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Meeting Summary

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Planning (GSP) Advisory Committee Meeting #5 March 28, 2018, 5:30 – 9:00 pm

This meeting was the fifth convening of the Groundwater Sustainability Planning (GSP) Advisory Committee. It took place on March 28, 2018 from 5:30-9:00 p.m. at the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office. This document summarizes presentations to the Advisory Committee and discussion focusing on four Sustainability Indicators: Groundwater Levels, Groundwater Storage, Seawater Intrusion and Surface Water interactions. It also captures additional information provided on Basin conditions; presentation of an example proposal covering Seawater Intrusion; key points of discussion between Advisory Committee members, Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) staff and consultants; action items; and an overview of public comment received. It is not intended to serve as a detailed transcript of the meeting.

Meeting Objectives

The objectives for the meeting were to:

1. Share additional background information about Basin conditions.
2. Build understanding around four related Sustainability Indicators—Groundwater Levels, Groundwater Storage, Seawater Intrusion, and Surface Water Interactions—to inform future Advisory Committee discussions around initial proposals for each indicator in terms of Significant and Unreasonable Conditions, Minimum Thresholds, and Undesirable Results.
3. Discuss Seawater Intrusion example initial proposal to better understand the information that will be included in future options and alternatives to be presented by support staff.

Action Items

Key action items from the meeting include the following:

1) *Compendium of maps*

- a) *Staff* to revise maps as needed to make them more readable. Include additional information, such as:
 - i) Information on wells that are not already represented in the compendium of maps.
 - b) Page numbers.



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- c) *Staff* to post the maps/charts that were not in the meeting packet.
- d) *Advisory Committee members* to review compendium list of maps/charts and provide feedback to staff, particularly for red lined areas.

2) Committee request for historical basin information

- a) *Staff* to prepare trend information that is representative of basin history.

3) Example proposal – Seawater Intrusion

- a) *Staff/technical consultant* to provide multiple options that may be viable for future proposals.
- b) *Technical consultant* to incorporate an explanation of (Seawater Intrusion) risks in discussing options.
- c) *Technical consultant* to review concept of protective elevations.

4) Working group on streamflow depletion and groundwater dependent ecosystems

- a) *John Ricker* to connect with Coastal Watershed Council about joining the working group.
- b) *Kate Anderton* to send John Ricker contact information for Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute and The Nature Conservancy who could potentially join the working group (complete).
- c) *Darcy Pruitt* to follow up with Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute staff regarding considerations of groundwater dependent ecosystems in Monterey Bay.
- d) *John Ricker* to reach out to Advisory Committee volunteers (below) regarding further details of the working group.
 - i) Kate Anderton
 - ii) Keith Gudger
 - iii) Bruce Jaffe
 - iv) Jonathan Lear
 - v) Allyson Violante (absent, but indicated interest in advance of the meeting)

5) Other:

- a) *Staff* to review Charter to reassess approach to public comment and ensure approach is Brown Act-compliant.
- b) *Staff* to review date options for Joint MGA/Advisory Committee meeting (May 17 or July 19) and report back to Advisory Committee on final date.



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Meeting attendance

Committee members in attendance included:

1. Kate Anderton, Environmental Representative
2. John Bargetto, Agricultural Representative
3. David Baskin, City of Santa Cruz
4. Rich Casale, Small Water System Management
5. Keith Gudger, At-Large Representative
6. Bruce Jaffe, Soquel Creek Water District
7. Jon Kennedy, Private Well Representative
8. Jonathan Lear, At-Large Representative
9. Dana Katofsky McCarthy, Water Utility Rate Payer
10. Marco Romanini, Central Water District
11. Charlie Rous, At-Large Representative
12. Thomas Wyner for Cabrillo College, Institutional Representative

Committee members who were absent included:

1. Douglas P. Ley, Business Representative
2. Allyson Violante, County of Santa Cruz

Meeting Key Outcomes (linked to agenda items)

1. Introduction and Update on Advisory Committee Membership

John Ricker, County of Santa Cruz, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Mr. Ricker announced that the MGA Board appointed two new Advisory Committee members: Thomas Wyner, Cabrillo College, Institutional Representative; and Keith Gudger, At-Large Representative. Mr. Ricker asked the two new members, MGA Executive Team, staff and consultant support team around the room to introduce themselves. He then addressed members of the public in attendance and asked them for self-introductions.

Eric Poncelet, Facilitator, reviewed the agenda, meeting objectives, and the updated GSP process timeline.

2. Oral Communications (for items *not* on the agenda)

There were no public comments on general topics related to the Advisory Committee's work during this agenda item.

3. Broader Context for and Interrelationships among Four Focal Sustainability Indicators: Groundwater Levels, Groundwater Storage, Seawater Intrusion, and Surface Water Depletion



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Ron Duncan, Soquel Creek Water District, presented to the Advisory Committee a broader context for and interrelationships among four focal Sustainability Indicators: Groundwater Levels, Groundwater Storage, Seawater Intrusion, and Surface Water Depletion.

