MEETING NOTES | February 17, 2015
Santa Rosa Plain Basin Advisory Panel

MEETING IN BRIEF

Announcements
Marcus Trotta, manager for the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Management Program (SRP-GMP), welcomed the Panel and provided opening announcements.

- Following a recommendation from the Basin Advisory Panel (Panel), the Sonoma County Water Agency Board of Directors adopted the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Management Plan (Plan) in October, 2014. The Panel will now help guide Plan implementation.
- The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) passed last September and was signed into law by the governor. SGMA has significant repercussions for how groundwater will be managed across the state in the coming years. During the initial stages of implementation the Panel and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will begin to evaluate what actions could be taken to help transition the Plan become SGMA compliant.
- Rich Wilson of the Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) will facilitate future Panel and TAC meetings. Marci DuPraw will continue to serve as a senior advisor for CCP's facilitation role.

Meeting Overview

- Jay Jasperse presented an overview of SGMA. The presentation discussed main elements of SGMA, timelines and associated milestones and next steps towards forming newly required Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs).
- Technical Consultant Tim Parker provided an overview of the main elements of years 1–2 SRP-GMP implementation. He re-visited the Panel's recommended actions for Plan implementation and described the ongoing role of Panel and TAC members in launching the monitoring program, considering modeling scenarios to inform management, and conducting constituent outreach.
- Tim Parker and Marcus Trotta jointly described the draft workplan developed to guide the SRP-GMP in 2015. Panel members are requested to provide any feedback on the workplan by Thursday, February 26th, 2015.
- Marcus Trotta briefly described the need to form an SRP-GMP implementation phase funding subcommittee to develop a funding strategy for Panel consideration. The Project Team will develop draft language describing the funding subcommittee for Panel consideration.
- Tim Parker provided a legislative update on the California Water Action Plan, Water Bond, SMGA elements and ongoing legislative activity in Sacramento.
- Dr. Julie Kalansky with the Scripps Institute gave a presentation on the Scripps, USGS and Water Agency Drought Study.
- CCP facilitator Rich Wilson will be scheduling check in calls with all Panel members to explore member hopes and expectations and, per the charter tenets, solicit feedback on appropriate membership composition for years 1 – 2 implementation phase.

Audio Recording
The Sonoma County Water Agency (Water Agency) has a policy that when an attendee is recording a Panel meeting, staff do so as well and make the recording available to all. An observer acknowledged that he planned to audio record the meeting therefore staff recorded as well. Any

Panel members or interested parties seeking the audio recording should contact Marcus Trotta (mtrotta@scwa.ca.gov).

Next Panel meeting: May 14, 2015

http://www.scwa.ca.gov/srgroundwater/

Action items

Action	*Responsible party*	*Deadline*
Feedback on draft workplan	Panel members	February 26, 2015
Feedback on RR drought study	Panel members	March 3, 2015
Distribute legislative update to Panel members	CCP	February 20, 2015

MEETING SUMMARY

Facilitator Rich Wilson began the meeting by reviewing the agenda. He subsequently gained support from the Panel for ground rules to guide a civil and constructive meeting. He introduced Jay Jasperse, Chief Engineer for the Sonoma County Water Agency (Water Agency), to provide the first presentation of the meeting.

Presentation on SGMA by Jay Jasperse, Sonoma County Water Agency

Jay Jasperse presented an overview of SGMA, passed by the legislature in September 2014 and then signed into law by Governor Brown. Through the formation of new GSAs, SGMA gives local agencies (cities, counties and water districts) additional powers to sustainably manage groundwater over the long-term. SGMA also requires GSPs be developed for medium- and high-priority groundwater basins.

