

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

**SUMMARY**

Meeting date/time: April 29, 2021/ 3:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: Zoom Online Platform

Key contacts:

- Matt Parker, County Natural Resources Specialist, [mparker@co.siskiyou.ca.us](mailto:mparker@co.siskiyou.ca.us) 530.842.8019
- Katie Duncan, Stantec Consulting – Facilitator. [katie.duncan@stantec.com](mailto:katie.duncan@stantec.com) 916-418-8245
- Laura Foglia PhD, U.C. Davis Technical Team Lead, [lfoglia@ucdavis.edu](mailto:lfoglia@ucdavis.edu) 530.219.5692

**MEETING RECAP**

- **Approval of Past Meeting Summary.** The committee approved the February meeting summary for posting on the Siskiyou County SGMA website.
- **Public Comment:** Public comments captured below.
- **District Staff and Other Announcements:** Matt Parker provided an update regarding GSP schedule and Tulelake coordination. Pat Vellines provide DWR resource updates. Thomas Harter indicated UC Davis is offering a groundwater course to the public.
- **Presentation of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems in Butte Valley:** Discussion captured during Action Item review.
- **Butte Valley Integrated Hydrologic Model Status Update:** The Technical Team provided a brief status update on the BVIHM.
- **Discussion on proposed SMCs, PMAs, and Draft Chapters 3 & 4:** Thomas Harter reviewed proposed approach for SMCs, PMAs as incorporated in the draft GSP chapters. Comments were provided by AC and public.

**SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS**

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Status/Deadline</i>
Coordination of Project & Management Action ad hoc group.	Facilitator	On hold.
CDFW to provide clarification on wetland designation and definition.	Janae Scruggs	May
Agricultural Land Study Review from Eric Levesque	Eric Levesque/Technical Team	May
Advisory Committee and Public to review draft chapters 3 and 4.	Advisory Committee and Public	May

**Next Meeting:** May 27, 2021/ 3:00 – 6:00 pm. Due to current circumstances surrounding COVID -19 the meeting will again be held online with Zoom technology.

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

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Call to Order, Agenda Review**

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The Facilitator thanked all for joining, reviewed the virtual meeting platform procedures, indicated that quorum had been reached and called the meeting to order. She then reviewed the meeting agenda.

**Review/Approval of Past Meeting Summary**

The Facilitator obtained approval from committee members to post the February AC meeting summary on the county's SGMA website.

**Review Action Items**

The Facilitator reviewed action items from the February AC meeting and provided updates on progress.

- The Technical Team (TT) provided clarification on groundwater depended ecosystem (GDE) topics presented previously. Matt Parker, CDFW, and DWR provided update on GDE classification of BVWLA.
  - Janae Scruggs (CDFW) advised that SGMA's definition of a wetland should be applied but that the GSA should consider all beneficial users, which includes the wildlife area.
  - The TT indicated there is no distinction between the wildlife area as a groundwater user and any other user.
  - The grouped discussed wetland locations in the basin and the need for additional definition for wetlands in the plan. The Technical Team explained that these descriptions would be included in chapter 2.
- The Facilitator reminded the group the draft chapter content was available for review and requested comments on draft chapters 3 and 4 to be provided by May 10<sup>th</sup>. *Note: This deadline has since been extended through May 24<sup>th</sup>.*

**Public Comment Period**

Angelina Cook asked for clarification on the May 10<sup>th</sup> deadline for draft chapter review and public comment incorporation procedures.

**District Staff Updates and Other Announcements**

Matt Parker provided an update on GSP schedule and Tule Lake coordination. The schedule shows the full public draft of the GSP to be approved in the summer. November is the target to officially adopt the GSP.

Pat Vellines provided DWR updates:

- DWR is currently assessing GSPs for critically overdrafted basins and are hopeful to have basins with single GSPs reviewed by late May. Reviews will be released to the public.

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- Airborne Electromagnetic Surveys will be flown in November in Siskiyou County.
- Prop 68 grant applications for non-critically overdrafted basins will be available Spring of 2022. Eligible proposed projects should be included in the GSP. Projects outside of the basin but within the watershed may be eligible for IRWM funding.
- Pat is currently tracking opportunities for funding related to drought conditions. If you have a dry well report it to My Dry Water Supply webpage. ([Household Water Supply Shortage Reporting System \(ca.gov\)](https://www.mydrywatersupply.com/shortage-reporting-system))
- The TSS well in Butte Valley is scheduled for August installation.
- The public comment period for Bulletin 118 closed on April 26<sup>th</sup>. There is an online video if you are interested in learning more. ([California's Groundwater \(Bulletin 118\)](https://www.water.ca.gov/bulletin-118))
- There is an upcoming California Financing Coordinating Committee funding fair on May 27<sup>th</sup> 8-11 online, where you can learn more about available grants, loans, and bond financing for infrastructure projects. ([www.cfcc.ca.gov](http://www.cfcc.ca.gov))

Thomas Harter indicated a groundwater short course opportunity through the University of California.

**Presentation of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems in Butte Valley and the Butte Valley Integrated Hydrological Model**

The Technical team indicated that there were no specific updates regarding GDEs in Butte Valley and that details provided in the previous discussion on BVWLA and wetland designation would be incorporated in Chapter 2 of GSP.

**Butte Valley Integrated Hydrologic Model Status Update**

TT provided Butte Valley Integrated Hydrologic Model status update. TT indicated intent to present model to the group in May.

Don Bowen asked for discussion on illegal well usage in nearby area.

Steve Albaugh asked whether recent data of pumping and water use would be included in the BVIHM model. TT indicated that to the extent that data is available, it will be incorporated into the model. However, the modeled period will not be impacted by recent data availability.

