

AUGUST 2021

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

SISKIYOU COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# Scott Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan

PUBLIC DRAFT REPORT



**SISKIYOU COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
SCOTT RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

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# Chapter 1. Introduction

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**Note:** Appendices 1-B and 1-C will be provided after public meetings have occurred and once all comments on the draft GSP have been received.

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66 **1.1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

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68 In September 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law the Sustainable Groundwater  
69 Management Act (SGMA), a three-bill legislative package composed of Assembly Bill  
70 (AB) 1739 (Dickinson), Senate Bill (SB) 1168 (Pavley) and SB 1319 (Pavley), which is  
71 codified in Section 10720 et seq. of the California Water Code. The legislation provides a  
72 framework for long-term sustainable groundwater management across California. The  
73 intent of SGMA is to provide local and regional agencies the authority to sustainably  
74 manage groundwater resources to help preserve water supplies for existing and potential  
75 beneficial uses and to protect communities, farms, and the environment against  
76 prolonged dry periods and climate change.

77 The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the State Water Resources  
78 Control Board (State Board) provide primary oversight for implementation of SGMA. DWR  
79 adopted regulations that specify the components and evaluation criteria for groundwater  
80 sustainability plans, alternatives to Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs), and  
81 coordination agreements to implement such plans. To satisfy the requirements of SGMA,  
82 local agencies must do the following:

83 Locally controlled and governed Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) must  
84 be formed for all high- and medium-priority groundwater basins in California.

85 GSAs must develop and implement GSPs or Alternatives to GSPs that define a  
86 roadmap for how groundwater basins will reach long-term sustainability.

87 The GSPs must consider six sustainability indicators defined as: groundwater level  
88 decline, groundwater storage reduction, seawater intrusion, water quality  
89 degradation, land subsidence, and surface-water depletion.

90 GSAs must submit annual reports to DWR each April 1 following adoption of a GSP  
91 with the first report due April 2022.

92 Groundwater basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their  
93 GSPs.

94 The Scott River Valley Basin (Basin) is a medium priority basin in Siskiyou County in  
95 Northern California. A description of the Basin, including a summary of the jurisdictional  
96 areas, water resources monitoring and management, land use, and groundwater  
97 conditions are presented in Chapter 2.

98 In accordance with SGMA, this GSP was developed and will be implemented by the  
99 Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) representing the Basin, the Siskiyou County  
100 Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

101 Per SGMA requirements, the GSA is responsible for developing and submitting a  
102 Groundwater Sustainability Plan, by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The GSA feels the GSP will  
103 provide long-term sustainability for all beneficial uses and users of water. The GSA also

104 anticipates these plans will be a tool used for the overarching watershed goal of improving  
105 water management in the watershed bringing multiple interests to the table to resolve  
106 water conflicts in the basin.  
107

108 **1.2. SUSTAINABILITY GOAL**  
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110 The overall sustainability goal of groundwater management in the Basin is to maintain  
111 groundwater resources in ways that best support the continued and long-term health of  
112 the people, the environment, and the economy in the Basin, for generations to come.  
113 Further description of the sustainability goal, as it relates to the sustainability indicators,  
114 is included in Chapter 3.

115 **1.3. AGENCY INFORMATION AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

116 **1.3.1. Agency Information**

117 Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District  
118 190 Greenhorn Road  
119 Yreka, CA 96097

120 **1.3.2. Organization and Management Structure**

121 The Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District is the sole GSA for  
122 the Basin. The Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Act (Cal  
123 Uncod. Water Deer, Act 1240 §§ 1-38) was adopted by the State Legislature in 1959.  
124 This Act established a special district of the same name, and of limited powers that could  
125 provide flood protection, water conservation, recreation and aesthetic enhancement  
126 within its boundaries. At the time of its creation, the jurisdictional boundaries of the Flood  
127 District were smaller than those of the County. In 1983, following LAFCO action, the  
128 balance of the County was annexed into the District making its jurisdictional boundaries  
129 coincide with the County. The District is governed by a Board of Directors that is  
130 composed of the Board of Supervisors; however, the District is a separate legal entity  
131 from the County, with independent rights and limited powers set forth in its originating act.  
132 The District's purpose is the conservation and control of storm, flood, and other waters  
133 and ensuring beneficial use thereof.

