

Discussion on the Requirements to Form a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Ukiah Valley Basin Presented by: The Mendocino County Water Agency

SGMA Overview

Comprehensive legislation to manage groundwater to sustainable levels

- High and Medium Priority Basins
 - Ukiah Valley Basin is a medium priority basin
- Formation of a GSA
- Preparation of Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)
 - Basin Conditions
 - Best management practices, measurable objectives and 5 year milestones
 - Achieve sustainability in 20 years

Groundwater Legislation Timeline



SGMA Overview

Sustainability: Manage groundwater to prevent undesirable results (significant & unreasonable)

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels
- Reduction of groundwater storage
- Seawater intrusion
- Degraded water quality/contaminant plume migration
- Land subsidence
- <u>Depletions of interconnected surface water</u>

CASGEM BASIN SUMMARY

- 58.6 square miles (37,508 acres)
- 560 people/square mile (2010 Census)
- Low population growth (<<6%)</p>
- <1 municipal well/square mile</p>
- <<20 total wells/square mile
- Groundwater is 20–40% of water supply
- 15-20% of basin area is irrigated land



- 4,500 7,500 acre feet/year of groundwater supply for municipal & agricultural use (2010, UAVP).
- Municipal groundwater supply increasing (est. 5-10% from 2010-2015)
- Basin storage capacity of 90,000 acre-feet, recharges annually with average rainfall
- No evidence of groundwater over-draft
- Extraction rates are projected to be sustainable given low population growth

- Some possibility for surface water depletions (interconnected with groundwater extraction) that have significant and unreasonable adverse impacts on beneficial uses of the surface water
- Can be associated with high groundwater extraction rates where significant groundwater discharge to surface water occurs
- