



Groundwater is a vital resource, together let's protect it.

midcountygroundwater.org • 5180 Soquel Drive • Soquel, CA 95073

SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Capitola Library, 2005 Wharf Road, Capitola

AGENDA

The public may attend and provide public comment in person.

The meeting will also be publicly streamed (viewing only) via Zoom webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82647432227>

Webinar ID: 826 4743 2227; Webinar audio by phone (669)444-9171

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Nominations to Elect a Chair Pro Tem**
4. **Appreciation for Service by Ron Duncan**
5. **Oral Communications Related to Items Not on the Agenda**
Issues within the purview of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency. Guidelines attached.
6. **Consent Agenda - Page 4**
 - 6.1 Approve June 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes
7. **General Business - Page 10**
 - 7.1 Receive Comments on the Draft Periodic Evaluation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan
 - 7.2 Biennial Review of the Conflict of Interest Code
8. **Informational Updates - Page 40**
 - 8.1 Treasurer's Report
 - 8.2 Staff Reports
 - Presentation on County Well Ordinance Update
 - GSP Implementation Status Update
 - SGMI Grant Update
9. **Future Agenda Items**
10. **Written Communications and Submitted Materials**

Written communications received by 4:00 p.m. on the Tuesday of the week prior to a regularly scheduled (Thursday) Board meeting will be distributed to the Board and made available on the MGA website at the time the Agenda is posted.

11. Adjournment

Next Board Meeting: December 12, 2024

GUIDANCE FOR ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS AND DISABILITY ACCESS

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

MGA Board meeting agendas set aside time for oral communications regarding items not on the agenda but within the purview of the MGA. Oral communications are also heard during the consideration of an agenda item.

Anyone wishing to provide public comment should come to the front of the room to be recognized by the Board Chair. Individual comments are limited to three (3) minutes; a maximum time of 15 minutes is set aside each time for oral communications. The time limits may be increased or decreased at the Board Chair's discretion. Speakers must address the entire Board; dialogue is not permitted between speakers and other members of the public or Board members, or among Board members.

While the Board may not take any action based upon oral communications, an issue raised during oral communications may be placed on the agenda for a future Board meeting.

Organized groups wishing to make an oral presentation to the Board may contact Laura Partch at 831-662-2053 or admin@midcountygroundwater.org, preferably at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Written communications to the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) Board may be submitted as follows:

- Via email: comment@midcountygroundwater.org
- Via mail or hand delivery: MGA Board of Directors, c/o Emma Olin, 5180 Soquel Drive, Soquel, CA 95073

Deadlines for Submittal:

- Written communications received by 4:00 p.m. on the Tuesday of the week prior to a regularly scheduled (Thursday) Board meeting will be distributed to the Board and made available on the MGA's [website](#) at the time the Agenda is posted.
- Written communications received after the 4:00 p.m. deadline will be posted on the MGA [website](#) and Board members informed of the communications at the earliest opportunity. Please note, communications received after 9:00 a.m. the day before the Board Meeting may not have time to reach Board members, nor be read by them prior to consideration of an item.
- Written communications received at a Board meeting will be distributed to Board members and posted on the MGA [website](#) at the earliest opportunity.

Any written communication submitted to the Board will be made available on the MGA website at <http://www.midcountygroundwater.org/committee-meetings> and constitutes a public record. Please do not include any private information in your communication that you do not want made available to the public.

DISABILITY ACCESS: Please contact Sophia Sholtz at admin@midcountygroundwater.org or 831-662-2055 for information or to request an accommodation.



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SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, June 20, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Capitola Library, 2005 Wharf Road, Capitola

MINTUES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:14 pm by chair Kennedy

2. Roll Call

Directors present: (Alternates acting as voting Directors shown in *italics*)

Jon Kennedy (Chair) – Private Well Representative

David Baskin (Vice Chair)– City of Santa Cruz

Jim Kerr (Secretary) – Private Well Representative

Curt Abramson – Private Well Representative

Carla Christensen – Soquel Creek Water District

Manu Koenig – County of Santa Cruz

Rachél Lather – Soquel Creek Water District

Rob Marani – Central Water District

Marco Romanini – Central Water District

Doug Engfer – City of Santa Cruz

Directors absent: (Alternates shown in *italics*)

Zach Friend – County of Santa Cruz

Fred Keeley – City of Santa Cruz

Jennifer Balboni – Soquel Creek Water District

Allyson Violante – County of Santa Cruz

Francis Whitney – Central Water District

Alternate directors present but not voting:

Robert Schultz – Private Well Representative

Member Agency Staff present:

Heidi Luckenbach – Water Director, City of Santa Cruz

Melanie Mow Schumacher – Soquel Creek Water District

Isidro Rivera – Deputy Director/Engineering Manager, City of Santa Cruz

Sierra Ryan – Water Resources Program Manager, County of Santa Cruz

Leslie Strohm – MGA Treasurer; Financial/Business Manager, Soquel Creek Water District

Others:

Tim Carson (remote), Rob Swartz, Laura Partch, Sophia Sholtz – Regional Water Management Foundation (RWMF)

Michael De Smidt – MGA General Counsel; Assistant Counsel, County of Santa Cruz

Georgina King (remote), Cameron Tana (remote) – Montgomery & Associates (M&A)

3. Oral Communications Related to Items Not on the Agenda

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner stated concerns regarding the Pure Water Soquel project, suggested MGA track issues around small water system consolidations, suggested MGA encourage the County to hold public forums on update to well ordinance, and suggested MGA issues on non-storm water quality monitoring.

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approve March 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes

4.2 Approve Contract Amendment with Montgomery & Associates and Proposed Services for Fiscal Year 2024-25

4.3 Approve Regional Water Management Foundation Sustainable Groundwater Management Implementation Grant Administrative Services for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (Year 3)

4.4 Approve Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Memorandum of Agreement

Public comments: Becky Steinbruner made comments relating to a few aspects of work to be conducted under the Montgomery & Associates contract amendment.

MOTION: Director Romanini; Second, Director Christensen, to approve the consent agenda with an amendment to Item 4.1 to strike a repeated paragraph from the draft meeting minutes. Alternate Director Engfer abstained on item 4.1. Motion passed unanimously.

5. General Business

5.1 Appoint a Designated Director and/or Alternate Director for Association of California Water Agencies Joint Powers Insurance Authority

Staff advised the Board of the need to appoint both a designated director and an alternate. The designated director must be a board member, the alternate can include officers to the board.

Following nominations and voting, Director Christensen was appointed as the Designated Director and Director Marani as the Alternate.

5.2 Consider Proposed Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25

Staff presented the proposed annual budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25 (FY 24/25) and summarized changes to the preliminary budget presented to the Board in March, as summarized in the Board memo and attachments. The proposed budget for FY 24/25 is 11% higher than the preliminary budget presented to the Board in March.

The proposed budget increases the amount for Administration for additional staff support for agency administration. Legal support was lowered by \$10,000 from the preliminary budget because

legal services to date from the firm Best, Best, and Krieger have been less than initially projected. The proposed budget increases the Management and Coordination budget category by \$40,000 over the preliminary budget for additional support on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Implementation grant as well as consultant support on assessing long-term funding mechanisms to support SGMA implementation. The proposed budget for the Monitoring budget category is \$389,000; an increase of \$25,760 over the prior fiscal year. The proposed work includes looking more closely at seawater intrusion and chloride levels in groundwater in the Seascapes area. The proposed budget for the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Periodic Evaluation is increased by \$15,000 over the preliminary budget based upon progress to date and the anticipated schedule for completion later this year.

The beginning cash reserves are approximately \$1.8M. Operating revenue includes a projected \$500,000 in anticipated grant funds in FY 24/25. Reserves will be drawn down over time consistent with the reserves policy approved by the Board in March 2024. The proposed budget reduces reserves from \$1.7M to \$1.3M. There is no proposed contribution from the Member Agencies for FY 24/25 because prior years' contributions and grant reimbursements have built up sufficient cash reserves.

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner asked for specifics of the administrative tasks requiring additional staff. Tim Carson responded there are some lower priority administrative items that have been deferred over time that the increased staff support is intended to address.

MOTION: Director Baskin; Second, Director Lather, to approve the budget. Motion passed unanimously.

5.3 Consider Adoption of Annual Investment Policy

In response to a prior request from the Board, staff developed a policy to guide the annual investment of surplus cash reserves and the Agency's cash management. The MGA Treasurer developed the proposed Annual Investment Policy consistent with the state and local statutes governing the investment of public funds. The Policy identifies the objectives, authorities, and related considerations including safety of investments, liquidity, and return on investment. The Policy identifies authorized investments, diversification, performance standards, reporting and other aspects. The Policy delegates authority for investing funds to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will establish written procedures for the operation of the investment program consistent with this investment policy. The Policy is to be reviewed and approved annually by the Board.

Questions were raised on particulars of reporting and performance. The performance report would be brought to the Board at each meeting, included with the Treasurer's report. The annual report with investment policy updates would include any new guidelines, should they change. The maximum maturity for investments is 5 years, the average maturity is 3 years.

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner requested to know the frequency of treasurer reports to the Board. Leslie Strohm responded that reports would be provided quarterly in the Board packet as they currently are provided.

MOTION: Alternate Director Engfer; Second, Director Koenig, to approve the adoption of the Annual Investment Policy. Motion passed unanimously.

5.4 Consider a Groundwater Well Registration and Metering Policy for Non-De Minimis Users

Staff presented updates on the policy for well registration and metering for non-de minimis users considering comments raised at the March meeting. The primary mechanism of enforcement is to submit a notice of non-compliance to Santa Cruz County Environmental Health. The County is working on a well ordinance update that will require all non-de minimis users to install meters on new and rehabilitated wells.

To achieve compliance with this policy, a well owner will need to register the well, install a meter, and report the information from the meter. Missing any of these steps may trigger a notice of non-compliance. MGA reserves the right to impose a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 with up to \$100 for each additional day of non-compliance. There may be circumstances around seawater intrusion in certain areas that require the statistical data that well meters would provide. The enforcement portion of this policy would provide a framework for collecting that data.

MGA reserves the right to enter into an agreement with member agencies to enforce portions or totality of the policy. The compliance review and appeals process was streamlined from the previous version and shortened the amount of time and interaction that the Basin Point of Contact (POC) will have with the well owner. The appeals process consists of the following:

1. A certified-mail letter will be sent to the well owner to explain the violation. The well owner will have 45 days to respond. If the owner doesn't respond or the schedule is not met, the POC would issue a notice of non-compliance and provide a date for appeal at the next Board Meeting.
2. If the owner decides to appeal, they must provide the appeal in writing at least 14 days in advance of the applicable MGA Board Meeting. A hearing would take place where the board can consider the owner's appeal and whether the policy should apply.
3. If the owner does not appeal or there is agreement that the policy does apply to the owner despite their appeal, the board would authorize the POC to send a report to Santa Cruz County Environmental Health.

Questions were raised about the methods for determining non-de minimis users. Staff responded that estimates were originally based on land use information and followed up through additional county records review and surveys sent to property owners.

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner cited policy language (e.g., "shall" and "must") as a cause for concern and advocated for enforcement without financial penalties.

MOTION and RESOLUTION: Director Romanini; Second, Director Baskin, to approve the adoption of the Groundwater Well Registration and Metering Policy for Non-De Minimis Users. Roll call vote required due to additional resolution.

AYES: Abramson, Baskin, Christensen, Kennedy, Kerr, Koenig, Lather, Romanini, Alternate Director Engfer
NOES: Marani

Resolution carried.

5.5 Consider Groundwater Monitoring Well Agreements between MGA and Member Agencies

Staff brought consideration of the Groundwater Monitoring Well Agreement (Agreement) to the Board. MGA constructed seven shallow groundwater monitoring stations. The wells were funded

by two Department of Water Resources (DWR) grants. The Agreement proposes that MGA continue to monitor the wells and maintain responsibility for costs associated with monitoring and maintenance. The respective Member Agencies would assume ownership of the wells located within their jurisdiction boundaries. The receiving Member Agency would assume legal responsibility and assume the well(s) as a capital asset. The transfer of legal ownership to Member Agencies requires DWR approval because construction of the wells was funded in part from DWR grants.