134 **1.3.3. Legal Authority of the GSA**

135 Siskiyou County Resolution FLD17-01, approved by the District Board on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
136 authorized the District to act as the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Butte, Scott  
137 and Shasta Valley groundwater basins.  
138

139 **1.3.4. Contact Information for Plan Manager**

140 The Siskiyou County Natural Resources Department is designated as the plan manager,  
141 and can be reached at:  
142 1312 Fairlane Rd

143 Yreka, CA 96097  
144 Phone: 530-842-8005  
145 [SGMA@co.siskiyou.ca.us](mailto:SGMA@co.siskiyou.ca.us)  
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147 **1.3.5. Estimated Cost of Implementing GSP and GSA’s Approach to Meet**  
148 **Costs**

149 The GSA will pursue all available grant funding opportunities to assist in covering the  
150 yearly costs. The GSA utilized a consultant to conduct a fee study to have in place  
151 should the GSA feel funds need to be raised publicly to pay for yearly management of  
152 the plans. It is expected that the GSA will manage implementation and reporting of the  
153 GSP, with support from other entities as needed.  
154

155 **1.4. NOTICE AND COMMUNICATION**

156 **1.4.1. Notice**

157 GSP information, GSA Board and Advisory Committee meeting schedules, and useful  
158 links can be found at the County of Siskiyou Website<sup>1</sup>.

159 The GSA holds publicly noticed public Board and Advisory Committee meetings to allow  
160 stakeholders to engage and provide input throughout the process as well as meetings  
161 with specific working groups in the Basin to address specific technical topics or questions.  
162 As the GSP is developed and implemented, the website will be updated accordingly with  
163 new information for public comment. Notices of public hearings are communicated  
164 through multiple methods including local newspapers and postings on the County of  
165 Siskiyou website, and a SGMA email outreach list, informing the public on meeting  
166 information, subject, and how to provide comments.

167 **1.4.2. Decision- Making Process**

168 GSP decision-making and input is represented by the roles of the Groundwater Advisory  
169 Committee, GSA Boards and Stakeholders.

170 Decision-making during GSP development and for final approval is ideally achieved  
171 through consensus. In the absence of a consensus, as a last resort, members of the  
172 Groundwater Advisory Committee or GSA Board may be called upon to cast votes.

173 *[The decision-making process is currently under legal review and may be modified]*

174 **1.4.3. Public Outreach**

175 **1.4.3.1. Communication and Engagement Plan**

176 The Siskiyou County Groundwater Sustainability Agency developed a Scott River Valley  
177 Basin Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (C&E Plan) to educate

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.co.siskiyou.ca.us/naturalresources/page/sustainable-groundwater-management-act-sgma>

178 interested parties about local SGMA implementation, describe the phases of GSP  
179 development, encourage public participation in the process, and address noticing and  
180 communication requirements in the law (Appendix 1-A).

181 The C&E Plan describes how the local GSA was formed in Siskiyou County, the support  
182 role played by technical and facilitation consultants, and the process by which the GSA  
183 board of directors (GSA Board)—with support from a stakeholder advisory committee—  
184 gathers, considers, and responds to needs and interests of constituents throughout the  
185 community. Consensus building is a foundational principle of all committee discussions,  
186 and membership is intended to reflect the diversity of beneficial groundwater uses and  
187 users in the Basin.

