

MEETING NOTES | January 9, 2014

Santa Rosa Plain Basin Advisory Panel

MEETING IN BRIEF

Announcements

- Consultant Tim Parker offered numerous announcements pertaining to state-wide water policy developments. These can be found at Attachment A.

Meeting Overview

- The Panel had an opportunity to provide feedback on the revised draft GMP implementation priorities (Attachment B) – perhaps the core element of Section 6. Additional written comments on this iteration were welcomed for the subsequent week (through Thursday, Jan. 16); participants were directed to email such comments to Marcus Trotta and Tim Parker. The Panel will have one or more additional opportunities to comment on this section of the GMP.
- The GMP Funding Subcommittee provided a progress report.
- The Community Forums Planning Committee provided a progress report and recruited additional members.

There will be NO February Panel meeting. The next Panel Meeting will take place March 13, 9:00-12:00, at 35 Stony Point Rd

Topics: At the March meeting, we hope to share a summary of the pre-release USGS study; a revised draft of the water resources section of the GMP, drawing upon that pre-release draft; a revised draft of the implementation schedule, incorporating Panel feedback; progress on the GMP funding strategy; and progress on planning the spring community forums. We also look forward to hearing further feedback from any additional constituent briefings done by Panel members.

MEETING SUMMARY

Feedback on Revised Draft GMP Implementation Priorities

Project Manager Marcus Trotta and Technical Consultant Tim Parker oriented the Panel to the revised draft Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) recommended implementation actions. Actions included on this 4-page table include the slate of activities recommended to take place or be initiated over the next five years. The comprehensive list of actions considered and ranked, based on seven agreed-upon criteria, has been preserved in a separate table. Chapter 6 will ultimately include or reference the criteria, the “comprehensive” table, and the “recommended” table, with an explanation of how the latter was developed.

Tim explained how to interpret the various symbols in the columns on the right side of the table. Where an item has a green box with a check mark in it under the “year” column, this indicates the item is a core operating function required by the water code or is an item expected to require minimal to no funding and thus, recommended for initiation in the first year. The relative cost of an item is indicated by the number of dollar signs shown under the column of that name – from one dollar sign (relatively low cost) to three dollar signs (relatively costly). An asterisk indicates that the item must be funded over an extended period (e.g., annual or periodic; not just one time). A symbol that looks like a cluster of four dots

alludes to sequencing; it indicates that implementation of the item depends on the emergence of a project sponsor and funding.

Panel feedback on this text provided today included:

➤ **Overall:**

- Good work!
- The condensed format is helpful.
- Please experiment with using additional color-coding to ensure future audiences quickly absorb the right messages from this table, e.g.:
 - Use a color (vs. white) to display the items that are recommended, but not included in the slate of items recommended for the 1st 2 years (e.g., land subsidence and groundwater recharge). Leaving them uncolored seems to convey that they are not among the actions that are being recommended, and that misunderstanding could create unnecessary confusion and distress.
 - Use another color to indicate items that are already being implemented (or going to be implemented) independent of the Basin Advisory Panel's efforts. These are on the table because we are proposing to recommend that GMP implementers build upon, or leverage, these parallel activities. Examples include Items #97 (Section 5.5) and Section 5.6.1.

➤ **Section 5.2.1.1 (Groundwater Level Monitoring):**

- Item 21: Add “and implement” so this item begins, “Develop and implement an outreach program...” Then put a checkmark in all five of the green boxes.
- Item 23 (re: expanding the groundwater level monitoring well network): Put the symbol that looks like a cluster of four dots in the columns for Years 3, 4, and 5. Meeting attendees feel this activity is important, and suggested that Sonoma's use of volunteers for this function might be worth emulating. It was noted, however, that some funding would still be needed to coordinate the volunteers.

Update on Funding Strategy for GMP Implementation

Project Manager Marcus Trotta explained that SCWA had had an initial meeting before the holidays with current funders of GMP development to begin the discussion of how to put together a funding package for GMP implementation. They had encouraged SCWA to recruit a broader group to participate in the discussion. Thus, SCWA worked with CCP facilitator Marci DuPraw to organize a broader GMP Funding Subcommittee, and Marcus reported on progress made at its first meeting.

Subcommittee members are those whose constituencies can contribute funds or in-kind services, or can help the Panel pursue grants. Subcommittee members need not be members of the Panel or TAC. (See Attachment C for a membership list.) This group is charged with developing a funding strategy for the first two years of implementation. They plan to meet Feb. 6, 9:30-noon, and (if necessary) Feb. 11, 1:30-4:30. They hope to have a proposal worked out by then that participants can use to develop their respective budget requests.