The template agreement in the packet was reviewed by legal counsels representing DWR, Soquel Creek Water District (District), and the MGA. All approved the template. Recommended action is for the Board to authorize the Chair to execute the Agreement subject to final MGA counsel approval. The Agreement will next go to the County of Santa Cruz (County) and the District for consideration/approvals. The motion allows for non-substantive revisions to the Agreement to be approved by MGA legal counsel. If either the County or District proposes substantive revisions to the Agreement, then the Agreement would return to the MGA for reconsideration at a future MGA Board meeting.

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner requested additional information on the need for transferring ownership to member agencies. Tim Carson responded that prior Board discussion and direction defined roles for the MGA and Member Agencies and the prior direction is that the MGA does not intend to lead on capital projects nor hold capital assets.

MOTION: Director Christensen; Second Director Romanini, to authorize the Board Chair, subject to MGA legal counsel approval, to execute agreements for Monitoring Well Agreements with Soquel Creek Water District and the County of Santa Cruz. Motion passed unanimously.

5.6 Receive Update and Provide Direction on the Periodic Evaluation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Georgina King provided an update on the status of the Periodic Evaluation and a revised timeline.

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner requested additional information on the updated modeling assumptions and asked how the public would be notified of the draft periodic evaluation. MGA responded that modeling assumptions would be discussed under the next agenda item and that the draft evaluation would be noticed through the MGA e-blast distribution list.

MOTION: Director Romanini; Second Director Lather, to concur with the approach and schedule for concluding the Periodic Evaluation. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Informational Updates

6.1 Presentation on Groundwater Modeling Analysis of Technical Development of GSP Projects and Management Actions (SGMI Grant Component 4, Task 2)

Cameron Tana provided an update on the groundwater modeling efforts to assess the development of GSP projects and management actions and changes to modeling assumptions from the initial 2020 Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Mr. Tana provided an overview and a description of next steps under the system optimization study.

Public comment: Becky Steinbruner noted that she still was unclear on what modeling assumption changes occurred since the 2020 Basin GSP and requested that the system optimization study continue to consider additional refinement of alternatives considered.

6.2 Staff Reports

- GSP Implementation Status Update

No comments or questions.

- SGMI Grant Update

No comments or questions.

6.3 Treasurer's Report

Public comments: Becky Steinbruner questioned the nature of a recurring expense for Google in the report. Tim Carson responded that it is for a subscription to Google Workspace that is used for MGA administrative tasks.

7. Future Agenda Items

A request was to receive an update on the Kisters data security breach.

8. Written Communications and Submitted Materials

No written communications were received.

9. Adjournment

Next Board Meeting: September 19, 2024

September 19, 2024

MEMO TO THE MGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Subject: Agenda Item 7.1

Title: Receive Comments on the Draft Periodic Evaluation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Attachment(s):

1. Presentation on Draft Periodic Evaluation

Recommended Board Action: Provide Comments and Receive Public Comment on the Draft Periodic Evaluation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

Background

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires Periodic Evaluation that is due at least every five years after submittal of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP or Plan). The Periodic Evaluation is intended to be a thorough assessment of how a GSP is performing and whether modifications are needed.

In June 2023, the MGA Board approved a contract amendment with Montgomery & Associates (M&A) to conduct a Periodic Evaluation of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin GSP. Work on the Periodic Evaluation by M&A commenced in July 2023.

In October 2023, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) released anticipated guidance: [A Guide to Annual Reports, Periodic Evaluations, & Plan Amendments](#). M&A is preparing the Periodic Evaluation with consideration of the DWR guidance document.

In December 2023, March 2024, and June 2024, the MGA received updates on the Periodic Evaluation and the public had opportunity for comment. On June 20, 2024, the MGA Board concurred with the MGA and M&A staff proposed schedule to: 1) release a draft Periodic Evaluation by August 20, 2024; 2) provide Board comments and receive public comment by September 19, 2024; and 3) consider MGA Board approval of a final Periodic Evaluation on December 12, 2024. The Periodic Evaluation is required to be submitted to DWR by January 30, 2025.

Discussion

Following initial MGA member agency and Regional Water Management Foundation staff review, M&A completed a Draft Periodic Evaluation on August 20, 2024. The Draft Periodic Evaluation was posted in Adobe PDF format on the MGA website: <https://www.midcountygroundwater.org/sustainability-program/gsp-periodic-evaluation>. The public and MGA Board were notified of the availability of the document via the MGA's e-mail distribution list (approximately 1,200 subscribers). Notice was also given that comments on the Draft Periodic Evaluation are due by September 19, 2024. The public was invited to submit written comments via regular and electronic mail or via oral comments at the MGA Board meeting. Georgina King of M&A will provide a brief overview of the Draft Periodic Evaluation at the MGA Board meeting and Board and public comment will be solicited.

Recommended Board Action:

1. Provide Comments and Receive Public Comments on the Draft Periodic Evaluation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Submitted by:

Rob Swartz

Senior Planner

Regional Water Management Foundation

On behalf of the MGA Executive Staff

Ron Duncan, General Manager, Soquel Creek Water District

Ralph Bracamonte, District Manager, Central Water District

Heidi Luckenbach, Water Director, City of Santa Cruz

Sierra Ryan, Water Resources Program Manager, County of Santa Cruz

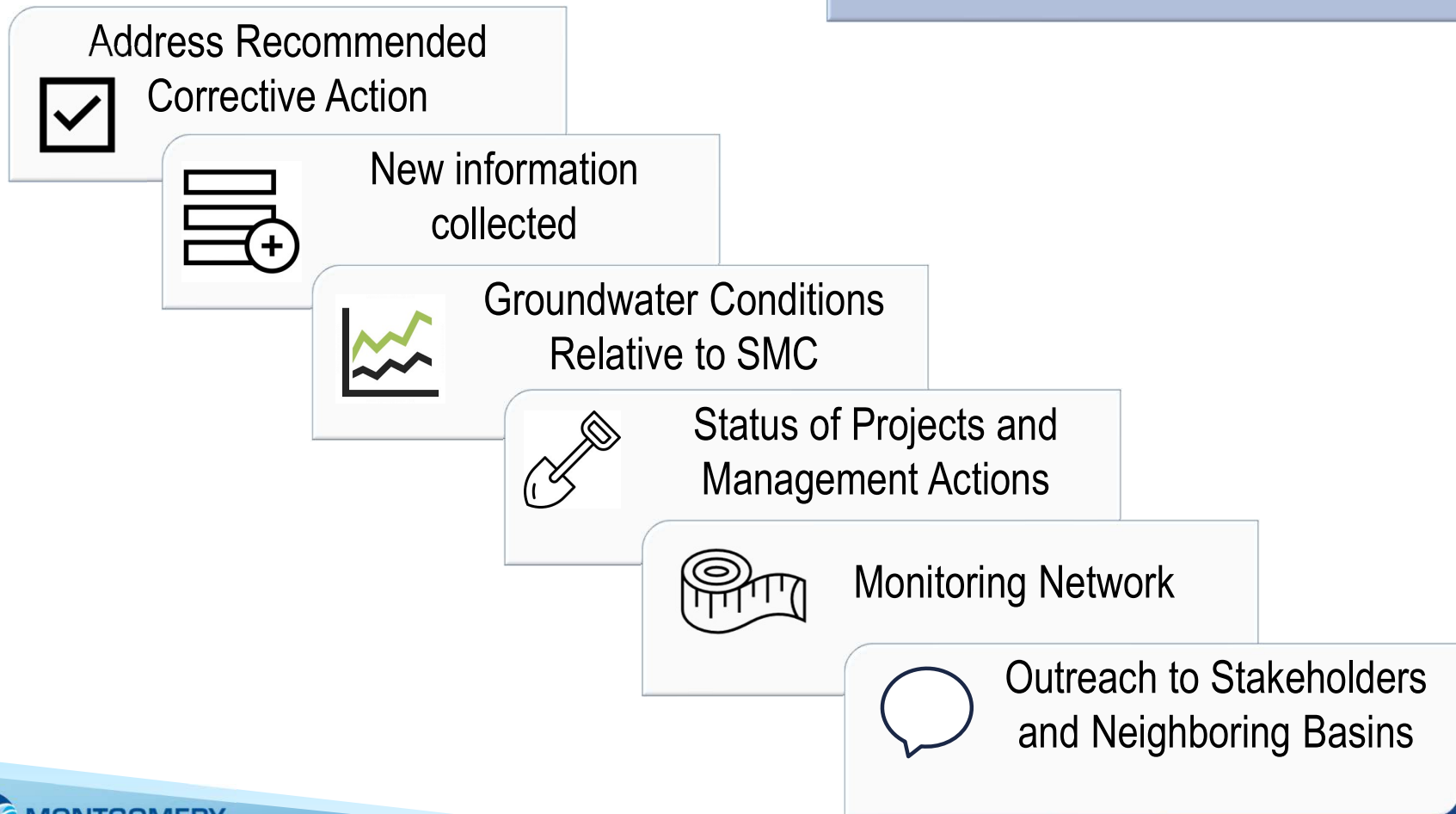
Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency 2025 Periodic Evaluation



Board of Directors
September 19, 2024

Periodic Evaluation Content

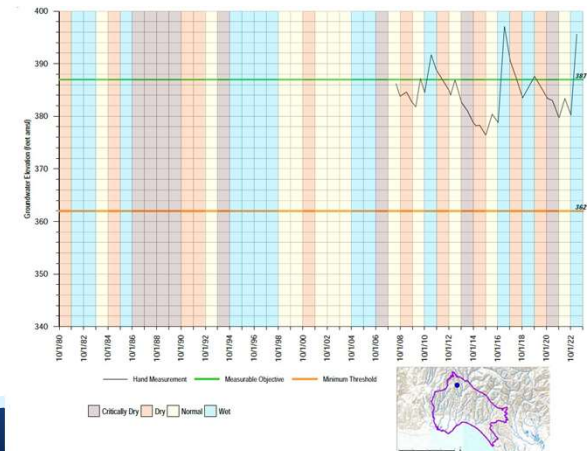
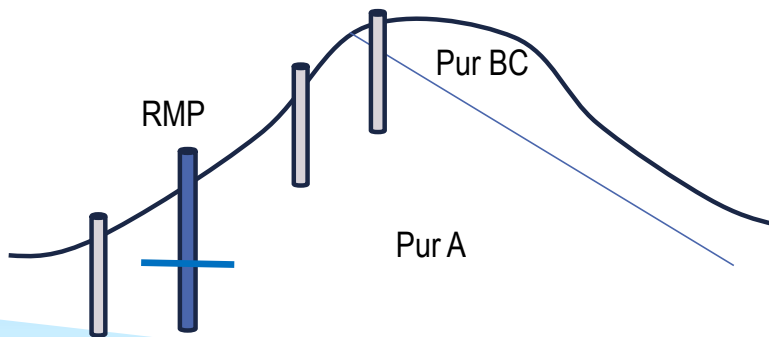
Evaluation Cycle = WY 2019 through WY 2023



**Address DWR
Recommended
Corrective Action**

Identify and quantify potential impacts to domestic wells that the Plan describes as potentially needing to be deepened if groundwater level MTs are reached

- Typical methods of identifying and quantifying water level impacts on domestic wells not work for this basin because most domestic wells are in mountainous areas with dipping stacked aquifers
- Relatively balanced groundwater conditions and stable demand supported by regulated rural land use development, limits long-term groundwater level declines in areas of domestic well groundwater use



Recommended Corrective Action

Drought Preparedness: Small Water Systems

NEW HOME PROGRAMS WATER RESOURCES DROUGHT RESPONSE DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS: SMALL WATER SYSTEMS

Para traducir esta página al español, haga clic en "Select Language" en la parte superior de la página y seleccione "Spanish" en el menú.

Santa Cruz County residents are already experiencing the effects of climate change, which are expected to only increase in the coming decades. These effects include longer, more intense, and more frequent droughts, which are punctuated by more extreme rain events. Additionally, wildfire risk in the County is projected to continue increasing, with the danger being greatest in the mountainous areas of north and central county. Residents that get their water from a small water system are especially vulnerable to these impacts, but the County has resources to help your water system adapt to climate change.