188 The GSA maintains a government-to-government relationship with any Native American  
189 Tribe in Siskiyou County or the larger Klamath River watershed which expresses interest  
190 in SGMA. Tribal representatives have been appointed to the advisory committees in the  
191 Scott Valley, Shasta Valley and Butte Valley groundwater basins. Moreover, Siskiyou  
192 County and the Karuk Tribe formalized good faith communication protocols around SGMA  
193 through an established memorandum of understanding.

194

195 The Scott Valley C&E Plan includes the following overarching public outreach goals:

- 196 • Provide the GSA, Advisory Committee, community leaders and other beneficial  
197 users a roadmap to ensure broad understanding and consistent messaging of  
198 SGMA requirements
- 199 • Foster information sharing, communication and collaboration, and opportunities for  
200 stakeholders to have meaningful input on the GSA decision-making process
- 201 • Provide reasonable opportunities for interested stakeholders to receive and  
202 understand the technical groundwater information developed as part of the GSP  
203 process
- 204 • Ensure a collaborative GSP development and implementation process that is  
205 widely seen in the community as fair and respectful to the range of interested or  
206 affected stakeholders
- 207 • Assist the GSA in meeting all SGMA communication and engagement  
208 requirements
- 209

210 Specific objectives which help the GSA achieve these overarching goals include the  
211 following:

- 212 • Educate stakeholders on:
  - 213 ○ Important SGMA requirements, events and milestones
  - 214 ○ The role, authorities and responsibilities of the local GSA in Siskiyou County
  - 215 ○ The advisory committee's role and how the public can stay informed or  
216 involved
  - 217 ○ The benefits of having a technically robust and broadly supported GSP
  - 218 ○ Potential changes to groundwater monitoring and management under  
219 SGMA
  - 220 ○ How the interests of beneficial uses and users will be considered under

- 221 SGMA
- 222 • Develop strategies and communication mechanisms for obtaining broad
  - 223 stakeholder input and feedback that informs GSP development
  - 224 • Coordinate outreach and engagement activities that foster information sharing,
  - 225 raise awareness and encourage public engagement in SGMA
  - 226 • Ensure the needs, interests and perspectives of all beneficial uses and users are
  - 227 identified, documented and considered by the GSA Board
  - 228 • Support local beneficial users to identify, preempt or otherwise proactively address
  - 229 and resolve different perspectives or conflicts over groundwater use and
  - 230 management
  - 231 • Track all input received by beneficial users during the GSP development process
  - 232 and document GSA Board responses as input is considered
  - 233 • Develop strategies and communication mechanisms for long-term GSP
  - 234 implementation
  - 235

236 A comprehensive list of identified stakeholder groups in the Basin is included in the C&E  
237 Plan. Initially developed by GSA staff, the list was reviewed and expanded by the local  
238 SGMA advisory committee. The list may be improved and updated at any time during the  
239 GSP development or implementation process. Stakeholder groups included in the list  
240 represent a priority target audience for SGMA related communication and engagement.

241 The final section of the C&E Plan describes outreach strategies which the local GSA  
242 employs to effectively advance SGMA implementation. Specific tools and forums include  
243 the following:

- 244 • Advisory committee meetings
- 245 • Constituent briefings with local organizations
- 246 • Tribal engagement
- 247 • Public meetings and workshops
- 248 • GSA Board meetings
- 249 • Coordination with local resource conservation districts
- 250 • Coordination with state and federal agencies
- 251 • Integration of relevant studies and materials
- 252 • Interested parties list
- 253 • Informational materials
- 254 • County SGMA website
- 255 • Local media and public service announcements
- 256

257 The local GSA will at key times evaluate the effectiveness and efficacy of its C&E Plans  
258 for each SGMA groundwater basin in Siskiyou County. Evaluations will likely occur at or  
259 near key milestones, such as the completion of a major phase of work or shortly before  
260 or after submission of the GSP for evaluation by the Department of Water Resources. As  
261 needed, the C&E Plan will be updated to best serve Siskiyou County, its constituents,  
262 and all its collaborative partners in the SGMA implementation process.

