

MEETING NOTES | February 14, 2013

Santa Rosa Plain Basin Advisory Panel

Meeting in Brief

Acceptance of Section 1 and Member Feedback on Section 5.2

Building upon the TAC's work, the Panel reviewed section 1 (Introduction and Purpose) and sub-section 5.2 (Monitoring). Several members noted that the introduction is exceptionally well done and no additional feedback was provided. A range of suggested improvements, additions and clarifications was provided for the monitoring section.

Enhanced Recharge Presentations

Marcus Trotta presented on two regional enhanced recharge studies currently being conducted by the Sonoma County Water Agency and many local partners. The presentations served to deepen that Panel's understanding of important recharge topics, facilitate understanding of how these topics relate to the groundwater management plan, and help identify additional studies the Panel may need to discuss at future meetings.

Sharing USGS Report Elements

Two key elements of the USGS report, a characterization report and surface/groundwater flow model, are planned for release in early 2013 and mid 2013, respectively. USGS is scheduled to present on the characterization report at the April or May Panel meeting. Members agreed on the need to effectively learn about and share the results of the USGS report and made various suggestions for informing the public about the report.

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

Next Panel Meeting: March 14, 9:00-12:00, at 35 Stony Point Rd.

Member Review of GMP Draft Section 1 and Sub-section 5.2

Since its inception, the TAC has made substantive contributions to the development of draft sections 1 (Introduction and Purpose) and 5.2 (Monitoring) among others. The TAC is not a decision making body but rather a group that works under the direction of the larger Basin Advisory Panel to identify and prioritize science and technical needs, and to develop proposals for the Panel's consideration and approval for inclusion in the GMP.

Building upon the TAC's work, the Panel reviewed section 1 and sub-section 5.2. Several members noted that the introduction is exceptionally well done, and Panel members provided no additional feedback. Suggested improvements, additions and clarifications to the monitoring section included the following:

- Ensure that monitoring, modeling and analysis identifies and evaluates trends, particularly in relation to climate change.
- Include a timeline for actions in table 5-6 for ease of use and understanding
- Consider inclusion of more existing stream flow gages in figure 5-4. However, make sure private stream gage owners approve being listed in the map and that any data included in the GMP is of acceptable quality.
- Correct reference to PRMD "public" supply wells to "private" wells.

- Note that, in relation to water quality, “protect the health of basin users” is a plan objective not a data objective.
- Identify additional issues that warrant monitoring (e.g. nitrates).
- Maintain confidentiality of data subject to confidentiality requirements (e.g. Water Well Completion Reports, private well owner’s addresses, etc.).
- Revisit contaminants issue but maintain sensitivity to how limited information could be misinterpreted via use of maps. Consider including links to other resources (e.g. Geotracker; Department of Toxic Substances Enviro Store; Regional Water Quality Control Board).
- Soften language in section 5.2 that says activities “will be conducted” until funding sources are known.
- Consider inclusion of “elastic” subsidence in section 5.2.1.3.
- Design and maintain data management systems to meet GMP objectives.

One member inquired as to why the Russian River Data Management Framework is referenced. This framework is referenced as an example of other planned or existing data collection programs that should be considered in developing monitoring and data management protocols for the GMP.

Enhanced Recharge Studies

Marcus Trotta presented on two regional enhanced recharge studies that the Sonoma County Water Agency and other local partners are currently conducting. The presentations were provided to deepen that Panel’s understanding of important recharge topics, facilitate understanding of how these topics relate to the GMP, and help identify additional studies the Panel may need presented at future meetings.

The two studies came about as recommended strategies from the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan. The first study, storm water management and groundwater recharge, is exploring ways to manage storm water that limit damage from flooding and promote groundwater recharge. The second study, groundwater banking feasibility, seeks to capture and convey wintertime water from the Russian River for storage in the Santa Rosa Plain and Sonoma Valley groundwater basins for subsequent use during needed times (peak summer demand periods, droughts, etc.). The overall objective for both studies is to help improve water supply reliability, operational reliability and resiliency during extreme events such as drought, earthquakes, etc. Pilot studies of this nature are generally needed to demonstrate the feasibility of recharge programs. The state recognizes these kinds of studies as important programs for counties seeking to successfully adapt to climate change. A range of questions on both studies elicited discussion on the following:

- Potential online availability of recharge maps.
- Conveyance of stream flows to recharge areas.
- Distinction of recharge properties in engineered versus natural areas.
- Relationship of soil, substrate and slope to recharge potential.
- Potential for coordination with construction sites to eliminate peak flows and allow handling of storm water before it carries sediments and pollution.
- Concept of 2 for 1 well recharge.
- Benefits versus what happens if programs are not conducted.
- Similar groundwater infiltration projects in Santa Clara Valley.
- Understanding of wintertime availability of water from the Russian river.

- Expected level of water recovery based on respective programs.
- Means for incremental testing of aquifers.

Working Agreements

Members received a revised 2013 meeting framework for both the Panel and TAC. The framework reflects progress to date and incorporates expected release dates for key elements of the USGS report.

Members also received the latest iteration of the plan's goals and objectives. The goals and objectives were revised at the November Panel meeting and will remain draft until the end of the process. The TAC will discuss section 4 of the plan (Basin Management Objectives) at its February 27th meeting.

Update on USGS Report Release

Two key elements of the USGS report, a characterization report and surface/groundwater flow model, are planned for release in early 2013 and mid 2013, respectively. USGS is scheduled to present on the characterization report at the April or May Panel meeting.

Understanding and Sharing the Report

Members agreed on the need to effectively learn about and share results of the USGS report as it becomes publicly available. The Panel made the following suggestions:

- Produce a brief (3-4 pages) non-technical summary document that is easily understood.
- Ensure early public understanding so appropriate and insightful questions can be asked once a public forum is scheduled.
- Allow the Panel to receive a preliminary briefing followed by a secondary briefing that facilitates more detailed questions.
- Plan and coordinate an outreach campaign on the release of the USGS reports, public workshops and progress on the GMP.
- Provide a background brief and summary presentation to the editorial board of the local Press Democrat to ensure accurate information dissemination.
- Stress how the GMP seeks to address and create solutions for water management challenges highlighted in the report.
- Consider the web as a clearinghouse of information.

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members

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