How Can the County Help Your Water System?

Santa Cruz County has secured funding for several programs that can help small water systems that have been impacted by drought.

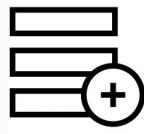
Dry Well Assistance:

Increasing drought conditions can lead to wells going dry. Santa Cruz County has secured funding to provide 3,800 gallons of hauled water per household every 6 weeks, at no cost, to small water system managers whose wells have gone dry due to drought. To receive this assistance, you will need to report the dry well through the State reporting system. County staff will review the report to determine if the well is likely to have gone dry or if there is another issue causing the well to stop producing water. If the well is likely dry, we will coordinate with you and the water hauler to fill your onsite storage tanks while a long-term solution is pursued.

REPORT YOUR DRY WELL

County has developed a Drought Response and Outreach Plan to support domestic or small water system well owners should they experience impacts to their wells, particularly during drought periods, and when State funding is available.

MGA's response to the recommended corrective action documented in Section 3 is explanatory and does not lead to any GSP revisions



New Information Collected

Significant New Information	Aspects of Plan Affected	Warrant Change to Any Aspects of the Plan (Yes/No) If yes, include section of the Plan
DWR AEM	Potentially basin setting / HCM	No
7 new ISW monitoring wells and 6 streamflow gages	Basin setting, monitoring network	No, monitoring network changes do not warrant change to GSP
2 new deep coastal monitoring wells	Monitoring network, SMC, HCM depth of aquifer contacts	No, monitoring network changes do not warrant change to GSP
PWS SWIP recharge and monitoring well installation	Potentially basin setting, HCM, aquifer properties, contact depths	No
PWS demonstration testing	Aquifer properties and basin setting	No
SCWD ASR Pilot and Demonstration testing	Aquifer properties and basin setting	No
Soquel Creek Streamflow Assessment Study	Helps the MGA design and plan PMAs that avoid habitat impairment	No, findings were informational



Groundwater Conditions Relative to SMC

Sustainability Indicators

- Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels
- Seawater Intrusion
- Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water
- Degraded Groundwater Quality
- Reduction in Groundwater in Storage
- Land Subsidence (not applicable)

Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC)

- Minimum Threshold (don't want to have levels or quality worse than this)
- Measurable Objective (goal)
- 5-Year Interim Milestones (progress towards Measurable Objective)
- Undesirable Results (combination of Minimum Threshold exceedances)

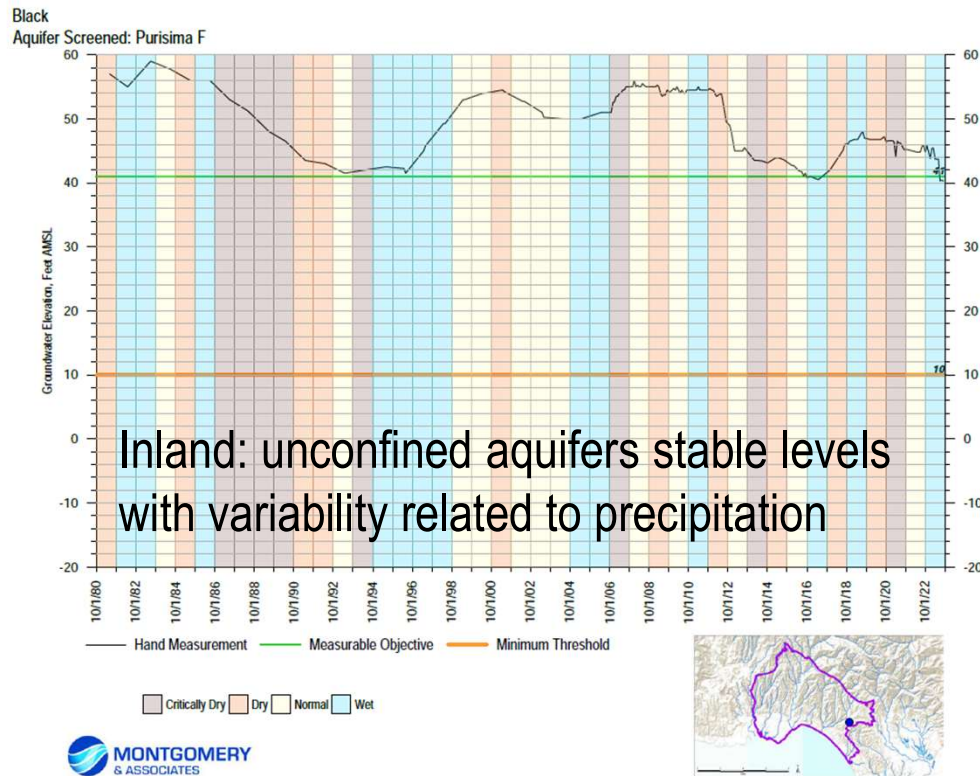
Evaluation of Sustainable Management Criteria

For each Sustainability Indicator:

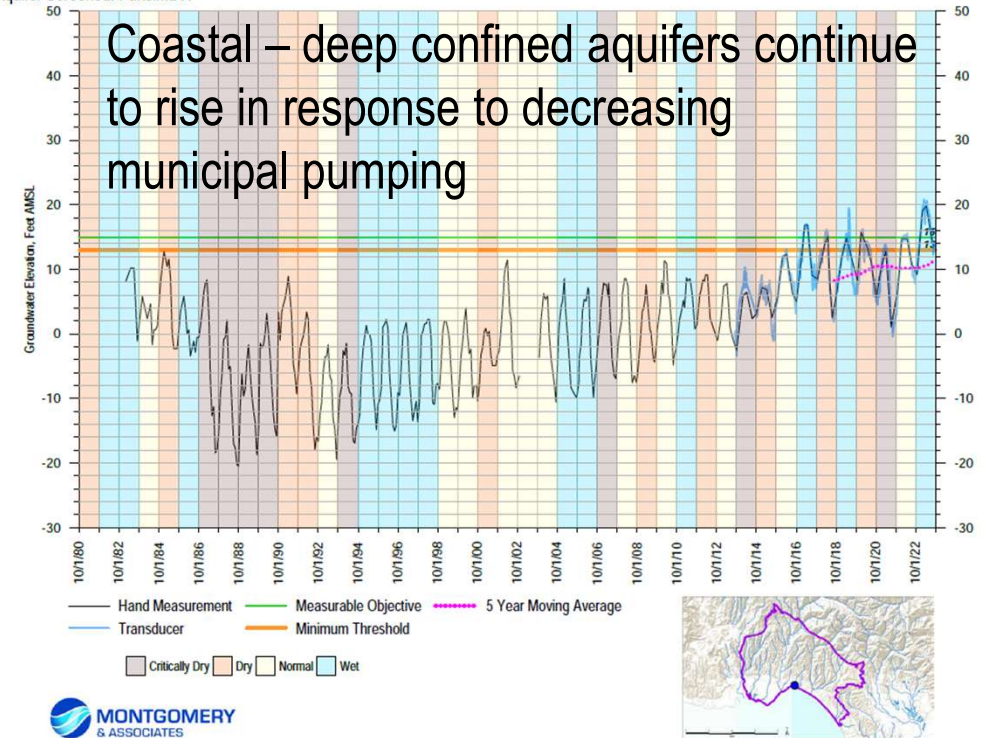
- Reviewed progress being made relative to SMC (Minimum Threshold, Measurable Objectives, Interim Milestones & Undesirable Results)
- Considered significant new information obtained over the evaluation cycle

No changes to Sustainable Management Criteria are needed

Groundwater Conditions – Groundwater Levels



SC-5A & SC-5RA at New Brighton
Aquifer Screened: Purisima A



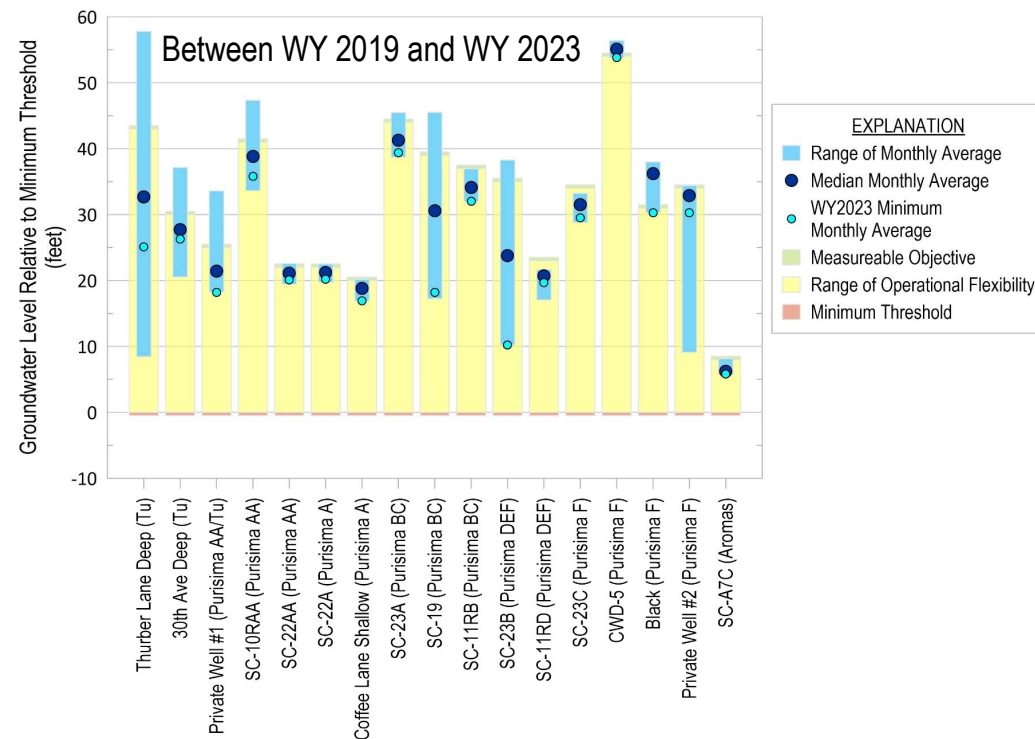
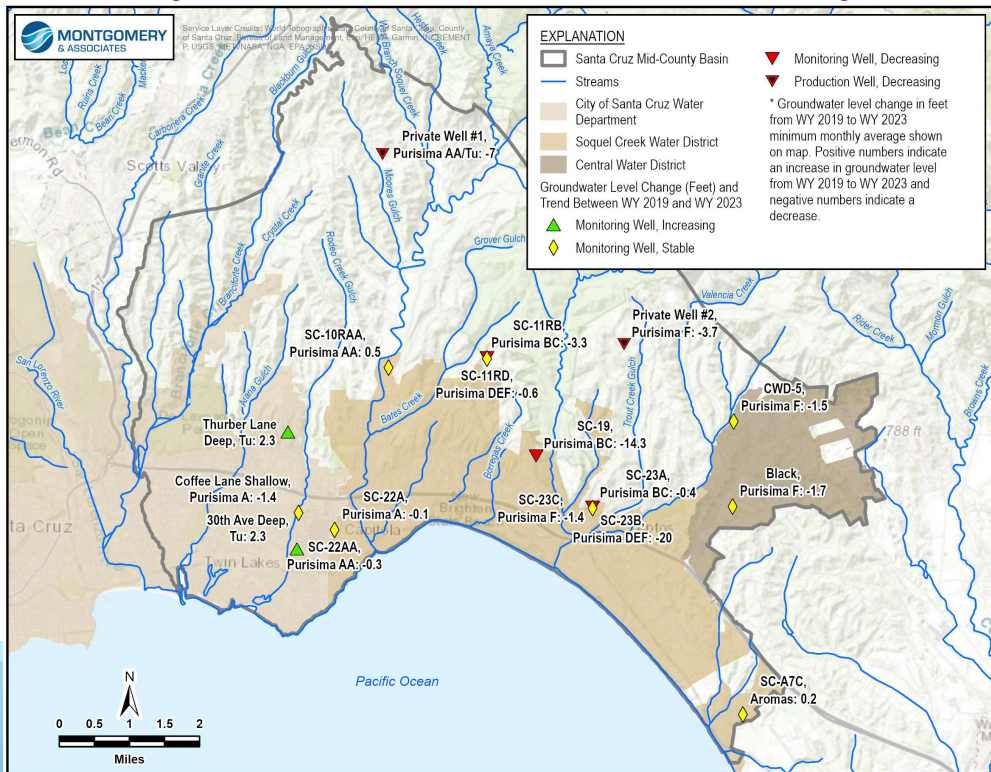
Implementation of Pure Water Soquel (PWS) and City of Santa Cruz Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) projects will facilitate further coastal area groundwater level increases to prevent seawater intrusion