There are three medium priority basins in Sonoma County: the Santa Rosa Plain, Sonoma Valley and Petaluma. As a first step to address SGMA, in October 2014, County and Water Agency staff formed a workgroup to consider governance options and have been meeting with stakeholders to inform them of the new law's requirements and to discuss collaborative approaches. The workgroup will brief the Water Agency's Board of Directors and County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors on SGMA on March 17, 2015. The introductory SGMA presentation provided information on the following:

- SGMA timeline and key implementation milestones
- Land use planning connections
- Formation of GSAs and development of GSPs
- Backstop role of the State
- Next Steps

Interested parties may view the presentation here: http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs//water-resources//groundwater//sgma/SGMA_PRESENTATION_DEC_2014_access.pdf

Jay also distributed a FAQ document that summarizes SGMA issues relevant to Sonoma County. The FAQ is available here: http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs/water-resources/groundwater/sgma/GroundwaterAct_FAQ_Dec2014_v2.pdf

For more information on California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) basin prioritization process please visit:
http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/casgem/basin_prioritization.cfm

Open discussion / Q&A followed the presentation:

- Question: We are ahead of the game with our GMP, but will we incorporate numerical sustainability goals?
  Response: Yes, measurable goals are required under SGMA. We will add them by 2022, or before if we choose.
- Question: what is meant by "degraded water supply?"
  Response: This will need to be defined in the future GSP, which must be approved by the state.
- Question: What will happen to our GMP under SGMA, and when?
  Response: We must update our plan by 2022. There are no interim deadlines for modifying our GMP, however there are steps along the way like creating a GSA. Also note that implementation of the adopted GMP will be ongoing while we work on SGMA compliance.
- Question: What is the distinction between sustainability versus recovery?
  Response: The baseline is set at January 2015 in SGMA, but GSAs can pick an earlier date. This is already under discussion in the Sonoma Valley, where we have documented ongoing groundwater declines.
- Question: What will small users (less than 2 acre-feet per year) be required to do to comply with SGMA?
  Response: This will be up to each GSA, but could involve monitoring and reporting. Identifying the so-called "de minimis" users will be challenging, but generally assumed that one single-family home is under the 2 afy threshold.
- Question: Have state or local agencies considered what additional measures will be put into place if the drought continues?
  Response: This is a much larger statewide issue and mainly DWR's responsibility. The big issue is the central valley. Note that the Santa Rosa Plain has a head-start with an adopted GMP; it will be up to the Panel and local agencies to take appropriate action while planning for the GSP is underway between now and 2022.

SRP-GMP Years 1-2 Implementation

The facilitator briefly informed the group of two near-term activities prior to introducing Technical Consultant Tim Parker the highlight key activities that will take place during first two years of SRP-GMP implementation.

The facilitation team will soon schedule check in calls to explore each Panel member's hopes and expectations of the implementation phase, and to solicit feedback on appropriate membership composition for the Panel, TAC and funding subcommittee. In addition, outstanding action items from summer 2014, per an agreement by the Panel at the time, will be discussed at the February TAC meeting.

Tim Parker then presented an overview of early SRP-GMP implementation steps, briefly describing upcoming activities associated with:

- Implementation of management components and recommended actions (previous work of the Panel and TAC)
- Ongoing stakeholder involvement and public outreach

- Development of the monitoring program and modeling scenarios
- Review of the draft meeting framework for SRP-GMP activities in 2015
- Establishment of a funding subcommittee to develop and recommend a funding strategy for Panel consideration, including how best to optimize projects for funding. Prioritization in the adopted GMP is the starting point. Most year 1-2 are already funded.

The draft SRP-GMP workplan can be viewed here:
http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs/projects/srgw/Draft_BAP_WorkPlan_2-17-15.pdf

Open Discussion / Q&A interspersed the presentation:

- Question: Is section 5.5 of the Plan (recharge enhancement projects) incorporated into the monitoring and modeling program?
  Response: Yes. Scenarios informed by TAC and BAP discussions will be prioritized for modeling. Some project specific modeling might be necessary for recharge projects.
- Question: At what rate will funding from Proposition 1 (Water Bond) be released?
  Response: 7-8% of Prop 1 bond funding will be released for this year, likely to ramp up over the next few years.
- Question: What is the time commitment for the budget subcommittee?
  Response: Unknown, hoping to have members that are aware of existing funding sources and can match funding sources to priority projects.

Following the implementation discussion, Tim Parker briefly provided a legislative update. He encouraged Panel members to become familiar with the overarching California Water Action Plan. He described key elements of SGMA and highlighted various ongoing legislative activities including changes in the legislature, appointment by the governor and other groundwater related legislation.