**Presentation and Discussion of Potential Project Management Actions in Butte Valley**

The Facilitator provided overview on the GSP development implementation timeline, key GSP components, and reviewed the Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) monitoring and compliance approach.

The TT reviewed the groundwater level SMC and presented the projects and management action (PMA) list and explained the tiered nature of the PMA plan. The Facilitator then opened

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the meeting for discussion. Comments specific to draft chapters 3 and 4 of the GSP and provided as part of this discussion will be included in the comment response log.

Don Bowen asked for incorporation of language regarding Lower Klamath water utilization in the GSP.

Angelina Cook commented that she understood that the PMAs will evolve over time. She asked how the GSP will evolve over time. The TT provided clarification on the update process and continuous reporting phase.

Eric Levesque asked for clarification on Figure 9 Box B in Chapter 3. The TT indicated that the figure was describing a process and not a policy, but that the TT would look at the figure to provide more clarity where possible.

Eric Levesque asked for additional clarification regarding PMA prioritization. The TT explained that Chapter 5 of the GSP describes plan implementation and could go into more detail on the topic.

Eric Levesque also asked about CA water law/groundwater rights and asked for clarification on topic in general. Matt Parker indicated that the legal team would be consulted on the matter and information would be provided later.

John Bennett asked for clarification on DWR replacement well policy proposal. Pat Vellines indicated that Prop 68 funding is for construction, implementation funding, but not for specific wells. There is no current repayment plan in place.

John Bennett shared concerns with question regarding process and prioritization prior to GSP submittal. He also expressed concerns regarding meeting frequency and progress in Butte Valley.

Pat Graham commented that the project included in the GSP describing the abandonment of Sam's Neck Flood Control Facility among a few other projects are already complete. And suggested that that restoration of Butte Creek, allowing it to flow into Meiss Lake should be included as a priority PMA.

John Bennett asked for discussion on irrigation efficiency PMA.

Steve Albaugh provided a comment on the irrigation efficiency. He indicated that an economic analysis should be completed. He indicated that the improvements would take place inherently due to crop economic feasibility. TT asked for clarification on central pivots and corner piece irrigation mechanisms.

Bennett indicated that the efficiencies available will differ between basins. The primary issue in Butte is the cost of power required to irrigate. The TT indicated that the PMAs (with exception of one Tier III PMA) are intended to be voluntary.

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Eric Levesque proposed that funding options be explored to support individual irrigators so that they might comply with or implement voluntary PMAs.

Greg Herman commented that drilling deeper wells does not seem like an action that would increase sustainability. The TT indicated that the well replacement PMA is intended to keep groundwater pumping at current levels.

The Facilitator suggested convening an ad hoc meeting to discuss PMAs.

Don Bowen indicated that CA state law prescribes irrigation efficiency and asked how folks who had increased efficiency would be compensated. He indicated concern for illegal pumping activities moving into Butte Valley. He discussed the variety of crops grown in Butte and that particular crops are grown in specific locations and that introducing new crops or lower-ET crops isn't necessarily realistic.

Carol McKay proposed that additional monitoring and increased metering for the City of Dorris be included as the City of Dorris is looking to expand and fund this effort. She also expressed concern regarding potential changes in diversions to flood the grasslands explaining that previously flooding had impacted the City of Dorris.

Greg Herman indicated that PMAs should be specific to Butte Valley.

Steve Albaugh asked for identification of upper limit on private land pumping. TT indicated that they would gather information on the topic; they have land use maps from the previous 30 years. The available study includes all land utilized for agricultural purposes during that time, but not all possible land.

Eric Levesque indicated that he had done a study to identify possible land for agricultural use and that he would provide the study to the TT for reference.

Howard Wynant added that he was listening to the conversation and processing all information and thanked all for their participation in the process.

Jeffrey Volberg provided GDE context and indicated that an expansive definition is preferred. He asked for consideration of water use in the Klamath area. He seconded a previous point about economics driving water use efficiency. He also indicated that voluntary efforts to maintain sustainability, since they are available, indicates that Butte Valley is in a good position to allow for this course of events.

Eric Levesque provided comment on the monitoring network and indicated need for future expansion.

Matt Parker commented on how the plan acknowledges illegal water use (cannabis). He indicated that Chapter 2 will include language addressing the topic. Legal counsel is currently advising on how cannabis and associated water use should be addressed in the plan.

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**Meeting Adjourns**

The Facilitator reminded attendees that draft chapters 3 and 4 are out for review and requested comments be provided by May 10<sup>th</sup>. She thanked all for their feedback. Matt Parker thanked all for their input. The meeting was adjourned.

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

***Advisory Committee Members***

Don Bowen, Residential  
Carol Mckay, City of Dorris  
Don Crawford, Private Pumper  
Greg Herman, Private Pumper  
Patrick Graham, CDFW Butte Valley Wildlife Refuge  
Steve Albaugh, Private Pumper  
Steve Lutz, Butte Valley Irrigation District  
Howard Wynant, Tribal Representative  
Jeffrey Volberg, Environmental/Conservation

***Absent Committee Members***

Richard Nelson, Private Pumper

***District Staff/Siskiyou County Staff***

Matt Parker, County of Siskiyou Natural Resources Specialist  
Natalie Reed, Assistant County Counsel

***Technical Team***

Dr. Laura Foglia, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates  
Dr. Thomas Harter, UC Davis  
Bill Rice, UC Davis  
Katrina Arredondo, Larry Walker Associates

***Agency Staff***

Janae Scruggs, California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Pat Vellines, Department of Water Resources  
Chris Watt, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

***Facilitator***

Katie Duncan, Stantec  
Elizabeth Simon, Stantec

***Members of the public***

Angelina Cook  
Eric Levesque  
John Bennett

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Giuliano Galdi, UC Cooperative Extension  
Melissa High, City of Dorris