Groundwater Conditions – Groundwater Levels

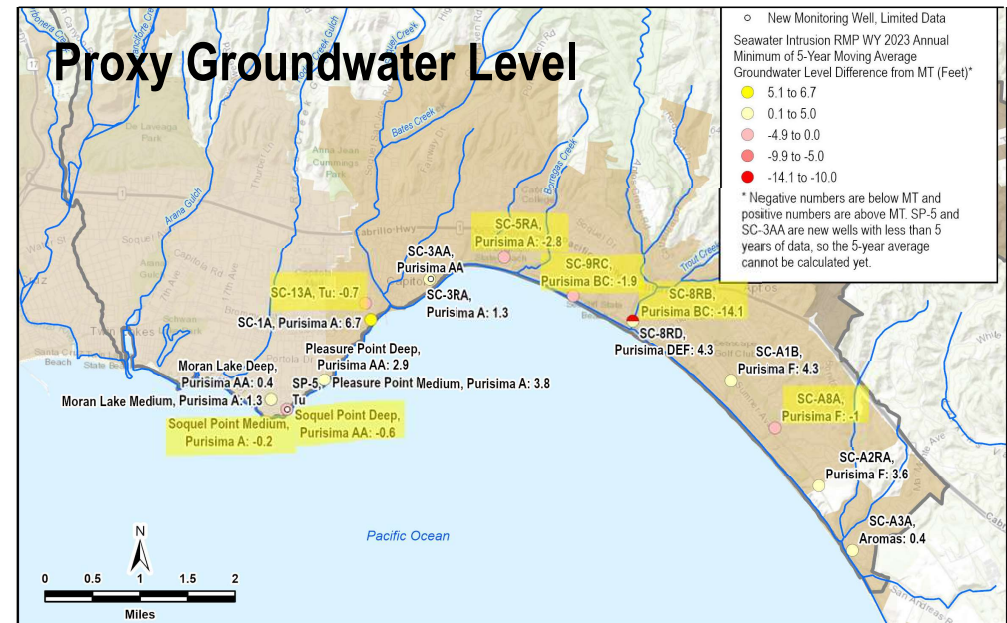
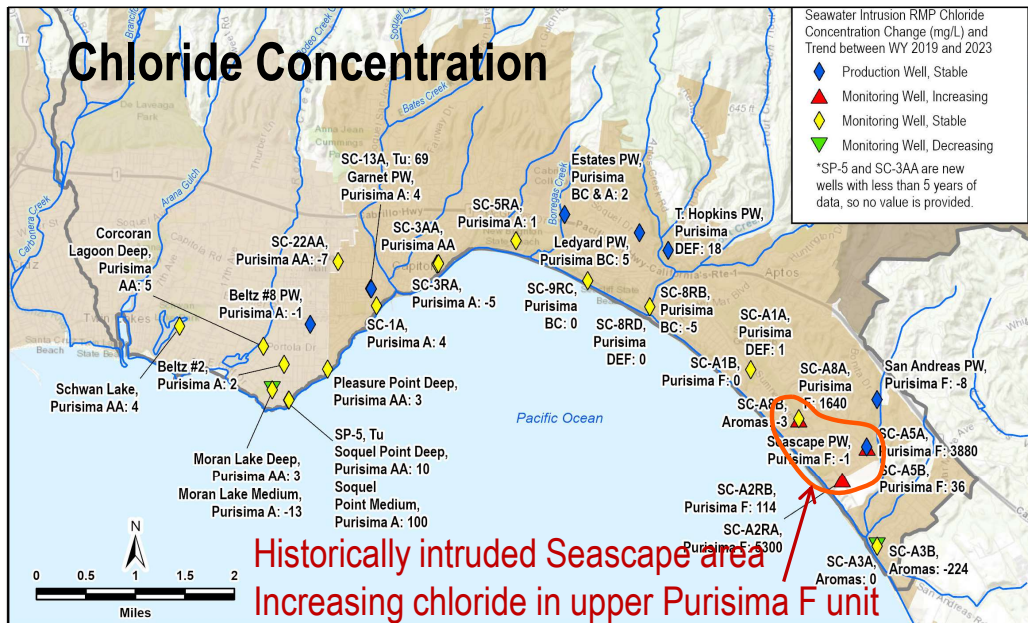
Sustainable Management Criteria

- Representative Monitoring Points (RMP) for this Sustainability Indicator do not include coastal wells – they are included in the RMP for Seawater Intrusion
- Most groundwater levels are stable or increasing

- Groundwater levels have never fallen below Minimum Thresholds
- No Undesirable Results



Groundwater Conditions – Seawater Intrusion Sustainable Management Criteria



- Except for the Seascape area, chloride concentrations are stable
- Additional analysis in the Seascape area being conducted to better understand pumping dynamics, geochemistry, and to potentially delineate the onshore extent of intrusion.
- 7 of 17 RMP have 5-Year Moving Average groundwater levels below protective groundwater levels (Minimum Thresholds)
- Undesirable results are occurring in all aquifers except, Aromas Red Sands and Purisima DEF units

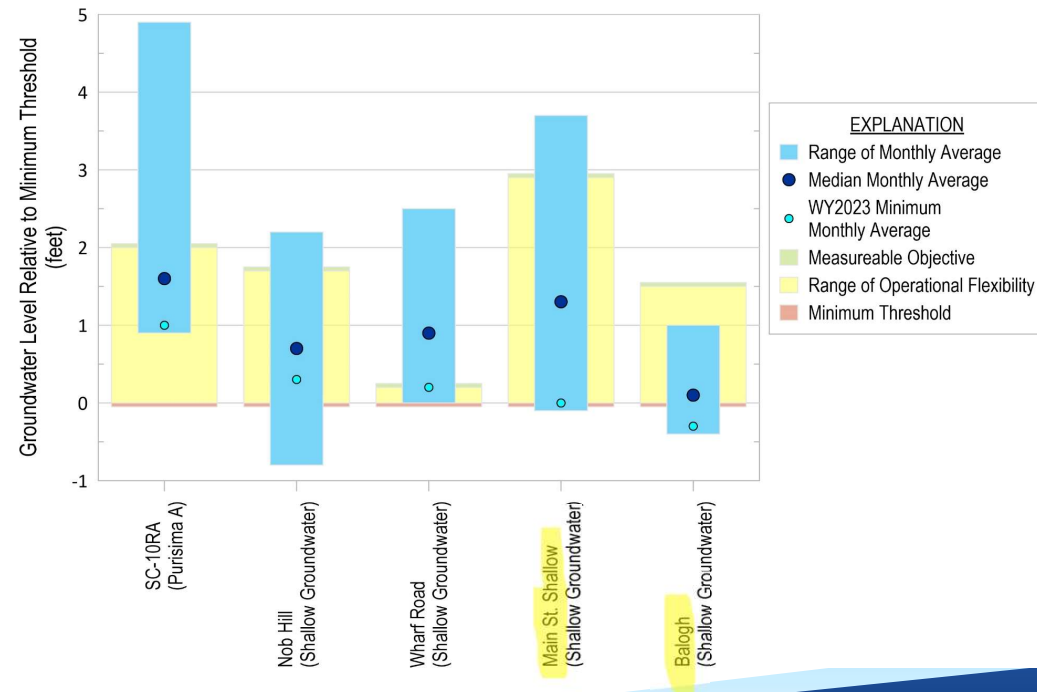
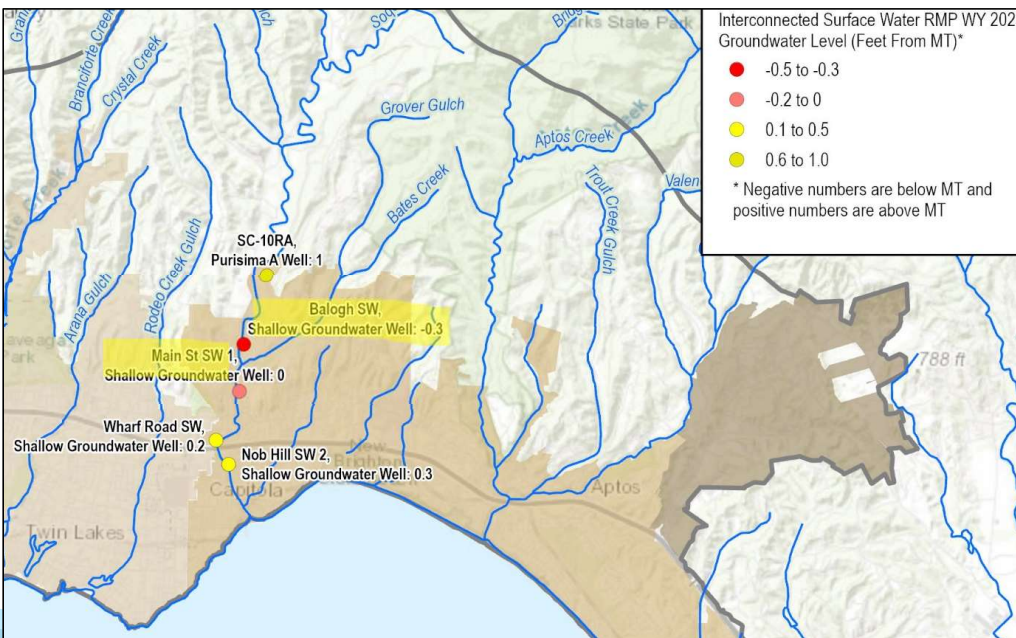
Metrics should be met by implementation of PWS and ASR projects which bring in supplemental water supplies to decrease municipal groundwater demand

Groundwater Conditions – Interconnected Surface Water

Sustainable Management Criteria

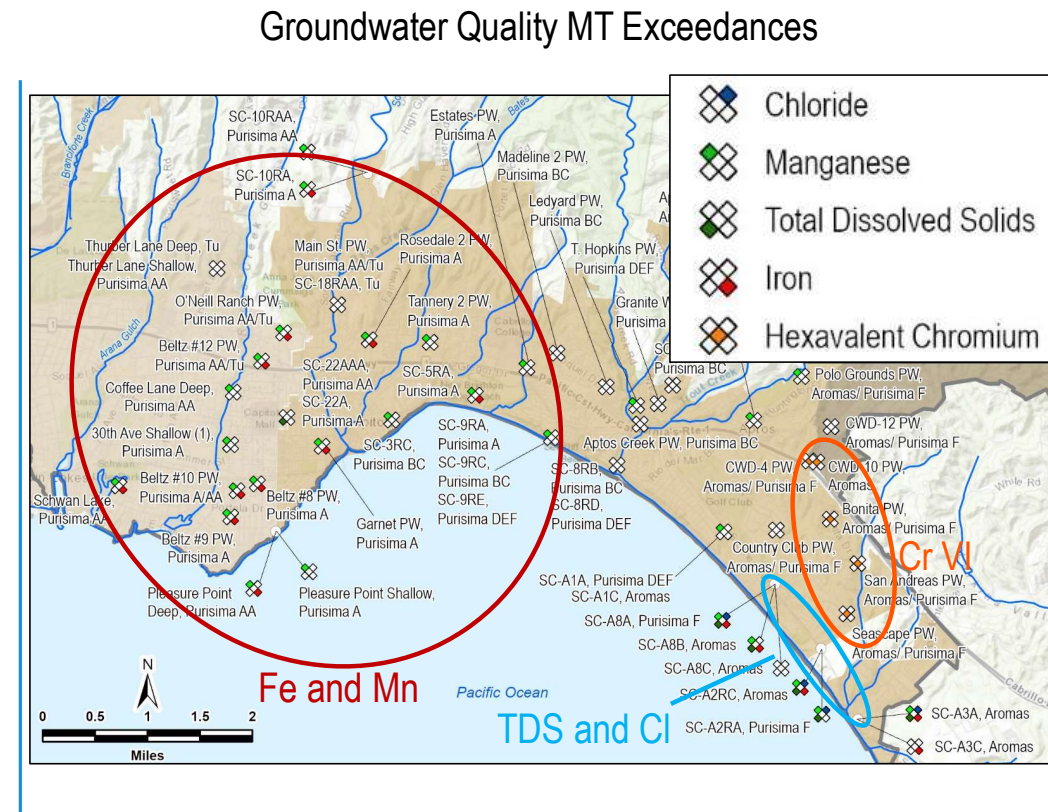
- Groundwater levels in shallow monitoring wells adjacent to streams are used as a proxy for monitoring and managing surface water depletion
- Shallow groundwater levels near interconnected streams were stable during the evaluation cycle, fluctuating by no more than 4 feet.