The legislative update can be viewed here:
http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs/projects/srgw/Legislative_Update_2-17-15.pdf

Drought Study: Scripps Institute, USGS and Water Agency

Guest presenter Dr. Julie Kalansky delivered a presentation on a Russian River drought study being jointly carried out by the Scripps Institute, the Water Agency and the United States Geological Survey. She distributed survey questions and requested that Panel members interested to inform the study complete the survey and submit it to her within two weeks. The presentation can be viewed here:
http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs/projects/srgw/RR_drought_study_presentation.pdf

Available time in the agenda enabled brief discussion of questions included in the presentation. Bulleted responses below reflect Panel member responses.

- How do you define drought?
  - The necessary amount of precipitation to maintain healthy soil composition
  - Having less water than we need
- What makes drought readiness in the Russian River challenging?
  - Many water users in the watershed
  - Defining words like “need” vs “want”
  - Different timelines in surface water and groundwater response to drought
  - Storage capacities and management

    - Uncertainty of future scenarios of climate change
- What are the impacts of drought on the region or groups you represent?
    - Farmers cannot plan their crops because they don't know what to expect for the season
    - Wells go dry/are drilled deeper
    - Impacts on plants, wildlife and streams (salmonid species)
    - Stakeholder and community stress
- What information would make getting through a drought easier?
    - Water demand
    - More info through water bills in municipalities (info on tiered rate system)
    - Reliable info on how water is used in the community
    - Info on groundwater sources and levels
    - Outdated flood control regime management through improved forecasting and reservoir management
    - Reliable precipitation forecast
        - NOAA is working on this, but is asking that in the absence of a reliable seasonal precipitation forecast what info could be helpful (ex: what is the probability of the drought ending this year?)
    - Increased outreach effort
    - Recognition of surface water and groundwater connections
- What strategies and plans are currently in place in response to drought
    - Drought contingency plans
    - Saving water any way you can
    - PRMD programs - Permitting for rain catchment and low water use development
    - Water agency / Sonoma Marin saving water partnership resource
    - Watershed and landscape management for water capture
    - Streamline and harmonize all efforts to manage groundwater (Sacramento, well ordinances, local GMPs/GSP's)
    - Increase ease of information for soil moisture and rural water management

Public Outreach

The project team is in the process of updating materials and reaching out to increase awareness of the Plan implementation. The project team will prepare an updated Public Outreach Plan for Panel consideration. One Panel member suggested that the presence of the drought may enhance outreach opportunities while the public is attentive to drought conditions. Project manager Marcus Trotta remains available to support Panel member constituent briefings as desired.

Participants

To be added by Jennifer.

Panel Members

- Curt Nichols, Construction Coalition
- Daniel Sanchez, North Bay Association of Realtors
- Dawna Gallagher, Santa Rosa Plain Well Owner & Clean Water Sonoma Marin
- Edward Grossi, Sweet Lane Wholesale Nursery
- Garrett Broughton, Town of Windsor
- Gary Mickelson, California Groundwater Association

- Jane Nielson, Sonoma County Water Coalition and O.W.L. Foundation
- Jay Jasperse, Sonoma County Water Agency
- John Nagle, Sonoma County Winegrape Commission
- Kara Heckert, Sonoma Resource Conservation District
- Keith Abeles, Sonoma Resource Conservation District RCD (Alternate)
- Lloyd Iverson, Well Owner
- Margaret DiGenova, Cal American Water Company
- MaryGrace Pawson (Rohnert Park Alternate)
- Maureen Geary, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Michael Burns, Santa Rosa Resident
- Rocky Vogler, City of Santa Rosa
- Rue Furch, Sebastopol Water Information Group (SWIG) and Sierra Club
- Sandi Potter, Sonoma County PRMD
- Tito Sasaki, Sonoma County Farm Bureau

Staff

- Marcus Trotta, Sonoma County Water Agency (Project Manager)
- Tim Parker, Parker Groundwater (Technical Consultant)
- Rich Wilson, Center for Collaborative Policy (Facilitator)
- Jennifer Larocque, Sonoma County Water Agency (Public Outreach)
- Marci DuPraw, Center for Collaborative Policy
- Pete Parkinson, Consultant
- Julie Kalansky, SCRIPS

Observers

- Len Holt
- Karl Adelman
- Keith Abeles