

# **Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Planning Steering Committee Recommendation**

Dated 3/1/2011

The Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Steering Committee recommends that stakeholders collaboratively develop a non-regulatory, voluntary groundwater management plan for the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Basin. Beginning this spring, the Sonoma County Water Agency would convene a broad-based Basin Advisory Panel to develop a consensus-based groundwater plan under the Groundwater Management Act (AB 3030).

Following on the successful groundwater planning effort in the Sonoma Valley, the Basin Advisory Panel would be the primary decision-making body in developing the plan. The Basin Advisory Panel would consist of 25-30 members representing key groundwater interests: Agriculture (Dairies, Farmers & Grape Growers and Wineries); Business / Developers; Environmental; Government (Tribal, State, County, and Cities); Public Health; Rural Residential Well Owners; and Water Supply & Groundwater Technical Expertise. The Steering Committee recommends that Basin Advisory Panel members either live in or have jurisdiction in the Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed. Center for Collaborative Policy impartial mediators would work with individual organizations to identify representatives and to assure that the Panel's composition is representative of all groundwater interest groups.

## **Steering Committee Members Issuing Recommendation**

**Leslie Corp**, Western United Dairyman

**Brock Dolman**, Occidental Arts and Ecology Center

**Lynn Fritz**, Lynmar Winery

**Randy Burgess**, President of the Sonoma Branch, California Groundwater Association

**Dawna Gallagher**, Rohnert Park Resident

**Lloyd Iverson**, Rural Residential Well Owner

**Jay Jasperse**, Sonoma County Water Agency

**Darrin Jenkins**, City of Rohnert Park

**Sue Kelly**, City of Sebastopol

**Jane Nielson**, Sebastopol Water Information Group (SWIG) and Sonoma County Water Coalition (Alternate: **Rue Furch**)

**Glen Wright**, City of Santa Rosa

**Tito Sasaki**, Project Adviser, Sonoma Valley Groundwater Study

## **Background**

The Santa Rosa Plain, home to approximately half of the population of Sonoma County, faces growth in population and increasing demand for groundwater. In 2009, the Sonoma County Water Agency asked the Center for Collaborative Policy to conduct an impartial stakeholder issue assessment regarding developing a groundwater management plan. The Center recommended that preliminary planning occur in 2010. Consistent with these recommendations, the Water Agency convened the Steering Committee to address groundwater stakeholder concerns, oversee a public education and outreach effort to build common understanding about groundwater, and develop recommendations on whether groundwater planning should proceed based on these activities. The Committee met six times in 2010. The Committee held three educational workshops and conducted briefings with 20 organizations. The Committee's recommendations are based on the understanding gained through these outreach activities.

## **Public Outreach Briefings**

(Organized Chronologically)

- Town of Windsor (conducted April 7, 2010, and March 2, 2011)
- Democratic Club (conducted June 23, 2010)
- Sonoma County Water Coalition (conducted July 14, 2010)
- North Bay Dairy Women (conducted Aug 3, 2010)
- Santa Rosa Board of Public Utilities (conducted Sept 2, 2010)
- American Society of Heating and Air Conditioning (conducted Sept 2, 2010)
- Community Alliance with Family Farmers (conducted Sept 7, 2010)
- Russian River Watershed Association Technical Working Group (conducted Sept 14, 2010)
- League of Women Voters (conducted Sept 23, 2010)
- Russian River Watershed Association Board Meeting (conducted Sept 23, 2010)
- California Groundwater Association (conducted Sept 21, 2010)
- Sonoma County Alliance Infrastructure and Environmental Committees (conducted Sept 23, 2010)
- City of Sebastopol City Council (conducted Oct 5, 2010)
- Sotoyome RCD Board Meeting (conducted Oct 27, 2010)
- Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation Board Meeting (conducted Nov 17, 2010)
- City of Cotati City Council (conducted Nov 23, 2010)
- North Bay Realtors Association, Local Government Committee (conducted Oct 22, 2010)
- Water Advisory Committee (conducted Nov 1, 2010)
- Sonoma County Winegrape Commission (conducted Jan 10, 2011)
- Gratton Rancheria (conducted Jan 28, 2011)
- Sonoma County Planning Commission (conducted Feb 3, 2011)
- Farm Bureau Board of Directors, Natural Resource Committee (ongoing monthly updates)

## **Educational Workshops**

- Santa Rosa—Approximately 85 participants, Sponsored by Sierra Club, Sonoma County Water Coalition and League of Women Voters: November 17, 2010
- Sebastopol, Approximately 60 participants, Sponsored by the City of Sebastopol: December 2, 2010
- Rohnert Park: Approximately 35 participants: January 12, 2011

## **Staff to the Steering Committee**

Marcus Trotta, SCWA

Tim Parker, Parker Groundwater

Gina Bartlett and Christal Love, Center for Collaborative Policy