The group reviewed information on which entities have been contributing to GMP development to date, and which sectors use how much groundwater. Appreciation was

expressed to DWR for funding assistance with planning and facilitation. Mark Nordberg (DWR) congratulated the group on its progress, and encouraged them to keep up the momentum. He noted that having a solid plan in place helps attract federal and state funding for implementation. He specifically noted that \$350 million will be available under Proposition 84, with applications due sometime in the upcoming year.

One Subcommittee member noted that, other than SCWA and DWR, municipalities have been the main contributors so far and probably will continue to be so for the core operating costs the first two years. However, the municipalities only use one fifth to one sixth of the groundwater. While the GMP will benefit everyone in the Basin, the municipalities feel that other users (agriculture and the County on behalf of rural well-owners) really need to step up. Agricultural representatives are part of the Committee; points raised from that sector included a desire to factor in the value of groundwater recharge that takes place on undeveloped land, a desire for more specifics on benefits derived by the agricultural sector, and assurance that GMP implementation will not interfere with property rights.

The Subcommittee acknowledged the importance of moving more in the direction of payment in proportion to benefit, moderated by what is feasible. Thus, the “equity + feasibility” principle will guide negotiations going forward, with respect to allocating costs for core operations and elements required by the water code. For other projects (those not considered core or required), Subcommittee members anticipate proposing the approach used by the Russian River Watershed Alliance (RRWA); in RRWA, such “special projects” are funded by whichever community entities have stakes in getting them done, and/or by grants and in-kind contributions.

Panel discussion yielded the following additional points:

- The Panel might want to establish another Subcommittee to explore funding sources for “special projects” (those not considered operational in nature) – perhaps once the initial two-year package is in place.
- We should stay open to the possibility that funders located outside the Santa Rosa Plain might consider contributing to GMP implementation if they see a close nexus with their interests.

Next steps for the Subcommittee include:

- Conferring with their constituents about what they might be able to contribute, in preparation for the Feb. 6th Subcommittee meeting;
- Exploring the appropriate way to document the ultimate funding agreement (who signs; how to account for in-kind contributions, etc.; whether it should be a separate document from who signs onto the GMP itself).

Planning Community Forums for Spring, 2014

With back-up from Rue Furch and two handouts (Attachment D), Jane Nielson reported on progress in planning several community forums for Spring, 2014. As discussed, the forums are intended to help educate the broader community about the GMP and build support for it, as well as counteract misinformation about the GMP and its development. An ad hoc Community Forum Planning Committee has held one conference call, and plans to hold monthly calls through the spring. Initial members include Jane, Rue, Dawna Gallagher, and Jennifer Laroque. Additional Panel members volunteered to join this effort, going forward; these include Sue Kelly, Lloyd Iversen, Curt Nichols, Jennifer Burke, and Gary Mickelson. Rocky volunteered to recruit a representative of the Town of Windsor to help.

Jane explained that the idea for holding a round of community forums began with Sue Kelly's observation that there are lots of people who rely on groundwater wells, and we need to reach out more broadly to ensure they understand why the GMP will be of value to them.

- Locations: To cover the Santa Rosa Plain, the Committee proposes to hold four forums – one each in Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, and Windsor, and one jointly for Cotati and Rohnert Park.
- Timing: The forums will be held in April and May (hopefully after Part II of the USGS report is incorporated into the draft GMP).
- Co-Sponsors: The Committee would like to ask community groups such as rotary clubs, the Laguna Foundation, and Cotati Creek Critters to co-host the forums. In fact, the Committee pictures a cluster of co-sponsors for each forum, with their logos on the promotional materials.
- Format:
 - The Committee would like to invite a local elected official to welcome participants to the event.
 - The Committee pictures Marcus and/or Tim presenting the draft GMP, and one or more Panel members speak to the local importance of the GMP and the process used to develop it.
 - Panel members and co-sponsors will sit at a table in front, and field questions during the discussion portion of the event.
 - We would like to have a big map of the Santa Rosa Plain on the wall, so attendees can locate their homes in relation to what is being presented.
 - We would like to offer multiple means by which attendees can comment (e.g., verbally and by jotting down a question on an index card and passing it up).
 - We would also like to have a sign-up sheet where attendees can indicate they would like additional information.
- Publicity: Jennifer Laroque will take the lead on a press campaign. She will explore the potential for both feature stories and paid ads. Panel members were enthusiastic about the possibility for feature stories, given the GMP's direct relevance to current drought conditions. Another suggestion was to make postcard-style "flyers" containing the dates and places of all the forums, which could be distributed widely (e.g., through Panel member-affiliated organizations, in mailboxes, and on car windshields); one person noted that a Panel member could stand in the County / PMRD lobby and hand them out to a steady stream of interested residents coming in to get their well permits. Others suggested that if there is a legal way to do it, it would be great to send such a card to all well owners in the area. The California Groundwater Association was mentioned as a potentially helpful group for getting the word out to well-testers.