- Interconnected surface water monitoring network was improved with 7 new monitoring wells
- Additional monitoring data and guidance from DWR on managing depletion of interconnected surface water will be incorporated into the next Periodic Evaluation



Groundwater Conditions – Groundwater Quality

- Groundwater quality in supply wells is generally of good quality and meets regularly standards, except for a few naturally occurring constituents:
 - Iron and manganese exceed taste and odor thresholds in numerous aquifers
 - Hexavalent chromium exceeds drinking water standard in areas underlain by Aromas Red Sands
 - Water quality standards are met by blending or treatment
- Chloride and TDS exceed regulatory standards in some coastal monitoring wells



Groundwater Conditions – Groundwater in Storage

Aquifer Unit Group	Minimum Threshold	Interim Milestone 2025	Measurable Objective	Undesirable Results
Aromas Red Sands and Purisima F	not met	not met	not met	yes
Purisima DEF, BC, A and AA	not met	not met	not met	yes
Tu	met	not met	not met	no

- Minimum Threshold is the Basin Sustainable Yield, or total volume of groundwater that can be withdrawn from the Basin without causing conditions that lead to undesirable results
- Extraction volumes currently exceed Minimum Thresholds in some of the principal aquifers
- Temporary Undesirable Results are expected and will be resolved with implementation of Pure Water Soquel and City of Santa Cruz ASR



Status of Projects and Management Actions

Projects

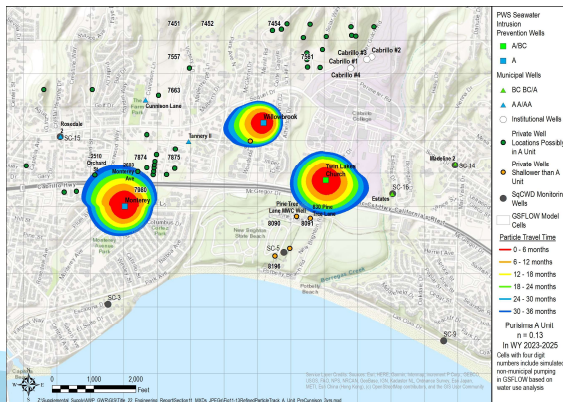
- Pure Water Soquel
- Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) City of Santa Cruz Water Department (SCWD)

Management Actions

- Water Conservation and Demand Management
- Installation and Redistribution of Municipal Groundwater Pumping
- Distributed Storm Water Managed Aquifer Recharge (DSWMAR)
- Well Metering

Pure Water Soquel

- Recharge up to 1,500 acre-feet per year (AFY) in Purisima A and BC aquifer units using purified recycled water
- Goals are to replenish the groundwater system and protect against seawater intrusion by raising groundwater levels above seawater intrusion Minimum Thresholds
- Project start up is expected in 2025



MONTGOMERY & ASSOCIATES



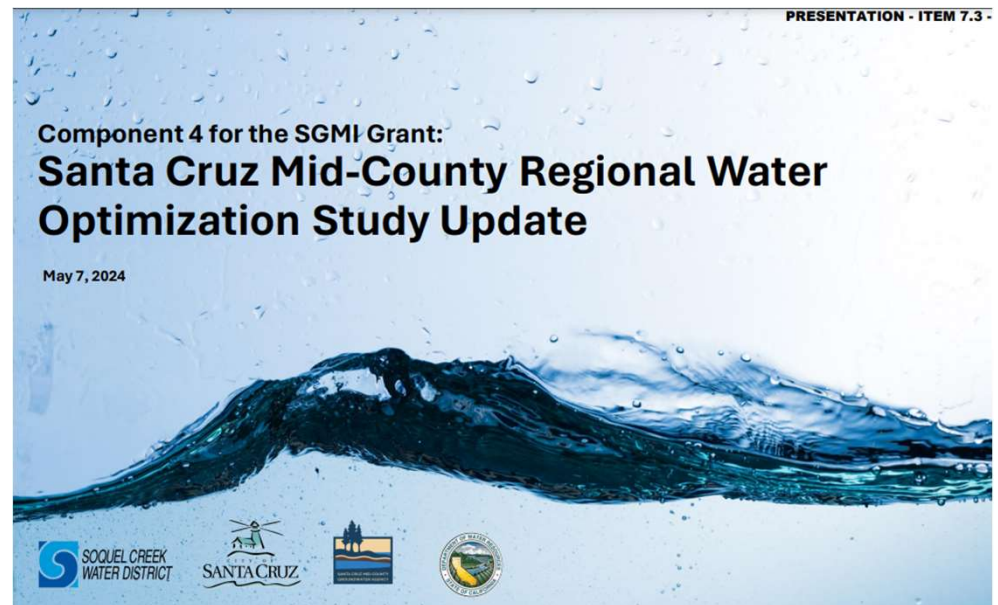
City of Santa Cruz ASR

- SCWD is planning an ASR project as part of its effort to develop additional water supplies for use during extended drought periods while contributing to improved conditions in the Basin
- Goal is to divert available flows from the San Lorenzo River, beyond what is needed to meet system demands, and inject and store the treated water in the aquifer through conversion of existing and installation of new municipal wells
- Permitting of the initial well conversion is expected to be completed in 2026



Regional Optimization Study

- Analyzes how different configurations and combinations of Projects & Management Actions can improve Basin sustainability while better meeting supply needs
- Examined reconfigurations and expansions of PWS, ASR, and inter-agency transfers
- Funded by a grant from the Department of Water Resources Sustainable Groundwater Management Program



Status of Management Actions

Management Action	Status and Benefits
Water Conservation and Demand Management	Groundwater demand has been reduced 41% since WY 1997. Increased groundwater levels in area supplied municipal water, even during the 2012 to 2015 drought
Installation and Redistribution of Municipal Groundwater Pumping	Cunnison Lane Well to be constructed by the end of 2024. Coastal groundwater levels have increased over time as pumping moves inland
Distributed Storm Water Managed Aquifer Recharge (DSWMAR)	2 facilities constructed 2 suitable sites are no longer available and a search for additional facilities is on hold

Authorities/Enforcement Action

- Amended Joint Powers Agreement and By-Laws in 2021
- Groundwater Well Registration and Metering Policy adopted June 20, 2024
 - Well registration, metering and reporting by groundwater users that extract more than 2 AFY in priority zones or users that extract more than 5 AFY anywhere in the basin.
 - Well registration is required by applicable well owners by December 31, 2024. Meter installation is required by September 30, 2025 and the first annual report of extracted volumes is due by October 31, 2025.





Assessment of Monitoring Networks

- Evaluated monitoring networks to confirm they are providing the quantity and quality of data necessary to monitor groundwater conditions in the Basin
- Monitoring networks have been expanded to fill all GSP-identified data gaps:
 - 7 new shallow wells & 5 streamflow gages for evaluating interconnected surface water
 - 2 new deep wells to monitor seawater intrusion
- Additional new monitoring wells associated with the PWS and ASR projects supplement the existing networks and provide a means for monitoring project performance



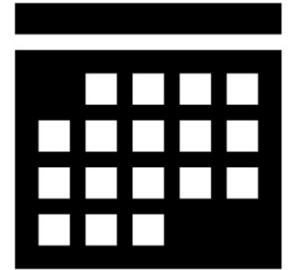


Outreach to Stakeholders and Neighboring Basins

- Stakeholder Engagement
 - Routine Board meetings and workshops provides public forum for GSP implementation
 - GSA updates website, releases newsletters, and hosts public events to promote sustainability
- Outreach to neighboring Santa Margarita Basin and Pajaro Valley Subbasin
 - Facilitate data and information
 - Discuss issues such as observed increases or evidence of seawater intrusion in an area close to the Basin's boundary with Pajaro Valley

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency. At the top is the agency's logo and name. Below this is a banner with the text "GROUNDWATER IS A VITAL RESOURCE" and "TOGETHER - LET'S PROTECT IT!". The banner also includes logos for the Santa Cruz Water District and the Soquel Creek Water District. Below the banner, there is a section titled "please join us" with logos for the Santa Cruz Water District and the Soquel Creek Water District. To the right of the banner, there is a section titled "NEXT MGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING" with details about the meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 6:00PM at the Capitola Branch Library. Below this, there is a section titled "June 20th meeting materials:" with links to the "Agenda" and "Packet". Further down, there are two links: "MGA GSP Draft Periodic Evaluation Available" and "MGA Request for Qualifications for Long-term Funding Assessment". At the bottom of the page, there is a green bar with the text "SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER". Below this bar, there are three columns: "Our Problem" with a diagram of seawater intrusion, "Groundwater Sustainability Plan" with a map of the basin, and "Community Involvement" with a photo of a public meeting.

Periodic Evaluation Schedule



- August 20: Board Draft available for review (30 days)
- September 19: Board meeting for feedback and public comment
- December 12: Board meeting to approve Periodic Evaluation
- January 30: Submit to DWR

Questions

September 19, 2024

MEMO TO THE MGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Subject: Agenda Item 7.2

Title: Biennial Review of the Conflict of Interest Code

Attachment(s):

1. Proposed 2024 Conflict of Interest Code of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency

Recommended Board Action: Review and approve the Proposed 2024 Amendment to the Santa Cruz Mid-County Conflict of Interest Code.

Background

The Political Reform Act requires every local government agency to review its Conflict of Interest code (COI) biennially to ensure it includes disclosures by agency officials who make or participate in making governmental decisions.

Upon review, agencies may determine if amendments are necessary for any of the following:

- Include new positions
- Revise disclosure categories
- Revise titles of existing positions
- Delete titles of positions that have been abolished and/or positions that no longer make or participate in making governmental decisions
- Other reasons

By October 1, 2024, local agencies must submit to the reviewing body, the County Board of Supervisors, a notice indicating whether a COI amendment is necessary. If an agency decides to amend its COI, the amendment must be approved by the reviewing body within 90 days.

Discussion

Staff requests the Board review the current COI and recommends updating the title of the designated position “County of Santa Cruz Water Resources Division Director” to “County of Santa Cruz Water Resources Program Manager”. Staff also recommends including the position of “General Counsel” as a designated position in the COI.

Upon approval from the Board, staff will file the 2024 Local Agency Biennial Notice with the County Clerk noting that amendment is needed and submit the amended 2024 Conflict of Interest Code to the Board of Supervisors for approval within the required timelines.

Recommended Board Action:

1. By MOTION, approve the Proposed 2024 Amendment to the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency Conflict of Interest Code.

Submitted by:

Tim Carson

Program Director

Regional Water Management Foundation

On behalf of the MGA Executive Staff

Ron Duncan, General Manager, Soquel Creek Water District

Ralph Bracamonte, District Manager, Central Water District

Heidi Luckenbach, Water Director, City of Santa Cruz

Sierra Ryan, Water Resources Program Manager, County of Santa Cruz

2024 CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE
OF THE
SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY

The Political Reform Act of 1974 (Government Code sections 81000, et seq.) requires state and local government agencies to adopt and promulgate conflict of interest codes. The Fair Political Practices Commission has adopted a regulation, section 18730 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, which contains the terms of a standard conflict of interest code that can be incorporated by reference in an agency's code. After public notice and hearing, the Fair Political Practices Commission may amend the standard code to conform to amendments of the Political Reform Act. Therefore, the terms of section 18730 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations and any amendments to it duly adopted by the Fair Political Practices Commission together with the attached Appendices designating positions and establishing disclosure categories are hereby incorporated by reference and together constitute the Conflict of Interest Code of the SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY (hereafter "Agency").

