. Scott Bauer
4. Mark Bramfitt
5. Valerie Brown
6. Jim Bundshu
7. Greg Carr
8. Caitlin Cornwall
9. Richard Dale
10. Norman Gilroy
11. Susan Haydon
12. Peter Haywood
13. Ned Hill
14. Steve Hill
15. Jay Jasperse
16. Becky Jenkins
17. Clarence Jenkins
18. Bill Keene
19. Ray Larbre
20. Vickie Mulas
21. Mitch Mulas
22. Pete Parkinson
23. Del Rydman
24. Mel Sanchietti
25. Tito Sasaki
26. Philip Sayles
27. Pat Stornetta
28. Steve Thomas
29. Ignacio Vella
30. Joe Votek

## **APPENDIX B: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### Introduction

- Please tell me about yourself and your organization(s) and how you are involved in water issues in the Sonoma Valley?

### Issues to be Addressed

- What concerns and interests do you have regarding water supply in Sonoma Valley? And groundwater in particular? What concerns, if any, do you have about the future?
- What issues might others raise? Are any of these issues in conflict with yours? How might these differences be resolved?
- What types of coordination occur between users currently? What other opportunities for coordination would you foresee?
- If recycled water was available, how open would you be to using it?
- What potential benefits and potential drawbacks do you associate with developing some type of groundwater management plan?
- What issues would a successful groundwater management plan address? Avoid?
- What obstacles to developing a management plan might arise? Do you have suggestions to overcome them?
- What are your thoughts about the Sonoma County Water Agency's role/capabilities in developing the groundwater management plan?

### Stakeholder Involvement

- If this effort goes forward, which individuals or groups do you think should be involved? How? Who doesn't usually participate in these types of public efforts that you believe should be involved?
- Would you or your organization/agency like to participate in developing a groundwater management plan if it were to go forward? How would you envision being involved?
- What kinds of outreach would you recommend?

### Context and Information Needs

- What information would you like to have or what technical questions would you like answered as part of this effort?
- Do you feel that you have a good understanding of where Sonoma Valley's water supply comes from and how water is used in the valley?
- What other related efforts are underway that I should know about?

### Conclusion

- Do you have any interests or concerns you have not yet mentioned?
- Is there anything else you think I should know or any advice you might offer?
- Who else, if anyone, do you think I should speak with?

## **APPENDIX C: INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE POLICY AND GINA BARTLETT**

The Center for Collaborative Policy is a unit of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies at California State University, Sacramento. The Center was established in 1990 as the California Center for Public Dispute Resolution, a joint program of California State University Sacramento and the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific.

The mission of the Center is to build the capacity of public agencies, stakeholder groups, and the public to use collaborative strategies to improve policy outcomes.

Visit the Web Site: [www.csus.edu/ccp](http://www.csus.edu/ccp)

**Gina Bartlett** has served as a public policy mediator and facilitator for state and local governments, and business and interest groups working on forest management, water supply, public access, natural resource management, recreation, land use and cultural diversity. Recently, she facilitated community meetings on stewardship and fire assessment for a national forest in California and mediated a regional effort to update policies for a 23-mile riverfront trail passing through an urban core and multiple jurisdictions. She has served as mediator and facilitator regarding statewide water management and integrating ground and surface water use as a water management tool, frequently working with technical and scientific information. Ms. Bartlett also facilitated development of policy recommendations for the San Francisco Bay that integrate conservation and public access. Ms. Bartlett received her Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University and has worked in the field since 1991.