

**Siskiyou County Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Butte Valley Advisory Committee Meeting
MEETING SUMMARY**

Meeting date/time: September 3rd, 2020 | 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom Online Platform

Key contacts:

-Matt Parker, County Natural Resources Specialist | mparker@co.siskiyou.ca.us | 530.842.8019

-Rich Wilson, Seatone Consulting Senior Facilitator | r.wilson@csus.edu | 415.515.2317

-Laura Foglia PhD, U.C. Davis Technical Team Lead | lfoglia@ucdavis.edu | 530.219.5692

MEETING RECAP

- **Approval of Past Meeting Summary.** The committee approved its May meeting summary for posting on the Siskiyou County SGMA website.
- **Public Comment.** A number of public comments interspersed the discussion, most during the course of the presentations.
- **District Staff and Other Updates.** Matt Parker provided updates on new stakeholder outreach efforts, finalization of recent grant agreements, and upcoming SGMA public meetings.
- **Review of Draft GSP Chapter 2.** The technical team introduced and secured feedback on draft chapter 2 of the GSP. Matt Parker reminded committee members of the process for submitting comments and asked committee members to respond with any additional feedback within one week of the meeting.
- **Preliminary Groundwater Modeling Results.** Dr. Laura Foglia, Bill Rice and Bradley Simms – all members of the SGMA technical team – shared initial modeling results, described new understanding of the Butte Valley groundwater basin, and fielded a range of comments and questions from both committee members and other meeting attendees.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Status/Deadline</i>
Reach out to committee members to secure contact information for broader stakeholder outreach effort	Matt Parker	ASAP
Reach out to committee members and interested parties to identify location of installation of equipment provided through BOR grant; committee members and interested parties in turn let technical team know of any interest in equipment installations	Technical team, committee members, interested parties	Ongoing
Provide alternative file sharing for committee members who cannot use Dropbox	Matt Parker	ASAP
Send in comments, questions and suggestions on draft GSP chapter 2	Committee members	9/9/20
Send local ordinances that guide Dorris groundwater conservation efforts	Carol Mackay	ASAP

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Next Meeting: October 29th, 3 – 6 p.m. The meeting will be held via the Zoom platform.

Public Meeting: A public meeting, open to all interested persons in the community, is scheduled for Thursday, October 15th. The meeting will be held virtually. Specific times and a meeting agenda are forthcoming.

View [Siskiyou County's groundwater website](#) for posted meeting materials.

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda Review and Approval of Past Meeting Summary

Facilitator Rich Wilson welcomed all participants to Zoom, an online platform being used temporarily during the coronavirus pandemic. He reviewed the agenda then secured consent to post the summary on the county's SGMA webpage. No questions or comments were put forward on the meeting agenda.

Public Comment Period

At the outset, members of the public may comment on items not on the consent agenda. The public is asked to wait until the appropriate item to comment on issues directly related the current meeting agenda. No comments were offered during the initial public comment period.

District Staff and Other Updates

Matt Parker provided a range of updates:

- As local SGMA coordinator, he has drafted an outreach memo that will soon be circulated to invite participation in the SGMA process from the broader public. Once approved by the GSA board, the memo will be released in mid-September.
- Contracts have been finalized for both the Proposition 68 grant and the Bureau of Reclamation grant. Installation of equipment provided by the BOR grant will begin soon.
- The project team – including Matt Parker as well as the technical team and facilitation contractors – met with the GSA board in June, 2020. The board received an update on both the technical and social elements of SGMA implementation. The board, although did not formally vote, gave approval for the Butte Valley Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (Butte Valley C&E Plan), which is now posted on the Siskiyou County SGMA website.
- A SGMA public meeting will be held for Butte Valley on Thursday, October 15th (agenda and specific time is forthcoming). Committee members are encouraged to attend the public meeting.

Review and Discussion of Draft GSP Chapter 2 – Plan Area and Basin Setting

A almost full draft version of chapter 2 of the GSP has been developed and made available for committee review: the water budget component is still under development pending the final

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groundwater model results. Matt Parker reviewed the process of how comments are received and considered during GSP development—first with at the advisory committee level, then the GSA board, and then with the wider public.

The process is designed for flexibility, however, Matt emphasized the goal to follow this general structure in order for all elements of the GSP to get reviewed and refined over the next year. Matt reminded the public that they are welcome to provide verbal input at these meetings, but that the public comment period for any chapter will come after the advisory committee and GSA board have given conditional approval on the material. Once the full GSP is assembled, all parties will have another opportunity for review.

Laura followed and reviewed the main elements of chapter 2. This chapter, she noted, sets the context for the GSP by describing the plan area and basin setting. She opened the conversation for initial comments, given that the chapter was shared with committee members two weeks in advance. She asked the committee to consider three key questions: 1) Is the chapter readable and understandable? 2) Is anything critical missing? 3) Is any content incorrect? A range of questions, comments and suggestions followed. The technical team, and Matt, replied at times with specific responses or explanations about the chapter format and content.

- Comment: Page 58, second paragraph. Need to clearly define what is unconfined versus confined groundwater elevation.
- Comment: Not clear on how grasslands can be both gaining and losing groundwater in nearby areas.
- Comment: Not clear on which wells were used for data collection.
 - Response: All data that is available was used. Some kind of legend can be created to show this.
- Comment: The format is good. It's long, but I understand that you need to capture a lot of data.
 - Response: Some information may get put in appendices.
- Comment: The GSP should consider and explain how some operational entities will have flexibility and some won't. As the chapter currently reads that's not clear.
- Comment: A glossary will be important.
- Comment: Pg. 24. On efficient water management practices: This section needs to be expanded as farmers are doing many things to improve efficient use of water.
 - Response: Another section may be developed that focuses on this specific issue.
- Comment: Pg. 14. List what Dorris does regarding water conservation. We have two programs and do different things at different times of year.
- Comment: Clarify that the number in line 273 is correct.
- Comment: Pg. 29 – Climate and Precipitation. You might want to capture that groundwater basins are impacted by surrounding regions.
 - Response: This gets addressed when we talk about the water budget.
- Comment: Make sure to capture that the National Resource Conservation Service is an entity that supports and is linked in water management practices.

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- Comment: I'll have to share this material with the Shasta Nation Tribal Council to secure feedback. I'm a new committee member so am trying to get up to speed quickly.
- Comment: Similar comment from me, as the environmental participant, I'm still getting up to speed.
- Comment: The draft material looks fine. It's a lot to digest.
- Comment: CDFW will make a few comments on things re: ownership of Meiss Lake.
- Public Comment: Will there be a Spanish version?
 - Response from DWR – We can help with translation tools

Laura concluded this session by thanking everyone for their input, and stressing again that local insight is of paramount importance during the GSP development and review process. Committee members have until COB September 9 to submit any additional comments on chapter 2.

Presentation and Discussion of the Butte Valley Integrated Groundwater Model

The next presentation, by Laura and Bill Rice, focused on the Butte Valley water budget, as well as preliminary model results. The team also provided an update on summer data collection, and extensive fieldwork that has been taking place in recent months. Bradley Simms, a member of the technical team, provided the second part of the presentation. He showed how new data analysis and modeling provide a new understanding of how groundwater flows through Butte Valley. It is becoming increasingly clear that the valley is not really the "bath tub" that it was previously considered to be. A range of questions and comments interspersed Bradley's presentation, including the following:

- Question: What is the drop in groundwater elevation this year?
 - Response: Some elevation came back in winter, though not as much recovery in the northern part of the valley. It dropped again this summer. Different parts of the valley seem to react differently.
 - Follow-up committee member question: Are you getting the data you need? Do you have enough wells in your monitoring network?
 - Response: We may need more sensors to get a more representative sample.
- Question: How do we know, as your presentation suggests, that groundwater moves south to north across the valley?
 - Response: USGS data, combined with PRMS model, gives us a clearer picture. In essence, our model and looking at other models.
 - Additional comment: My concern is we're using older models to inform your model.
 - Response: Models help given that we cannot measure every drop of recharge. These are preliminary results. We also incorporate uncertainty analysis. It's important to look back at least 20-30 years. Conversely, new data will help once we understand historical conditions.

