

Meeting Highlights | February 19, 2009

Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Program

Basin Advisory Panel

Upcoming Meetings

- March 11, 8:30-10:30, Technical Advisory Committee
- April 8, 8:30-10:30, Technical Advisory Committee
- April 23, 2:00-5:30, Basin Advisory Panel
- May 13, 8:30-10:30, Technical Advisory Committee
- June 10, 8:30-10:30, Technical Advisory Committee

State Budget Related Update

Due to the State budget issues, the Water Agency received a stop work order from the California Department of Water Resources for facilitation support by the Center for Collaborative Policy (Gina Bartlett). Currently there is no longer funding from DWR for facilitation of the Sonoma Valley GMP.

Bill Keene with the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District indicated that the Open Space District would be able to help support the SVGMP. The Open Space District is interested in protecting groundwater recharge areas in the Sonoma Valley, and has \$20,000 they wish to contribute.

AB811 Grants for Green Projects

AB811 authorizes all cities and counties in California to designate areas within which city officials and willing property owners may enter into contractual assessments to finance the installation of distributed generation renewable energy sources and energy efficiency improvements. The program, which will be made available to residents and building owners in Sonoma County March 25, allows property owners to make energy improvements to their buildings through loans from the county that are payable on the owners' property tax bills.

2009 Drought/Russian River Supply Status

In January, Lake Mendocino was at its lowest level since it was completed in 1959. For the past two years, the Water Agency has asked for voluntary conservation in order to stockpile water in Lake Mendocino for environmental needs. But with the lack of rainfall this year, and cutbacks from the Potter Valley project which normally provides more water that flows into the Russian River and Lake Mendocino, it is likely to be declared a dry year with cut backs on supplies.

Overview of Water Agency Plans for Conjunctive Use Study

The Water Agency is planning to conduct a groundwater banking feasibility study using Russian River seasonally wet, and wet year surplus water for groundwater recharge in the Santa Rosa Plain and Sonoma Valley areas. The Water Agency has proposed funding this study in the next year Water Agency budget. The Water Agency wants to discuss further with the Valley of the Moon Water District and city of Sonoma.

The Water Agency is also planning a separate stormwater capture, flood control, pond detention and groundwater recharge feasibility study for the Sonoma and Petaluma basin flood control zones. The Open Space District is a partner on this proposed study.

Initiation of Stakeholder Assessment in Santa Rosa Plain

A stakeholder assessment has been initiated on the Santa Rosa Plain area. The purpose of the assessment is to obtain information regarding the current understanding of water issues in the area, and to see if the stakeholders might support a groundwater management planning process. Thus far, the response has been positive. The assessment should be completed mid-year.

Draft State of the Basin Annual Report for 2008

The draft was discussed and comments were solicited. The conjunctive use feasibility study being planned by the County Water Agency should go into the summary. Energy and water concepts also should be considered for inclusion into the document. suggested that the groundwater description could be strengthened by tying the well depths, geologic structure and recharge zones more closely together – information could be added to the appendix. A copy of the draft report is on the SVGMP website at www.scwa.ca.gov/svgroundwater. All comments due from the BAP due to Tim Parker and Marcus Trotta by March 6th.

Organize Constituent Briefings on 2008-2009 Activities

The following commitments were identified made regarding constituent briefings:

- Sonoma Valley Rotary Club – briefed by Mark Bramfitt – good questions and interest
- Planning Commission – briefed by Pete Parkinson
- Valley of the Moon Water District – Krishna Kumar
- City of Sonoma – Milenka Bates?
- Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Association – Marcus Trotta

Watershed Scorecard – Caitlan Cornwall, Sonoma Ecology Center

This is a five organization (Sonoma Ecology Center, Napa County Resource Conservation District, The Bay Institute, US Geological Survey, San Francisco Estuary Institute), three year, \$300,000-\$500,000 project to develop tools for communities that focus attention on watershed management, describe current conditions and trends, and provide a common vocabulary for discussing natural resource stewardship in their watersheds. To meet this need, they are developing a "Watershed Health Scorecard," a simple one-page report card, modeled after the San Francisco Bay Index, on the condition of the Napa and Sonoma Creek natural resources, backed by the best science available. The first focus for each watershed's Scorecard is water supply. We selected five indices to answer the question: how is the watershed doing at providing enough water, now and in the future, for people and nature? Each index is composed of one or more indicators, which will be scored for the 2007 water year based on a reference condition or management target. The data and science behind the scores will be posted in detail on the web. Some of the challenges include the data and reporting, may not exist, not reliable, and won't be continuously reported, for example land use which is inconsistent in timing and reporting.

Implementing the Conservation Audit Program – Carrie Pollard, Water Agency

The conservation audit program consists of conducting water use audits and providing recommendations for water conservation improvements on up to 25 residences, 10 large landscape vineyard or golf course facilities, and 2 winery or dairy processing facilities. The results

of the audit and recommendations will be summarized in a report at the end of the program. The report will be used to develop recommendations for large-scale conservation efforts in the rural areas of Sonoma Valley, and should be applicable across the county. The recommendations will be used to target future grant opportunities for increased conservation the rural areas of the Sonoma Valley and county.

These audits are not just for well owners. Energy and water use is highly variable, and electricity is part of it, including electricity for well pumpage, electric heaters, mound septic systems that use electricity, etc. Under AB84 there are on demand water heater systems, and ultra low flow/no flow toilets. The audit-survey consists examining landscape irrigation systems and controllers, flow rates on all fixtures, filling out a form and questionnaire and conducting an interview on site. There is no follow up.

More volunteers for the conservation audits are needed. There is no real public outreach budget for this program, so we need your help to spread the word and get volunteers to have their place audited. Information on the conservation audit program is posted on the website with contact information.

Action Items

- Provide comments on the Draft Annual Report by March 6th
- Still need more voluntary groundwater monitoring wells
- Reach out for volunteers for the conservation audit program, and refer them to Carrie or provide contact info to Carrie
- Next TAC March 11th
- Next BAP April 23rd