Individuals holding designated positions shall file their statement of economic interests with the Clerk of the Elections Department of the County of Santa Cruz, which will make the statements available for public inspection and reproduction pursuant to Government Code section 81008.

Attachments:

- Appendix A: Designated Positions
- Appendix B: Disclosure Categories

Approved by Order of the Board of Directors

Ayes:

Absent:

Adopted:

~~Bruce Jaffe~~ Jon Kennedy
 Board President

Attested:

~~Cynthia Mathews~~ Jim Kerr
 Board Secretary

APPENDIX A: DESIGNATED POSITIONS

<u>Designated Positions</u>	<u>Assigned Disclosure Category</u>
Board of Directors (including alternates)	1
Executive Team:	1
City of Santa Cruz Water Director	
Soquel Creek Water District General Manager	
Central Water District General Manager	
County of Santa Cruz Water Resources Division Director Program Manager	
General Counsel	1

APPENDIX B: DISCLOSURE CATEGORIES

Category 1

A designated position in this category must report all income (including gifts, loans, and travel payments), investments, business positions, and interests in real property located in or originating from sources doing business within the boundaries of the agency.

September 19, 2024

MEMO TO THE MGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Subject: Agenda Item 8.1

Title: Treasurer's Report

Attachments:

1. Treasurer's Report for the Period Ending August 31, 2024

Recommended Board Action: No action required, informational report only.

Attached is the Treasurer's Report for June through August 2024. These reports contain three sections:

- Statement of Changes in Revenues, Expenses and Net Position
 - This interim financial statement provides information on the revenue that has been invoiced to the member agencies and the expenses that have been recorded as of the period ending date.
- Statement of Net Position
 - This interim financial statement details the cash balance at Wells Fargo Bank, the membership revenue still owed through accounts receivable, if any, prepaid expenses such as insurance, outstanding grant receivables or liabilities, and the resulting net income as reported on the Statement of Changes in Revenues, Expenses and Net Position.
- Warrants
 - The list of warrants reflects all payments made by the MGA, either by check or electronic means, for the period covered by the Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer's Report will be provided at each board meeting according to statutory requirement and to promote transparency of the agency's financial transactions.

Submitted by:

Leslie Strohm

Treasurer

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency

Treasurer's Report

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency
For the period ended August 31, 2024



Prepared by

Leslie Strohm, Treasurer

Prepared on

September 13, 2024

Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position

June - August, 2024

	Total
INCOME	
Total Income	
GROSS PROFIT	0.00
EXPENSES	
5100 Groundwater Management Services	55,711.00
5110 Grndwtr Mgmt - Groundwater Monitoring	26,725.41
5300 Administrative Personnel Services	36,847.29
5315 Office Services	172.80
5340 Computer Services	469.00
5415 Outreach Services	3,560.95
5510 GSP Consulting Services	12,308.50
5515 Audit & Accounting Services	3,045.00
5520 Legal Services	6,138.00
5600 Pass-through Grant Expenses	703,780.92
Total Expenses	848,758.87
NET OPERATING INCOME	-848,758.87
OTHER INCOME	
4401 Grant Revenue - DWR SGMI Grant	801,171.59
4410 Grant Admin Revenue	50,331.84
Total Other Income	851,503.43
NET OTHER INCOME	851,503.43
NET INCOME	\$2,744.56

Statement of Net Position

As of August 31, 2024

		Total
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
1100 Wells Fargo Business Checking		1,862,726.04
Total Bank Accounts		1,862,726.04
Accounts Receivable		
1200 Accounts Receivable - Membership Revenue		-29,390.02
1210 Accounts Receivable - Misc		50,331.84
1220 Accounts Receivable - Grants		801,171.59
Total Accounts Receivable		822,113.41
Other Current Assets		
1400 Prepaid Expenses		1,894.32
Total Other Current Assets		1,894.32
Total Current Assets		2,686,733.77
TOTAL ASSETS		\$2,686,733.77
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable		
2100 Accounts Payable		84,130.87
2110 Accounts Payable - Grants		703,780.92
Total Accounts Payable		787,911.79
Total Current Liabilities		787,911.79
Total Liabilities		787,911.79
Equity		
3100 Retained Earnings		1,899,103.88
Net Income		-281.90
Total Equity		1,898,821.98
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		\$2,686,733.77

Warrants

June - August, 2024

Date	Transaction Type	Num	Name	Memo/Description	Clr	Amount
Bill Payment (Check)						
08/06/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10388	City of Santa Cruz Water Dept	SGMI grant expenses		-271,862.75
						-271,862.75
08/06/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10389	Soquel Creek Water District (2)	SGMI grant expenses		-166,310.25
						-166,310.25
08/06/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10390	Errol L Montgomery & Associates Inc	Monitoring network; GSP Annual Report; Groundwater Modeling update		-16,524.47
						-16,524.47
08/06/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10391	Regional Water Management Foundation	SGMI grant administration		-25,552.77
						-25,552.77
08/06/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10392	Contractor Compliance and Monitoring Inc	Olive Springs MW labor compliance		-82.50
						-82.50

Date	Transaction Type	Num	Name	Memo/Description	Clr	Amount
08/06/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10393	Soquel Creek Water District (2)	Mailchimp, Quickbooks, DocuSign, audit services, SqCWD annual labor costing		-10,675.98
						-10,675.98
07/15/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10383	Errol L Montgomery & Associates Inc	Monitoring network; GSP Annual Report; Groundwater Modeling update	R	-9,701.28
						-9,701.28
07/15/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10384	Best Best & Krieger LLP	SGMA legal services	R	-576.00
						-576.00
07/15/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10385	Soquel Creek Water District (2)	Mailchimp, Quickbooks, Zoom, audit services	R	-1,857.00
						-1,857.00
07/15/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10386	Trout Unlimited Inc	Stream and groundwater monitoring	R	-2,680.53
						-2,680.53
07/15/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10387	County of Santa Cruz (County Counsel)	Legal counsel		-5,850.00

Date	Transaction Type	Num	Name	Memo/Description	Clr	Amount
						-5,850.00
06/11/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10378	Van Essen Instruments B.V.	Diver	R	-696.74
						-696.74
06/11/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10379	County of Santa Cruz (County Counsel)	Legal counsel	R	-2,437.50
						-2,437.50
06/11/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10380	Trout Unlimited Inc	Stream and groundwater monitoring	R	-14,853.22
						-14,853.22
06/11/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10381	County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency	RWMF administration, GSM implementation/coordination, outreach	R	-63,664.84
						-63,664.84
06/11/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	10382	Best Best & Krieger LLP	SGMA legal services	R	-180.00
						-180.00

Date	Transaction Type	Num	Name	Memo/Description	Clr	Amount
Expense						
07/05/2024	Expense	US00411jwe	Google - Online Payments	G Suite Subscription	R	-86.40
				Google Payment - G Suit		86.40
06/05/2024	Expense	US00412Ybb	Google - Online Payments	G Suite Subscription	R	-86.40
				Google Payment - G Suit		86.40

September 19, 2024

MEMO TO THE MGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Subject: Agenda Item 8.2.1

Title: Presentation on County Well Ordinance Update

Attachment(s):

1. Well and Water Systems Ordinance Update Slides

Recommended Board Action: No action required, informational report only.

Background

Santa Cruz County Environmental Health is in the process of updating the County Well Ordinance, which was last comprehensively updated in 2009. In August 2023 the Santa Cruz County Water Advisory Commission directed County staff to form a broadly represented Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and begin the process to update the ordinance. The TAC met four times in six months, with smaller subsets of interest groups meeting with County staff in between and after the full TAC meetings. The Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency was represented on the TAC by Rob Swartz. All of the meeting materials, more information about the TAC, and draft updated ordinance sections can be found at the website: <https://scceh.com/NewHome/Programs/WaterResources/WellOrdinanceUpdate.aspx>. The first public drafts of the updated Santa Cruz County Code sections 7.70 and 7.73 have been completed along with a supporting Resource Protection Policy and substantial documentation regarding the analyses completed by County staff as part of this process.

Sierra Ryan will provide the Board with an overview of the Ordinance update, including:

- The purpose of the update
- The reasons for the update
- The update process
- Significant changes in the update, including the installation of meters on new or replacement wells for non-de minimis users (extract more than 2 acre-feet per year)
- The role of GSAs in the permit review process
- Next steps in the process

Submitted by:

Sierra Ryan

Water Resources Program Manager
Santa Cruz County Environmental Health

and

Rob Swartz

Senior Planner
Regional Water Management Foundation



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

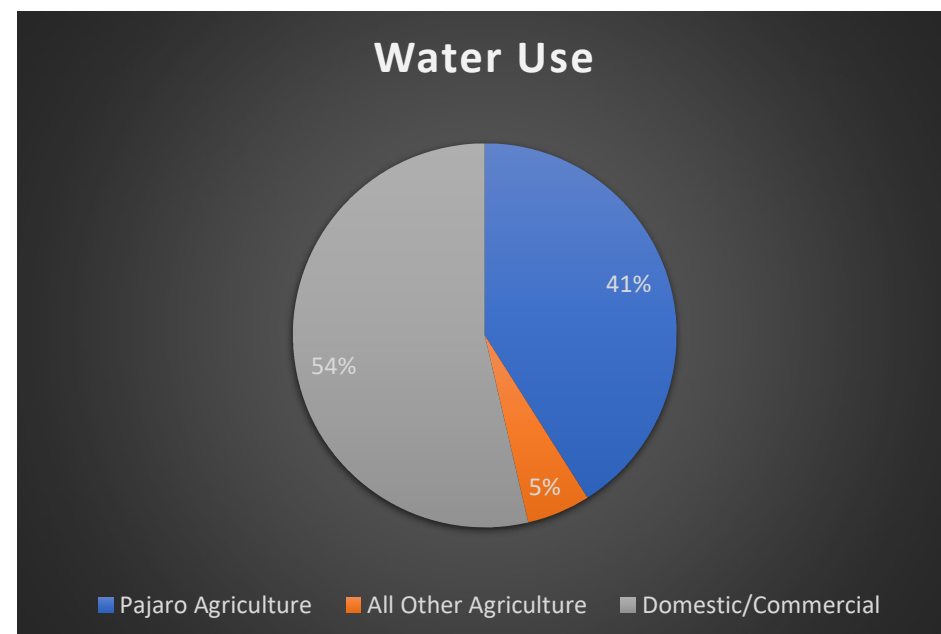
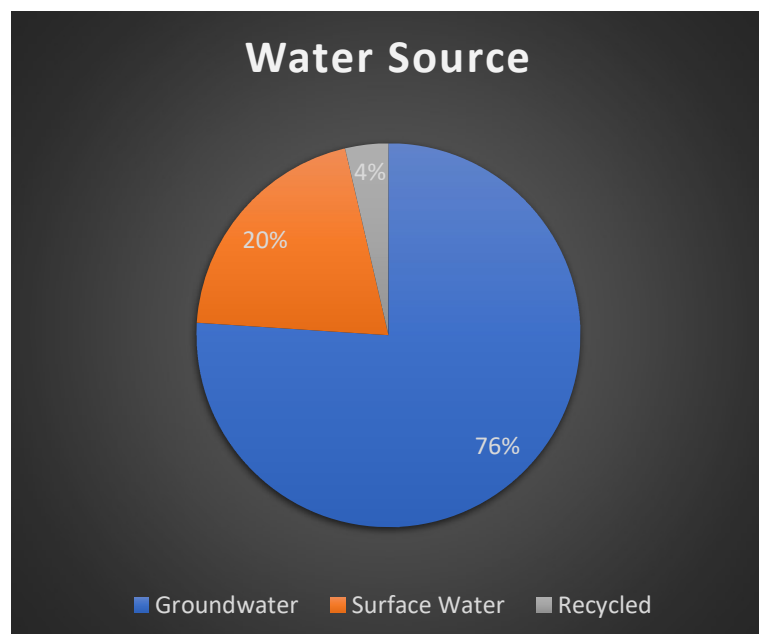


