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Meeting Summary

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Planning Advisory Committee Meeting #13 October 24, 2018, 5:00 – 8:30 pm

This meeting was the thirteenth convening of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Planning (GSP) Advisory Committee. It took place on October 24, 2018 from 5:00 - 8:30 p.m. at the Simpkins Family Swim Center in Santa Cruz. This document summarizes key outcomes from Advisory Committee and staff discussions on the following topics: project updates; groundwater modeling Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) update and recommendations on addressing climate change effects on sea level rise in the Mid-County Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP); groundwater modeling results for sustainability strategies; federal and state statutory and regulatory framework governing groundwater quality; and staff proposal for groundwater quality sustainable management criteria. It also provides an overview of public comment received. It is not intended to serve as a detailed transcript of the meeting.

Meeting Objectives

The primary objectives for the meeting were to:

- Receive an update on work of the Groundwater Modeling Technical Advisory Committee.
- Review and discuss groundwater modeling results for sustainability strategies:
 - Understand what we can learn from the results.
 - Evaluate results against Minimum Thresholds and Measurable Objectives.
 - Provide Advisory Committee feedback on Sustainable Management Criteria to inform future modeling iterations.
- Review federal and state statutory and regulatory framework governing potential GSP management actions and projects related to water quality, and discuss a staff proposal for groundwater quality sustainable management criteria.

Action Items

Key action items from the meeting include the following:

1. Technical staff to update the list of water quality constituents under the draft Groundwater Quality Sustainable Management Criteria as follows:



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- a. Include constituents in addition to the ones currently on the list that are naturally occurring.
 - b. Exclude treated iron manganese.
 - c. Include only constituents relevant to the Basin.
2. Staff to convene the next Surface Water Interactions working group in December or January and to report back to the Advisory Committee on this sustainability indicator in early 2019.
 3. Technical staff to review modeling efforts on combined potential effects of larger volume injections and the PureWATER Soquel project and present to the Advisory Committee in early 2019.

Meeting attendance

Committee members in attendance included:

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

Committee members who were absent included:

1. John Bargetto, Agricultural Representative
2. Thomas Wyner for Cabrillo College, Institutional Representative

Meeting Key Outcomes (linked to agenda items)

1. Introduction and Discussion of GSP Process Timeline and Project Updates

Ron Duncan, Soquel Creek Water District, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Mr. Duncan asked the GSP Advisory Committee members MGA Executive Team, and the consultant support team around the room to introduce themselves. He also 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.

Mr. Poncelet then invited the following project updates:



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- **Advisory Committee Field Trip**

Darcy Pruitt, Regional Water Management Foundation (RWMF), updated the Committee on the October 23rd field trip, reporting that the group visited seven different sites in the Santa Cruz Mid-County Basin to learn about issues related to groundwater planning and monitoring, habitat restoration and various relevant projects. She emphasized that there was a good representation of staff from agencies throughout the Basin, including Soquel Creek Water District, City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, and the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County who presented on the topics and addressed questions from the participants. Participants included Advisory Committee members, Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) Board members, project staff, and members of the public. Overall, Ms. Pruitt indicated that participants conveyed that the field trip was a fun and informative experience.

- **DWR Update**

Amanda Peisch-Derby, DWR, reported that with the passage of Proposition 68, \$50 million and \$100 million of Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) funding will possibly be allocated to groundwater sustainability planning and projects and management actions, respectively. She added that a draft funding report will be released in 2020.

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

No public comments were provided on non-agenda items during this session.

3. Update on Santa Cruz Mid-County Basin Groundwater Modeling Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Efforts

Cameron Tana, Montgomery & Associates, informed the Committee that the Groundwater Modeling Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on October 17, 2018 to discuss how it is using modeling to simulate climate change relating to sea level rise. Mr. Tana reported that the TAC made two recommendations at the meeting: 1) to continue using the historical catalog model for the climate change scenario in the GSP; and 2) to update sea level rise projections to match recently released state revised projections.

Following Mr. Tana's update, Committee members briefly discussed the logic behind the TAC selecting the 5% probability scenario (1 in 20 chance). Mr. Tana assured the Committee that the TAC is using a published probability scenario.

4. Groundwater Modeling Results for Sustainability Strategies

Mr. Tana presented key groundwater modeling result scenarios for sustainability strategies, including pumping impacts on key sustainability indicators, effects of stable water demand, pumping



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redistribution of reduced pumping, and an example of modeling impacts of the City of Santa Cruz Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) project. Mr. Tana also discussed evaluating such results against Minimum Thresholds and Measurable Objectives and posed the discussion question: What do the modeling results say about preferred management actions or projects to achieve sustainability? An audio recording of Mr. Tana's presentation is available on the Mid-County website.

Following Mr. Tana's presentation, the Advisory Committee and staff discussed the following issues and topics related to the groundwater modeling results:

- The relationship between the project water volume maximum related to the current municipal pumping data in the testing scenario where groundwater demand was reduced (5,000 AFY) to municipal pumping (3,450 AFY).
- The importance of referencing Pajaro Valley when testing pumping for the Aromas Aquifer.
- The current groundwater level recovery is not stable given assumptions of reduced rainfall and demand growth.
- The impact of demand growth at the coastal service areas versus at areas proximate to the coast.
- The effect of climate change on irrigation demand in the Basin.
- The baseline for the redistribution calculations and whether all of the redistribution scenarios are feasible.

With respect to the Santa Cruz ASR project, the Committee and staff discussed the following key points:

- Design criteria for the ASR project includes groundwater modeling in the Santa Cruz Mid-County and Santa Margarita areas.
- The differences between ASR/in-lieu strategy and ASR only strategy are related to well capacities and the amount and location of storage projected.
- Modeling results are preliminary, not cumulative, and are driven by the City's water supply planning priorities to obtain additional water supply to address supply shortfalls during multi-year drought.
- The state has not dictated a timeframe for addressing undesirable results for groundwater level proxies for seawater intrusion; in general, an average of ten years is used.
- A key question for the ASR and in-lieu strategies is whether the project can resolve the City's and the Basin's water-related issues.

5. Public Comment

During this session, Mr. Poncelet invited members of the public to comment on the Committee's discussions on groundwater modeling result scenarios for sustainability strategies, the City of Santa Cruz ASR project, and any other Advisory Committee work.



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One participant requested clarification on information related to specific data on the monitoring well graphs presented.

6. Groundwater Quality

In this segment of the meeting, Rosemary Menard, City of Santa Cruz, reviewed the federal and state statutory and regulatory framework governing potential GSP management actions and projects related to water quality and their applicability to the Mid-County GSP. Related to the topic of degraded groundwater quality, Ms. King provided an update to the proposed Sustainable Management Criteria, including a list of constituents for Purisima wells, and presented a staff proposal for interim milestones.

The GSP Advisory Committee provided general input that it would like to see a more complete list of constituents, or at least a list of constituents of concern, in order to further consider the proposal, acknowledging that the constituents listed in the presentation are naturally occurring and are generally used to assess the health of the Basin.

7. Public Comment

During this final public comment session, Mr. Poncelet invited members of the public to focus comments on the Committee's discussion on groundwater quality, and on any other Advisory Committee work.

One participant asked for clarification from Ms. King whether each point on the staff proposal for interim milestones for degraded groundwater quality graph represents an average.

Another participant requested that the list of constituents for the draft groundwater quality Sustainable Management Criteria include disinfection byproducts and contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) levels.

A participant asked why the total dissolved solids (TDS) and Chloride levels on the constituent list is not elevated along the coast.

8. Confirm the September 26, 2018 Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

The Advisory Committee did not have any edits or comments on the draft September 26, 2018 Advisory Committee meeting summary. Mr. Poncelet confirmed it for submission to the MGA Board.

9. Next Steps

In closing, Mr. Poncelet provided an overview of the GSP process timeline for the remainder of 2018, noting that there will be no Advisory Committee meeting in November. He confirmed that for 2019, the Advisory Committee members will continue to meet every fourth Wednesday of the month.



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Before the meeting adjourned, Committee members asked staff about when it plans to cover the topics of surface water interactions and the potential effects of the PureWATER Soquel project. Staff responded that it plans to convene the surface water working group in early 2019 and will report back to the Committee possibly at the February 2019 meeting. With respect to the PureWATER Soquel update, staff indicated that it may be able to address this topic in early 2019.

Executive Team members closed the meeting by thanking the attendees for their participation.