

MEETING SUMMARY | February 26, 2014

Santa Rosa Plain Technical Advisory Committee

Project Updates

The Funding Subcommittee and Community Forums Subcommittee are working in parallel to the ongoing Panel and TAC meetings as the GMP nears completion. The Community Forums Subcommittee is organizing a series of public information meetings for the month of May that aim to increase awareness and support for local groundwater management planning. The Funding Subcommittee is negotiating a proposed funding package for the first two years of core GMP implementation costs. Technical consultant Tim Parker provided statewide policy updates relative to groundwater management and the context within which the Basin Advisory Panel, and its various subcommittees, is operating.

Summary Presentation and Discussion of USGS Model Report

The Water Agency received approval to share preliminary information on the structure and results of the USGS groundwater model report for the Santa Rosa Plain. The Project Team provided a summary presentation that explains the model, describes simulated hydrologic budgets and highlights key results. The TAC reviewed, discussed and provided feedback on incorporating new information, based on the model results, into the GMP.

<http://www.scwa.gov/srgroundwater/>

Audio-Taping. In the interest of encouraging free exchange of ideas at TC meetings, the facilitation team continues to recommend that attendees not audio-tape meetings since it makes some members uncomfortable. If any attendee chooses to audio-tape anyway, we ask that you announce your intentions to the group for transparency. In this case, the Water Agency will audio-tape as well, and make the tape available via the project website so all have access to the same information. At this meeting, an attendee did announce the intention to audio-tape, and consequently, the Water Agency audio-taped the meeting as well. The recording has been posted on Dropbox and can be accessed at:

[https://www.dropbox.com/home/Santa Rosa Groundwater/tac meetings/Recordings/Feb 26 2014](https://www.dropbox.com/home/Santa%20Rosa%20Groundwater/tac%20meetings/Recordings/Feb%202014)

Next TAC Meeting

Upcoming TAC Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 from 9-12 a.m. at the Sonoma County Water Agency office, 404 Aviation Blvd, Santa Rosa.

Action Items

Timeframe	Name	Action Item
March 5, 2014	TAC Members	Provide feedback on sections 2 & 5 (summary USGS model results incorporated)

Project Updates

Facilitator Rich Wilson updated the TAC on the work of the recently formed Funding and Community Forums Subcommittees.

The Community Forums Subcommittee is organizing a series of public information meetings that coincide with the final stages of GMP completion. The forums aim to increase awareness and support for groundwater management planning and will take place in May at four locations within the Santa Rosa Plain: Cotati/Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol and Windsor. Several Panel members are acting as “forum leads” to help spearhead outreach, secure local sponsors and provide logistical support. Draft forum publicity materials will be presented for review at the March Panel meeting. Key Board members and other local officials will provide opening remarks at each forum, stressing the importance of public awareness and involvement in local groundwater management planning.

Looking towards the future, GMP implementation is projected to cost \$600,000 over the first two years, with the Water Agency committing \$375,000 to this effort. At its February meeting, Funding Subcommittee members made additional commitments totaling \$130,000, thus leaving a \$95,000 gap. Project manager Marcus Trotta noted the significance of gaining support from the rural sector, including agricultural and rural residential, the largest users of groundwater in the county. He also highlighted the importance of in-kind contributions. The Water Agency plans to develop a cooperative agreement with GMP funders and a separate agreement with stakeholder interests that provide in-kind services. The goal in the coming months is to close the funding gap and demonstrate broad GMP support to the Water Agency Board of Directors at the time of adoption.

Technical consultant Tim Parker followed with statewide policy updates relative to groundwater management. He described the legislative framework that has evolved in California over the last twenty years to address water management issues, including groundwater. The issue of groundwater depletion is getting more attention and visibility across the state, particularly as many communities struggle with drought conditions. The State Water Resources Control Board is attempting to address the issue of groundwater depletion through development of a sustainable groundwater management framework. Moreover, at a recent meeting in the governor’s office, high level officials and key water interests began to explore two key questions:

- ⇒ What tools and resources do local communities need to ensure sustainable groundwater management; and
- ⇒ How and when should state agencies step in as a backstop to provided necessary support?

Operating within this statewide context, implementation of a well developed and broadly supported GMP positions the Sonoma County Water Agency and its partners in the Santa Rosa Plain to further advance local groundwater management, ensure sustainability and capitalize on future funding opportunities.

USGS Model Report – Summary Presentation and Updating the GMP

The Water Agency received approval to share preliminary information with the TAC and Panel on the structure and results of the USGS groundwater model report for the Santa Rosa Plain. The Project Team developed and delivered a summary presentation that explains the model, describes simulated hydrologic budgets and highlights key results. Following the presentation TAC members were tasked to consider whether the newly incorporated material reflected the right kind of information and the appropriate level of technical detail.

Members agreed to share updated versions of draft chapters 2 (water resources) and 5 (management components) with the Panel that integrate suggested changes below. Several members recommended key messages for describing the updated chapters at the upcoming Basin Advisory Panel meeting.

General Recommendations

- Include a flyer for the general public
- Change “intra-channel” term throughout document to improve understanding
- Define groundwater mining in the GMP glossary
- Consider changing “in-stream recharge” term
 - Explain or find better term; currently unclear
 - Illustration may help explain term
- Increase well data collection to inform pumping estimates
- Note that model scenarios do take into account future population growth and development
- General editorial comment: Current text and information seems technical for the general reader, though some may appreciate this level of sophistication
 - Draft less technical Executive Summary and Chapter Summaries
 - Direct public to key resources in the GMP
 - Describe model in Executive Summary as a simulation and insert key results
 - Describe how model enables investigation of areas facing groundwater decline

Considerations to focus key messages for the Panel and public

- Message should be careful and considered (“35 year history of information”)
- Remind Panel what model is and what it is not (i.e. robust, state-of-the-art tool)
- Place less emphasis on technical details and more emphasis on take away messages
- Focus on bullets that summarize key model conclusions
- Give thought to how to phrase uncertainties – any model will have uncertainties, this model is robust
- Note that GMP implementation and associated monitoring program is critical to better understand the resource
- Note that information reflects early application of the model, additional scenarios will be run

Section 2 – Water Resources

- 2.4.5 – Add “surface water” at end of top paragraph
- 2.8.5 – (Model limitations) Put rough percentage on range of pumping taking place
 - Make USGS data request
 - Clarify last bullet – provide more detail regarding what it applies to
- 2.9 – In last bullet strike word “level” and add “more surface water monitoring”
- 2.4.6 – at bottom need “estimate” included (pg. 2-22)
- 2.4.6 Identify reasons/drivers of pumping (pg. 2-23)
- General comment – Show all occurring well extraction
- General comment – Note that is Rohnert Park wells have “partially” recovered

TAC Meeting Attendees

TAC Members

Kevin Cullinen
Rocky Vogler
Jane Nielson
Lloyd Iverson
Garret Broughton
Michael Burns
Matt O’Conner
Dawna Gallagher
Gary Mickelson

Project Team

Project Manager, Marcus Trotta
Technical Consultant, Tim Parker
TAC Facilitator, Rich Wilson

TAC Visitors

Karl Adelman