Well and Water Systems Ordinance Update

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency
September 19, 2024

Current Water Supplies in Santa Cruz County

- Local surface water and groundwater basins
- Limited recycled water (currently irrigation only)
- Santa Cruz is not on state or federal water projects, we must solve our problems locally

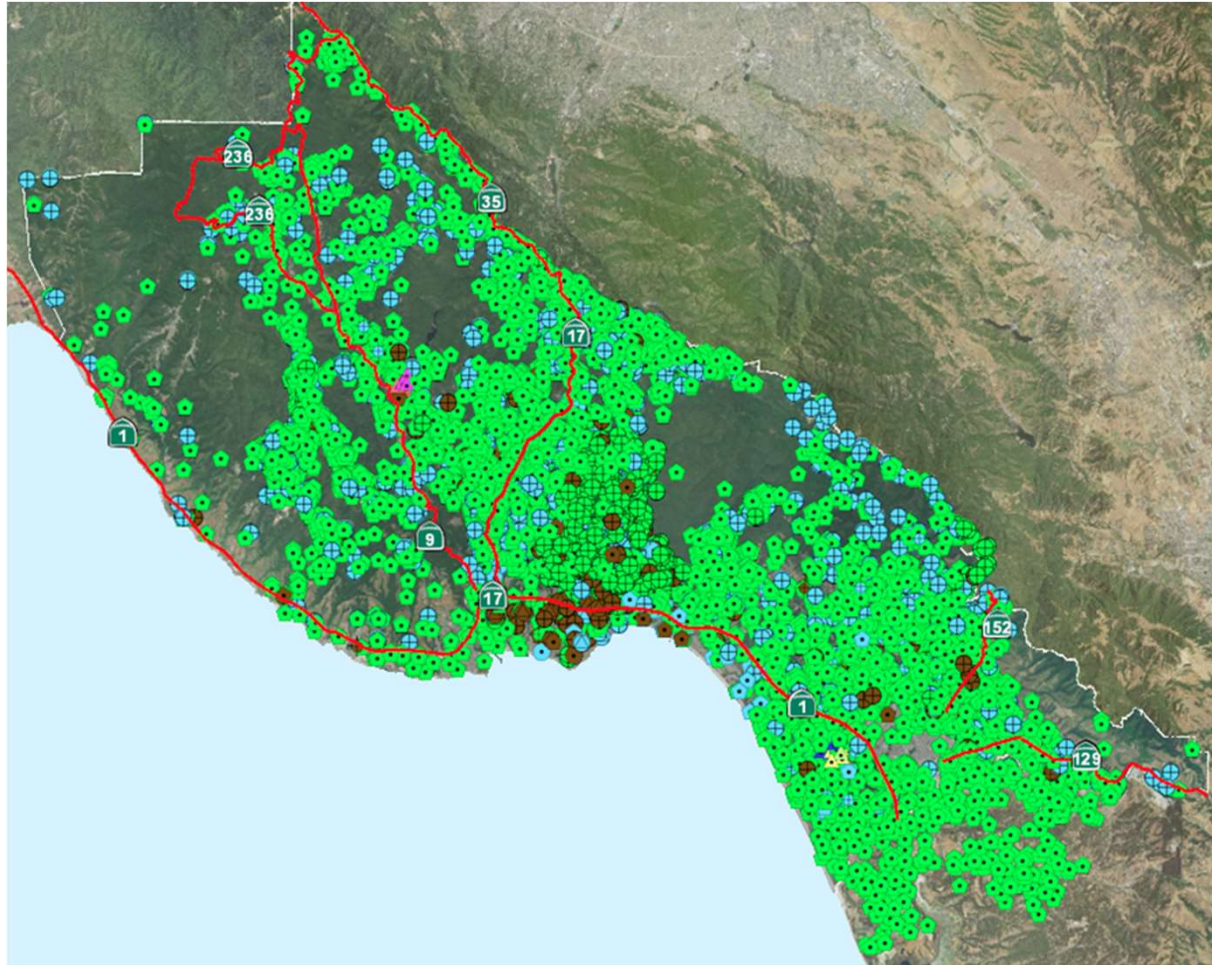


County's Role in Protecting Groundwater



- Develop/enforce ordinances:
 - Well Construction/Destruction
 - Individual Water Systems
 - Larger Water Systems
- Issue permits within jurisdiction
 - Excludes cities without formal agreements
 - Excludes state and federal land
- Enforcement

9,100+ Wells in County:



Current Well Permits:



	Subtotals	Percent	Average/year
Total Water Wells in Database	9100		
Well Construction Applications 2018-23	285		52/yr
Permit Type			
NEW WELL DOMESTIC	52	18%	10
NEW WELL IRRIGATION	3	1%	0.5
NEW WELL NON-DOMESTIC	6	2%	1
REPLACEMENT WELL - DOMESTIC	23	8%	
REPLACEMENT WELL - IRRIGATION	12	4%	
REPLACEMENT WELL - NON-DOMESTIC	6	2%	
SUPPLEMENTAL WELL - DOMESTIC	147	52%	
SUPPLEMENTAL WELL - IRRIGATION	22	8%	
SUPPLEMENTAL WELL - NON-DOMESTIC	14	5%	
Subtotal replacement/supplemental	224	79%	41
Subtotal Non-de minimis (non-domestic)	63	22%	13

Purpose of Well Ordinance:

Well Ordinance (Chapter 7.70)

1. Provide well construction and destruction standards to protect water quality and minimize environmental impacts.
2. Implement policies of the County General Plan and the Local Coastal Plan (LCP)
3. Update to include Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and protection of public trust resources

Individual Water System (IWS) Ordinance (Chapter 7.73)

Ensure adequate water availability and water quality for homes and other uses dependent on private wells for water supply.



Reasons for Update:



- Since the last update, policy changes at the State and local level, have occurred:
 - Passage of SGMA
 - Senate Bill 552 looks to counties to take more responsibility for deficiencies of private wells.
 - Executive Order N-7-22 looks more at well interference
 - Ongoing case law regarding CEQA review and protection of public trust values
 - County has adopted the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, the Drought Response and Outreach Plan
 - National Marine Fisheries Service has raised concerns about interconnected surface waters in the County
- Previous lack of regulatory oversight of soil borings

Update Process to Date:



1. Data collection, process review, check with other jurisdictions
2. Preliminary well ordinance update recommendations from staff
3. County Water Advisory Commission initial review and recommendation to proceed
4. Technical Advisory Committee: four meetings
5. Additional meetings with key parties for detailed review: water agencies, well drillers, resource stakeholders.
6. Back to Water Advisory Commission for review and recommendation to proceed to Planning Commission (August 7th public meeting)

Technical Expertise	Person
Small farmers	Alma Fernandez
Large working lands/Agriculture	Dennis Lebow
Large working lands/Agriculture alternate	Robert Wall
Well driller	Aaron Lingemann
Well driller	Dave Landino
Water Advisory Commission	Bryan Largay
Water Advisory Commission	Nate Gillespie
Santa Cruz Mid-County and Santa Margarita Groundwater Agencies	Rob Swartz
Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency	Brian Lockwood
Biotic resources -National Marine Fisheries Service	Rick Rogers (NMFS)
Biotic resources -California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Jessie Maxfield
Public utilities/Soquel Creek	Brice Dalhmeier
Department of Water Resources	Benjamin Brezing



Significant Changes:



- Tiered (Tier 1 through 4) approach to well permits so small domestic and replacement wells are a lower tier, and new large capacity wells are a higher tier.
- Tier 4 wells - new water uses over 50 AFY are discretionary, require significant analysis, CEQA, and can be denied.
- More extensive water quality testing will be required to develop wells and water quality and yield testing will be required at time of sale.
- Metering and reporting required on new and replacement wells that will extract more than 2 acre-feet per year for non-domestic purposes.

Proposed Level of Review and Mitigation Required for Various Types of Well permit Applications					
Tier	Criteria	Average Number of Permits/year	CEQA Review Required?*	Connected Stream Setback	Nearby Well Setback
Tier 1	De Minimis, domestic < 5 connections; Non-de minimis <2 AFY	44	Ministerial	>50 ft and 100 ft deep seal <u>within 1000 ft of stream</u> **	>50 ft
Tier 2	Non-De minimis Replace/Supplemental	11	Ministerial	>100 ft or not less than existing, and 200 ft deep seal <u>within 2000 ft of stream</u> **	>50 ft, or not less than existing
	<u>Public Water system replace/supplemental</u>	1			
Tier 3	New Non-De minimis wells that are consistent with GSPs, meet Tier 3 calculated setbacks, and will pump less than 50 afy/100gpm	1	Ministerial	<u>If within 2000 ft of stream</u> , Using depletion model, 10th percentile dry season flow shall not be reduced by more than allowed % after 10 years of pumping ***	Calculated minimum setback so that drawdown at nearby well is less than 5 feet****
	Wells that do not meet Tier 1 or 2 minimum setbacks, but do meet Tier 3 calculated setbacks	?			
Tier 4	Wells that do not meet Tier 1,2,or 3 requirements; or located in a control zone or Tier 4 gw concern area	?	Yes	Analysis, including cumulative effect on streamflow in overall basin	Analysis and mitigation
	<u>New Public Water System Serves > 199 connections</u>	<1			

