

Colusa County Groundwater Commission

May 5, 2021

Public Forum: Colusa Groundwater Authority SGMA update

Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)

The Colusa Groundwater Authority is working with the Glenn Groundwater Authority to develop a single GSP for the Colusa Subbasin. Plans are due January 31, 2022. The CGA also manages a very small portion of the Butte Subbasin and they are working with ten other GSAs in the Butte Subbasin to complete a single GSP.

Meetings – Colusa Subbasin

The Colusa Groundwater Authority/Glenn Groundwater Authority **Joint Technical Advisory Committee** meets monthly on the second Friday of each month at 1:00 p.m., and occasionally extra meetings are added. **The next meeting was rescheduled and will be held Thursday, May 13 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

The **Colusa Groundwater Authority Board** meetings monthly on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. **The next meeting will be held May 25.** Meetings have been held remotely via Zoom over the last year+, due to COVID-19. The CGA Board will begin meeting in-person at their May 25 meeting.

All meeting are open to the public, and meeting materials can be found on the CGA website: <https://colusagroundwater.org/meetings/agendas-and-minutes-2021>

Sustainable Management Criteria

The Sustainability Goal and Undesirable Results statements have been adopted for the Colusa Subbasin. These components of the GSP are foundational to Plan development and have been adopted by the GSA Boards as drafts, recognizing that they will not be finalized until the full GSP is adopted and submitted to DWR.

Status of SMC:

Recommended by Joint TAC, approved by CGA Board, pending approval by GGA Board:

- 1) **Water Quality:** Adopt a GSP policy to conduct monitoring of saline groundwater to support establishing salinity thresholds for groundwater quality as part of the 2027 GSP update.
- 2) **Land Subsidence:** Adopt certain Land Subsidence MT, MO, and Undesirable Result criteria presented at the meeting.

Recommended by Joint TAC, Pending approval by CGA Board and GGA Board:

- 1) **Groundwater Storage:** Adopt a GSP policy to monitor and manage reduction of groundwater storage using groundwater level MTs and MOs as a proxy.

- 2) **Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems:** Adopt a GSP policy to improve GDE classification reliability, expand the shallow monitoring network near GDE locations, and establish minimum thresholds in the 2027 GSP update.

MTs and MOs still under discussion at Joint TAC level:

- 1) **Groundwater Levels**
- 2) **Stream Depletion**

Well Monitoring Pilot Program

From among the total of 21 applications submitted, six were selected for enrollment in the program, including three in the Colusa County portion of the subbasin and three in the Glenn County portion. Applicants will be notified about the status of their applications. Once that is complete, the successful applicants will be contacted, and initial site inspections will be scheduled. The site inspections will be conducted by members of the technical team to verify that the wells proposed for the program meet participation criteria. Assuming all six wells qualify, program participation agreements will be initiated by the respective GSAs, and the technical team will proceed with purchasing and installing monitoring equipment.

Projects and Management Actions (PMAs)

The deadline to submit potential Project ideas was May 3.

The technical team has worked on identification and development of PMAs that could be implemented to ensure that the Colusa Subbasin can be operated within its sustainable yield. The team presented a PMA status report to the Joint TAC at its April 23 meeting, including:

- 1) An overview of the types of projects being considered, including groundwater recharge (both in-lieu and direct) and reduction of non-beneficial groundwater consumption.
- 2) Sources of surface water for groundwater recharge is being investigated, including the Sacramento River (CVP contract supplies and Section 215 water), Stony Creek, and the larger westside watersheds and streams.
- 3) Conceptual plans for groundwater recharge in the two areas experiencing persistent groundwater level declines in recent years:
 - a. The Orland-Willows Westside Area, and
 - b. The Williams-Arbuckle Westside Area
- 4) Other PMAs were also presented, including demand management (reduction of groundwater pumping), which will only be investigated if sufficient, cost-effective projects cannot be identified.

Management Areas

At its April 27 meeting, the CGA acted to not form Management Areas at this time, and instead to delineate subareas called “Water Users Groups” and conduct informal subarea meetings at which

smaller groups of interested parties will meet to discuss local PMA concepts and engage in GSP development.

The Glenn Groundwater Authority has informally agreed to not form Management Areas at this time in the Glenn County portion of the Colusa Subbasin.

Public Outreach

A joint meeting of the CGA/GGA boards was held on April 22, with interested parties and members of the public encouraged to attend. Two members of the consulting team, Ken Loy and Grant Davids, presented an overview of GSP Chapters 1-4, which had been released for review on April 8. The meeting was held via Zoom, and was also live-streamed on the Colusa Subbasin Facebook page.

- Colusa Subbasin SGMA Facebook Page: <https://facebook.com/ColusaSubbasin>
- Colusa Subbasin SGMA Twitter Page: <https://twitter.com/ColusaSubbasin>

Interbasin Coordination

Gradual progress continues to be made on comparison of interbasin subsurface groundwater flow and stream-aquifer interaction along streams bounding the Colusa Subbasin. In particular, additional comparison along the northern boundary (Stony Creek) and eastern boundary (Sacramento River) is being pursued with neighboring models (Corning C2VSimFG and Butte Basin GW Model). Progress on this front may take time depending on the level of engagement by the neighboring technical teams.

Technical experts supporting the preparation of GSPs for the Colusa, Butte, Corning, Los Molinos, Red Bluff and Vina subbasins met remotely on March 29 to discuss and coordinate the approaches being taken to develop sustainability criteria for Depletions of Interconnected Surface Water and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs). This same group is scheduled to meet again on May 19 to continue discussion on these same topics.

In the meantime, informal coordination continues between the Colusa and Butte Subbasin GSP consulting teams, both being led by Davids Engineering, Inc. The focus is on coordination of Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC), considering differences in local interests and concerns, as well as in physical conditions, between the subbasins.

Interbasin Coordination meeting summaries, maps of participating basins, and a spreadsheet comparing the different models being used can be found on the Butte County Water and Resource Conservation website here: [Inter-basin Coordination \(buttecounty.net\)](https://www.buttecounty.net/inter-basin-coordination)