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264 **1.4.3.2. Scott River Valley Basin Beneficial Uses and Users**

265 Groundwater in the Basin serves the needs of communities, farms, and businesses and  
266 provides high quality drinking water to urban and rural residents, in addition to helping to  
267 sustain vital ecosystems. Beneficial uses of groundwater include water for irrigation,  
268 agriculture, domestic use, municipal use, and water for the protection and enhancement  
269 of fish and wildlife. Beneficial uses and users of the Basin have been identified as the  
270 following:

- 271 • Agricultural users (farmers, ranchers, dairy professionals)
  - 272 • Rural, Agricultural and Domestic well owners
  - 273 • Municipal well operators
  - 274 • Public water systems
  - 275 • Local land use planning agencies
  - 276 • Environmental uses and users of groundwater, including but not limited to habitat  
277 that supports fish, birds, animals and insects; endangered species protection;  
278 protection of beneficial habitat for recreation and other societal benefits
  - 279 • Surface water users
  - 280 • Tribal Governments
  - 281 • Disadvantaged communities
- 282

283 **1.4.3.3. Public Engagement Opportunities**

284 The GSA is committed to encouraging the active involvement of diverse social, cultural,  
285 and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin. The County of  
286 Siskiyou website provides information regarding GSA Board Meeting frequency,  
287 background information, documents, status updates, and contact information. GSP  
288 updates will be included as noticed per GSA respective meeting agendas that are  
289 published in advance. Meetings providing updates on GSP development are scheduled  
290 on regularly, typically once a month, to inform the public and Interested Parties and  
291 provide opportunities to ask questions and make suggestions. These meetings are posted  
292 on the County of Siskiyou website<sup>2</sup> and announced via email. A full list of public meetings  
293 where the GSP was discussed or considered are included in **Appendix 1-B**.

294 In addition, GSP Staff will be available throughout the GSP development process to  
295 communicate and engage with Interested Parties and the public. Interested Parties can  
296 be involved in GSP development by providing input throughout the process.

297 Other avenues for public engagement included or will include:

298 **GSA Board meetings:** During Public comment period of any Siskiyou County Board  
299 of Supervisors or Siskiyou County Flood Control & Water Conservation District  
300 (GSA) Board meetings

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.co.siskiyou.ca.us/naturalresources/page/sustainable-groundwater-management-act-sigma>

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**Working Groups:** Working groups may be formed during GSP implementation to provide specific input from Interested Parties or on specific topics.

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**Comments:** Opportunity for the public or interested parties to comment on draft GSP sections or chapters is provided. Comments received through this process, and the responses provided are included in Appendix 1-C.

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#### **1.4.4. Coordination**

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GSA and Siskiyou County staff, and at times technical team held coordination meetings or phone calls to provide additional input into the GSP with various state agencies, Tribes, NGO's, or members of the public. GSA staff and at times the technical team also attended non-SGMA focused workshops to provide updates or information regarding SGMA and the GSP development. Some highlights of those efforts are below:

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- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**
  - GSA staff has monthly coordination meetings with CDFW staff to discuss numerous topics, which includes SGMA updates and key items and issue's related to groundwater management.
- **North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board**
  - Recently, GSA staff and the technical team has met with Regional Board staff regarding efforts to gather groundwater samples, and to also discuss the relationship of TMDL waivers in Scott and Shasta Valleys and how those will be impacted or partnered with projects and managements actions in the GSP.
  - GSA staff and technical team participated in a Scott and Shasta flow working group, led by Regional Board staff, where immediate project needs were discussed which included actions as they will relate to GSP actions and projects. Development of the interconnected surface water SMC was discussed, and members of the working group provided comments and asked questions that were answered by the technical team.
- **Quartz Valley Tribe**
- **Yurok Tribe**
- **Karuk Tribe**
  - The GSA developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Karuk Tribe regarding improving coordination and communication efforts related to GSP development which provided a bridge of opportunity to discuss and deliberate on GSP development for the Scott and Shasta basins. This took multiple meetings, with valuable assistance from DWR provided Facilitation Support Services. The MOU (in Appendix 1-D) was signed and approved by the District Board on March 17, 2020.
- **State Water Resources Control Board**
  - On November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, GSA and County staff, District Board members, met with SWRCB staff and toured agricultural operations in the Scott and