Salmonid Bearing Streams



January 8, 2024

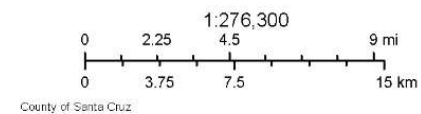
Street Labels

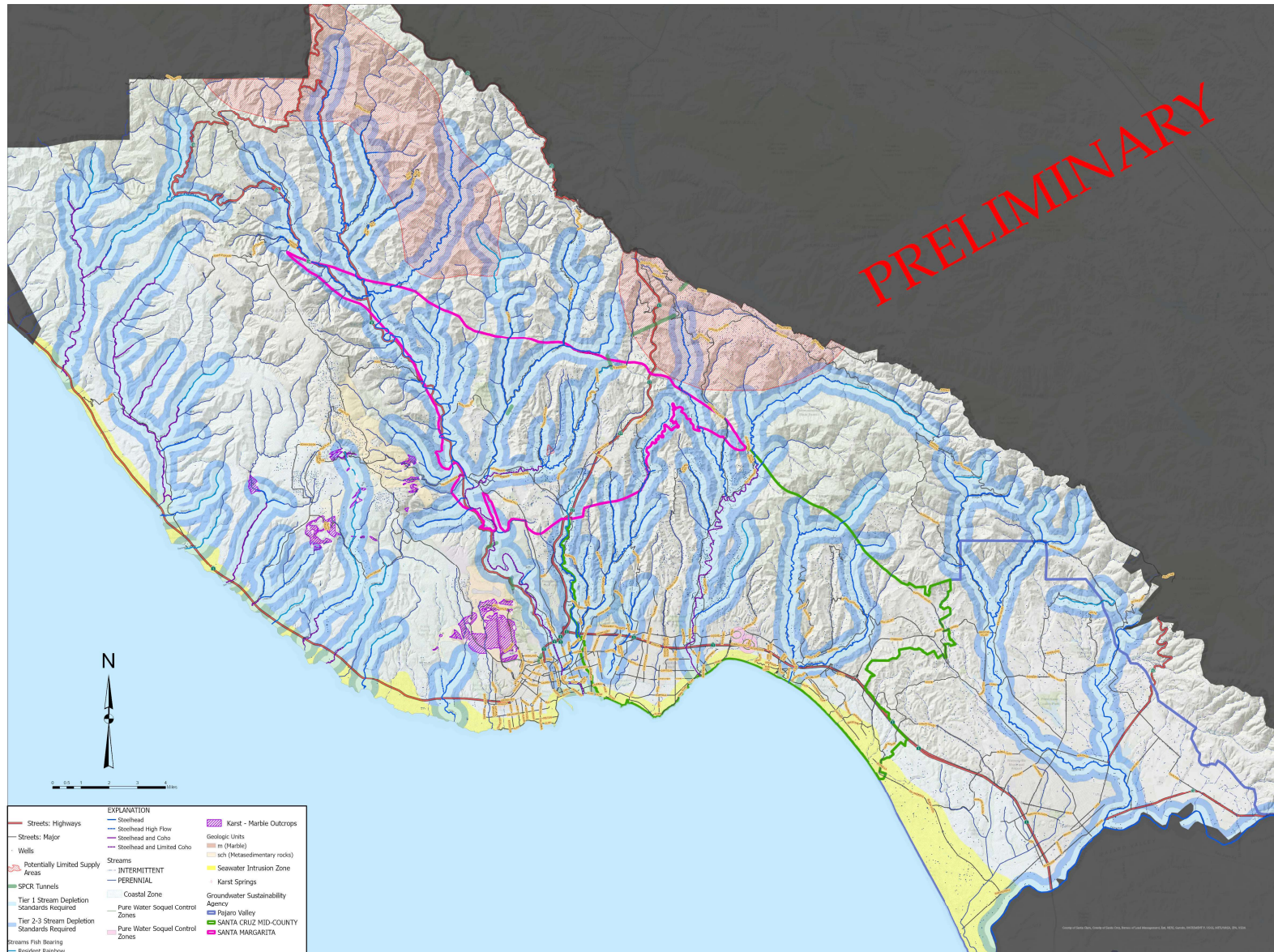
Street Labels

Streams Fish Bearing

- Steelhead and Limited Coho
- Steelhead and Coho

- Steelhead High Flow
- Steelhead
- Resident Rainbow



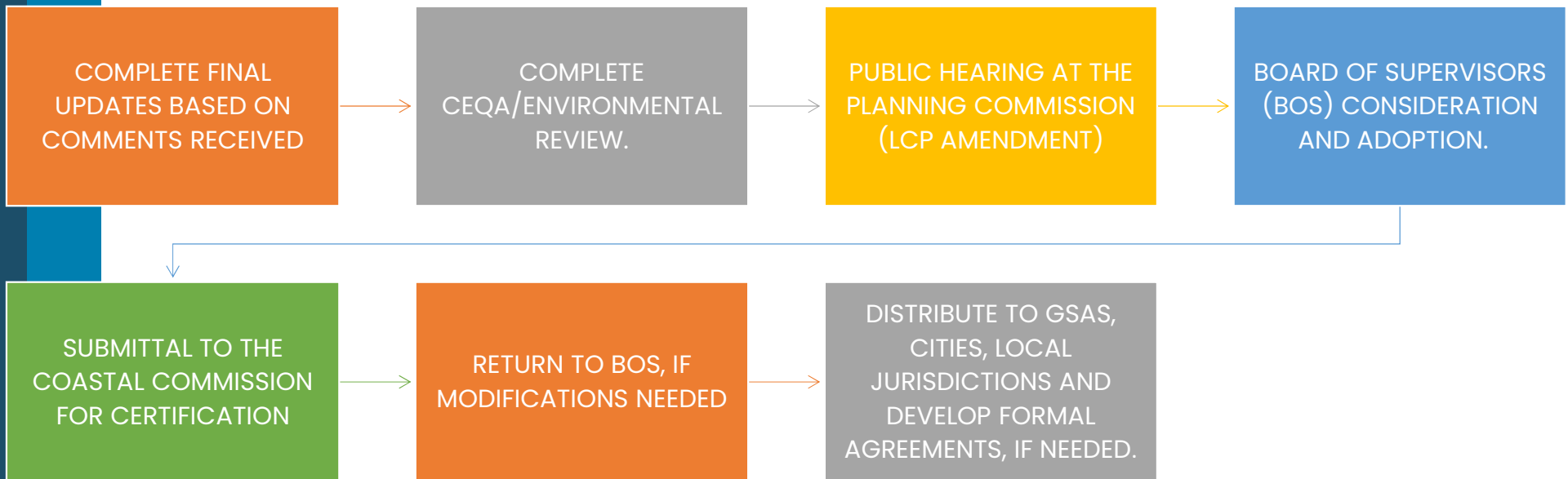


What is the effect on GSAs?



- All well permits in area of interest to a GSA will be shared.
- Comments will be required from GSAs for Tier 3 and Tier 4 wells. Comments may be solicited for some Tier 2 wells.
- County support of GSP implementation. Includes language:
 - (I) If a groundwater sustainability agency has required metering or other conditions for an existing, new, replacement, or supplemental well, the property owner shall abide by those requirements. If the usage information or the results of a site inspection show that the well owner is not in compliance with those requirements, the Health Officer shall require that corrective measures be taken.
 - (J) New, supplementary, or replacement wells shall not be constructed within a designated control zone for a groundwater management project.
- Stream depletion analysis, water quality testing, and yield testing support efforts to manage the basin.

Next Steps





Discussion

September 19, 2024

MEMO TO THE MGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Subject: Agenda Item 8.2.2

Title: GSP Implementation Status Update

Recommended Board Action: No action required, informational report only.

The intent of this memorandum is to provide status updates on Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation activities not covered elsewhere on the Board agenda.

Funding Options Assessment Request for Qualifications – On behalf of MGA, Regional Water Management Foundation (RWMF) staff released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify a consultant to assess long-term funding options for regulatory compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. There were 2 responses to the RFQ. MGA Executive Staff and RWMF staff are currently evaluating the responses.

Well Registration and Metering Program – Following Board adoption of the policy requiring well registration, metering, and reporting for non-de minimis groundwater users, RWMF staff has continued program development. The current focus has been to contact property owners near the area of observed high chlorides near Seascape. RWMF staff has established contact with the agricultural property at the end of Sumner Avenue, the Seascape Green Homeowners Association, and Seascape Golf Course. The golf course has confirmed that it has one well that is metered and has authorized the release of extraction data dating back to 2018. RWMF staff is also researching meters and pricing to determine what kind of assistance can be provided to owners in complying with the metering requirement.

Interbasin Coordination – On April 19, 2024, representatives of the Santa Cruz Mid-County and Pajaro Valley basins met to share information on monitoring results, progress on GSP implementation projects, and issues of common concern with sustainability criteria near their common boundaries. MGA was represented by the County of Santa Cruz, Soquel Creek Water District, and RWMF staff. Pajaro Valley was represented by Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency staff. Representatives discussed the observed increases in evidence of seawater intrusion near our common boundary and upcoming studies to continue to evaluate the issue. Representatives also discussed future coordination in sharing water level and water quality relevant to the preparation of future annual reports and other GSP implementation activities (e.g., cross boundary water levels to improve groundwater elevation contour maps).

At a minimum, the basins will meet annually following completion of their respective GSP annual reports.

Groundwater Elevations – Spring 2024 groundwater elevations were collected by early June and submitted to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) data portal by the July 1, 2024 deadline. One exception is that data could not be collected at an MGA shallow monitoring well along Soquel San Jose Road near Mountain Elementary School. The well is located on the road shoulder and has been covered by a large pile of debris. RWMF staff is following up on how to gain access to the well in time for the fall water level measurements in early October.

Streamflow Measurements – 2024 dry season streamflow monitoring commenced on May 17. Trout Unlimited has reinstituted data collection at the West Branch of Soquel Creek, which had historically been monitored. The sites will be monitored through October. Monitoring for 2025 will commence again in May.

Submitted by:

Rob Swartz

Senior Planner

Regional Water Management Foundation

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation Grant (Agreement #4600014636)

1. Project: Cunnison Lane Groundwater Well Lead: Soquel Creek Water District Grant Award: \$1,675,000 Status: Well construction underway	Activities to Date: Construction initiated in summer 2024 on the Cunnison Lane drinking water well. Completion of 30% designs for the associated water treatment facility. Geotechnical and topographic surveys were completed.
2. Aquifer Storage & Recovery, Beltz Wellfield Lead: City of Santa Cruz Grant Award: \$1,650,000 Status: Preparation of designs underway	Activities to Date: The City's engineering consultant Carollo submitted the 60% Design drawings and technical specifications for review, conducted a 60% design review workshop, and continues development of the wastewater discharge plan and addressing comments in the Basis of Design Report. Development of the 90% design plans is underway.
3. Park Avenue Transmission Main Improvements Lead Agency: Soquel Creek Water District Grant Award: \$800,000 Status: Construction Complete	Activities to Date: Construction of the 12" diameter PVC transmission pipeline completed, pipeline was flushed, chlorinated, and put into service in December 2023. Grant invoicing and final reporting to be completed in 2024.
4. Technical Development of GSP Group 1 & 2 Projects Leads: Soquel Creek WD & City of Santa Cruz Grant Award: \$1,900,000 Status: Underway	<p>Activities to Date:</p> <p>Task 1: Develop Objectives and Project Components to Analyze (Led by District). Brown and Caldwell (BC) serves as lead consultant working with District, City, and others on the development and evaluation of alternatives and costs. This task is complete.</p> <p>Task 2: Groundwater Modeling (Led by City) Montgomery and Associates (M&A) serves as lead consultant working with City, District, BC, and hydraulic modeling consultant Akel Engineering. Completed activities include substantial completion of modeling within selected project alternative tracks (Pure Water Soquel (PWS)), Aquifer Storage & Recovery (ASR), and transfers using machine-learning guided optimization. This process was used to narrow down thousands of scenarios under the project alternative tracks to four that represent different ways PWS, ASR, and transfers could be implemented. The four selected scenarios are being further analyzed under Tasks 4-7.</p> <p>Task 3: Hydraulic Modeling (Led by District)</p>

Continued

4. Technical Development of GSP Group 1 & 2 Projects

Leads: Soquel Creek WD & City of Santa Cruz

Grant Award: \$1,900,000

Status: Underway

Akel Engineering serves as lead consultant working with District, City, and M&A. Akel completed the hydraulic modeling component of the Study and submitted a technical memorandum for review.

Task 4: Water Quality and Regional Compatibility/Optimization (Led by District)
BC serves as lead consultant on water quality component. Ongoing activities include coordination on water quality data for City and District, coordination with modeling consultants, and development of the water quality modelling approach.

Task 5: Economic and Financial Analysis/Modeling (Led by District)
BC serves as lead consultant with subconsultants performing specialized evaluations. Work on this task is underway.

Task 6: Needs Assessment (Led by District)
BC serves as lead consultant with subconsultants performing specialized evaluations. Recent work includes a review of distribution system water quality data; initial development of distribution system water quality modeling for alternatives, and preparation of preliminary results for disinfection byproduct formation potential and corrosivity.

Task 7: Develop Final Report with Recommendations and Implementation Workplan (Led by District).

5. Sustainable Groundwater Management Evaluation & Planning

Leads: MGA & County of Santa Cruz

Grant Award: \$1,575,000

Status: Underway

GSP Implementation activities underway: GSP Periodic (5-Yr) Evaluation; streamflow and groundwater monitoring; development of non-de minimis groundwater usage metering program.

M&A completed the GSP Water Year (WY) 2023 Annual Report and continues work on the GSP Periodic (5-Year) Evaluation. Other recent activities include continued evaluation of seawater intrusion in Seascapes Area; reevaluation of the Basin monitoring network; assessing GSP corrective actions. Construction of the Olive Spring Monitoring well was completed in January 2024.

Trout Unlimited continues streamflow monitoring, data collection and reporting, associated shallow groundwater monitoring, data collection, and reporting.

RWMF staff continues GSP Implementation activities including coordination with MGA member agency staff on GSP Projects and Management Actions, coordination with member agencies and consultants to support GSP implementation efforts, coordination of Basin monitoring network evaluation, groundwater metering program and well registration planning, meeting coordination and facilitation with member agency staff, support for monitoring data and Data Management System (WISKI) and online portal, participation in County well ordinance technical advisory committee. Staff also supported planning activities on agency authorities. Supported outreach activities including website content updates, e-blast newsletters.

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a consultant to assess funding options for SGMA regulatory compliance was issued in August 2024.