The group discussed the following key points following Mr. Duncan's presentation and made several requests to staff:

- The amount of groundwater pumped in the Mid-County Basin in 2016 was the lowest in about 40 years. Factors that influenced this trend in reduced pumping include: population growth, tiered water rates, and increased awareness of water use, among others.
- The graphs would be more helpful and digestible if they were accompanied by or reformatted to include more information. Some suggestions for improving the graphs include:
 - Develop a dashboard/table for key indicator data (e.g., rainfall, population, production) measured on a similar scale over a time period (e.g., five years) that shows the history, change in, and total water use over time.
 - Create a breakdown showing historical changes for different types of water uses and finer detail on pumping for each use.
 - Present data showing the impact of management acts on consumption.

4. Additional Background Information on Basin Conditions to Inform Future Advisory Committee Discussions on Initial Proposals regarding Sustainability Indicators.

Darcy Pruitt, Regional Water Management District and Georgina King, HydroMetrics, shared additional background information on basin conditions in the form of a compendium of maps to inform future Advisory Committee discussions on initial proposals regarding Sustainability Indicators. Ms. Pruitt and Ms. King requested that the Advisory Committee review the listing of maps and charts distributed at the meeting for accuracy and completeness.

Advisory Committee members made the following comments on the compendium of maps:

- The readability of the maps would be improved by including the following information:
 - Information on missing wells; this will assist in determining populations impacted by the GSP.
 - Clearer boundary delineations for water formations (e.g., Purisima, Aromas) and water districts.
 - Maps that show levels and historical data overlay of water use.
 - Disconnected points in major streams (e.g., Valencia at 80-90 feet below water table).
 - Clearer refinements of watershed information.
 - Page numbers on each map for better reference.



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5. Review and Discuss an Example Seawater Intrusion Proposal

Ms. King, HydroMetrics, presented a numeric example of a Seawater Intrusion proposal as requested by the Advisory Committee members.

Key discussion points among Committee members, staff, and consultants included the following:

- An Undesirable Result could be assessed on a quarterly basis and should be applied (mg/L) by aquifer.
- When presenting proposing sustainable management criteria for Sustainability Indicators, staff and consultants should consider and include multiple viable options (e.g., different Minimum Thresholds for different locations).
- Options presented to the Advisory Committee should also consider whether the Minimum Threshold levels chosen lead to management actions.
- The concept of protective elevations should be an iterative component of each proposal presented to the Advisory Committee.
- Staff should provide the Advisory Committee with historical data, context, and rationales for all proposals presented.
- It is important for Advisory Committee members to understand the risks associated with Seawater Intrusion and other Sustainability Indicators.
- It is important to understand the impacts of particular proposal options on neighboring basins, and the impacts of those basins on the Mid-County basin..
- Overall, Advisory Committee members appreciated the format of the example proposal as something on which they could provide feedback and advice.

6. Overview of Management Areas

Ms. King provided an overview of Management Areas, including how they are defined and how they may apply to the Mid-County Basin. Key considerations around the use of Management Areas include:

- It is advisable to have fewer designated Management Areas, as each area would require justification for varying monitoring activities.
- Staff and technical consultant will provide recommendations on Management Areas to the Advisory Committee throughout the discussions on Sustainability Indicators. Committee members are also encouraged to share their recommendations for Management Areas with staff and consultants.
- Management Areas could apply differently to certain areas and stakeholders.



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7. Public Comment

No public comments were provide.

8. Working Group to Review Streamflow Depletion and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Mr. Ricker discussed forming a working group to review streamflow depletion and groundwater dependent ecosystems and invited Advisory Committee members to participate.

The following Committee members volunteered for this working group. Next steps for convening this group are captured above under Action Items.

- Kate Anderton
- Keith Gudger
- Bruce Jaffee
- Jonathan Lear
- Allyson Violante (absent, but indicated interest in advance of the meeting)

9. Confirm February 28th Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

The Advisory Committee members did not have any edits or comments on the February 28th Advisory Committee meeting summary. Mr. Poncelet confirmed it for submission to the MGA Board.

10. Confirm Amended Advisory Committee Charter

Mr. Poncelet explained that the Advisory Committee Charter was updated to reflect changes in Advisory Committee membership. One Committee member noted additional minor updates. Others recommended that staff again review the public involvement section of the Charter (Section 4) for compliance with the Brown Act. The Advisory Committee confirmed the changes made.

11. Next Steps

In closing, Mr. Poncelet reviewed the anticipated meeting objectives for the April, May and June Advisory Committee meetings, as well as action items from this meeting. Darcy Pruitt, RWMF, noted that Executive staff members are working on scheduling the joint MGA Board/Advisory Committee for July rather than May. Executive staff members closed the meeting by thanking the attendees for their participation.