344 Shasta Valleys to discuss water issues and observe on-ground projects  
345 being planned or implemented that in various ways will help improve both  
346 groundwater and surface water sources.

- **Klamath Coalition of the Willing**

- This is a large group of NGO's, Tribes, and irrigators brought together to develop solutions related to the Klamath Basin conflicts. County staff and the technical team has interacted with the group and developed project ideas that are both being implemented and in initial design phases, including managed aquifer recharge, storage development and improving upland lake management. These projects are further described in Chapter 4.

- **Scott and Shasta Valley Watermaster District**

- GSA staff and the technical team have had multiple meetings with Watermaster District staff regarding how the GSP's will not conflict with the Watermaster duties of upholding the Scott and Shasta Valley decrees. The meetings have also been beneficial to understanding current data related to flow and determining data gaps, that will both aid in the accuracy and reliability of both basins respective numerical models.

## 364 1.5. GSP ORGANIZATION

365 The GSP is organized in accordance with the GSP Emergency Regulations and statutory  
366 provisions of SGMA. The format of the GSP is similar to the outline provided by DWR's  
367 Sustainable Groundwater Management program. A brief summary of each GSP section  
368 is provided below.

369 **Executive Summary.** Provides a summary of what is included in the GSP.

370 **Chapter 1 – Introduction.** The Introduction includes the purpose and administration  
371 of the GSP, sustainability goal, agency information, and GSP organization.

372 **Chapter 2 – Plan Area and Basin Setting.** Plan Area describes the geographic  
373 setting, existing water resources planning and programs, and additional GSP  
374 components. The Basin Setting includes a detailed discussion of the hydrogeologic  
375 conceptual model used to prepare the GSP; current and historical groundwater  
376 conditions; future groundwater conditions after allowances for growth, land use  
377 changes, and climate change; and a discussion of the area's current and future  
378 groundwater budget.

379 **Chapter 3 – Sustainable Management Criteria.** Includes the sustainability goal,  
380 addresses the mandated six sustainability indicators that monitor undesirable  
381 results; defines the Minimum Thresholds for each undesirable result; and sets  
382 Measurable Objectives for the GSP's complete implementation, including Interim  
383 Milestones for intermediate plan years. This Chapter also describes the network  
384 of monitoring wells and other information to measure the GSP's outcomes;

385 assesses the need for improvements to the network to provide fully representative  
386 data; and address monitoring protocols and data analysis techniques.

387 **Chapter 4 – Projects and Management Actions to Achieve Sustainability.**  
388 Describes potential projects and management actions that may be implemented in  
389 pursuit of sustainability. Where available, project details include measurable  
390 objectives that are expected to benefit from the project or management action,  
391 required permits, anticipated benefits, estimated costs, and how the project or  
392 management action will be accomplished.

393 **Chapter 5 – Plan Implementation.** Describes the GSP implementation process,  
394 including estimated costs, sources of funding, a preliminary schedule through full  
395 implementation, description of the required data management system,  
396 methodology for annual reporting, and how progress evaluations will be conducted  
397 over time.

398 **Appendices – References and Technical Studies.** Contains the references and  
399 sources used to prepare this GSP.

400 ■ **DWR GSP Elements Guide**– This GSP was prepared to meet the regulatory  
401 requirements established by DWR, as shown in the completed GSP Elements  
402 Guide, provided in Appendix 1-E, which is organized according to the California  
403 Code of Regulation Sections of the GSP Emergency Regulations.

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