The group then explored the nature of the discussion they hope to have with participants at these forums. The conclusion was:

- The forums will be primarily informational, orienting the community the GMP that the Panel is recommending for approval.
- Discussion will be framed as "Q&A," rather than "input."
- The Panel will remain open to making changes based on discussion that takes place at these forums.
- CCP will revise the straw agenda for the community forums to reflect this discussion.

The Committee's next steps include:

- Working with the Panel to pick target dates for the forums soon in order to reserve appropriate facilities. Panel members recommended avoiding Tuesdays, avoiding Thursday evenings, and avoiding the first week of May due to conflicting events;
- Recruiting a local sponsor with a facility and a local elected official to welcome people, while holding off on recruiting additional co-sponsors and publicity until March or so, when we are confident that Part II of the USGS report will come out in time to be incorporated into the draft GMP for these events; and
- Marci will coordinate a doodle poll to choose the date for the Committee's next call.

Constituent Feedback. Facilitator Marci DuPrav invited Panel members to share any feedback they had received from briefing constituents. At a Panel member briefing for the Sonoma County Alliance, the audience really wanted to know information that won't be available until Part II of the USGS study comes out (e.g., groundwater-related trends for the area). Others expressed reluctance to do briefings until Part II can be integrated into the draft GMP. Marcus indicated that he hopes to be able to update the Panel at the February meeting as to whether or not USGS is on track to release Part II in March; he is optimistic about that. Marci deferred to Panel members' judgment about when to brief their constituents, but encouraged them to keep their constituents in the loop enough so that they don't request major changes to the draft GMP at the 11th hour. She encouraged them to consider five-minute updates on existing meeting agendas, if nothing else. A Panel member suggested that when members of the Community Forums Subcommittee recruit facilities and hosts for the spring community forums, they use those interactions as an opportunity to do a mini-briefing.

Updated Meeting Framework

Facilitator Marci DuPrav reviewed steps remaining to get closure on the GMP. One related point that came out earlier in the meeting is that we need to be sure to plan at least one Panel meeting after the community forums, but before submitting the GMP for decision-maker approval. At that meeting, the Panel will need a chance to discuss whether changes to the draft GMP are needed based on discussions at the community forums, and check for consensus on the GMP. Marcus indicated that he is thinking it will be the July / August timeframe when the GMP is finally ready to bring to decision-makers for approval.

Action Items

- Marcus Trotta and Tim Parker will revise draft implementation priorities table to reflect Panel feedback at today's meeting;
- Panel members will continue to brief constituent groups as they deem appropriate to keep them in the loop;
- The GMP Funding Subcommittee will meet Feb. 6 and Feb. 11 to complete their proposed funding strategy and determine appropriate means of documenting commitments; meanwhile, members will confer with their constituents about what they might be able to contribute, in preparation for the Feb. 6th Subcommittee meeting;
- CCP will revise the straw agenda for the spring community forums;
- CCP will doodle for the next Community Forums conference call date; and
- The Community Forums Planning Committee will focus on: a) working with the Panel to pick target dates for the forums soon in order to reserve appropriate facilities; and b) recruiting a local sponsor for each forum, reserving a facility and recruiting a local elected official to welcome people.

Attachments *(attached as separate files):*

- A. Announcements Regarding Overall Status of Legislative and Policy Climate in California *(Provided by Consultant Tim Parker)*
- B. Draft Implementation Priorities
- C. Members of GMP Funding Subcommittee
- D. Initial Plans for Spring 2014 Community Forums

Participants:**Panel Members**

- Keith Abeles, Community Alliance of Family Farmers
- Michael Burns, Resident of Santa Rosa
- Elizabeth Cargay, Foothills of Windsor Homeowners Association
- Rue Furch, Sebastopol Water Information Group (SWIG) and Sierra Club
- Dawna Gallagher, Well Owner and Clean Water Sonoma Marin, Director
- Joe Gaffney, Sonoma County Alliance
- Maureen Geary, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Edward Grossi, Sweet Lane Wholesale Nursery
- Lloyd Iversen, Local Well Owner
- Bill Keene, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- Sue Kelly, City of Sebastopol
- Valerie Minton, Sonoma Resource Conservation District
- Curt Nichols, Carlile Macy Landscape Architects and Civil Engineers, for the Construction Coalition
- Jane Nielson, Sonoma County Water Coalition and O.W.L. Foundation
- Daniel Sanchez, North Bay Association of Realtors
- Tito Sasaki, Farm Bureau
- Rocky Vogler, Senior Civil Engineer, Town of Windsor
- Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa

Observers

- Carl Adelman
- Bob Anderson
- Beth Lamb, NCRWQCB
- Jennifer Larocque, SCWA

Staff

- Marcus Trotta, SCWA (Project Manager)
- Tim Parker, Parker Groundwater (Technical Consultant)
- Marci DuPraw, Center for Collaborative Policy (Facilitator)