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- Question: Using your model, how do you predict that in some areas of the grasslands the groundwater elevation increases and in other areas it decreases?
 - Response: It's possibly due to the fact that there is no pumping in the grasslands area. The apparent rise might also be a reflection of more groundwater elevation measurements taken in recent years.
 - Additional comment: Can we assume this contributes to recharge?
 - Response: Not all recharge necessarily makes it to the aquifer.
 - Additional comment: We need to study if vast groundwater in the grasslands contributes to overall groundwater elevation levels in the valley.
- Question: What steps can we take if it's determined that Tule Lake is having an impact on our water?
 - Response: Coordination needs to occur between the basins, especially so the respective technical teams can share numbers and data. The issue of climate change will also need to be considered.
- Question: What makes a confined aquifer?
 - Response: Generally finer material that does not let water pass through as easily. Clay is a good example of a confining layer.

Public comments/questions:

- Question: Can you clarify crop co-efficient?
 - Response: When determining how much water can be used, use of a CIMIS station provides a reference point. And a crop co-efficient can be used for specific crops you are looking at. Helps understand how much water you need.
- Question: Where might you put another CIMIS station?
 - Response: Not sure but we might need another one.
- Question: Is groundwater discharging into the Klamath River?
 - Response: Yes, the river is about 1,500' lower than the valley.
- Comment: I'm concerned that the 2001 water shut off might have a bearing on our groundwater levels given all the deep wells that were drilled in the Tule Lake area following that shut off.
- Question: Does coordination occur between the Tule Lake GSA and the Siskiyou County GSA over these issues?
 - Response: Yes. Siskiyou County participates in the Tule Lake SGMA work.
- Question: A 30 foot drop in groundwater elevation over 40 years. Is this typical?
 - A gradual decline in groundwater elevation can be seen. Also, the 30 foot drop is a worst cast situation in drought years like this year.

Laura concluded the presentation by noting that a main message of the preliminary modeling and data analysis shows the system is much more complex than previously thought. By the time of GSP submission, the technical team will be able to assist the GSA in communicating what is known about the system, where there are data gaps, and what still needs to be known.

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Formation of Butte Valley Ad Hoc Committee

At the conclusion of this presentation and follow-on discussion, Matt Parker introduced and secured support for an ad hoc committee to help focus on priority topics ahead and thus advance the GSP development work. Matt reminded the group that any ad hoc work always comes to the full committee for consideration. Jeff Volberg, Don Bowen, Howard Wynant and Pat Graham volunteered to be on the ad hoc committee. (Richard Nelson was later added via a conversation with GSA staff).

Advisory Committee Members

Steve Albaugh, Private pumper
Don Bowen (Vice Chair), Residential
Patrick Graham, CDFW Butte Valley Wildlife Refuge
Greg Herman, Private pumper
Carol Mckay, City of Dorris, Municipal/City
Richard Nelson (Chair), Private pumper
Jeffrey Volberg, Environmental
Howard Wynant, Tribal

Absent Committee Members

Don Crawford, Private pumper
Steve Lutz, Butte Valley Irrigation District

District Staff

Matt Parker, County of Siskiyou Natural Resources Specialist

CDFW Staff

Janae Scruggs

DWR Staff

Pat Vellines

Technical Team

Dr. Laura Foglia, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates
Bill Rice, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates
Bradley Simms, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates
Cab Esposito, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates

Facilitator

Rich Wilson, Seatone Consulting

Members of the public

John Bennett

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Eric Levesque
Angelina Cook
Courtney Laverty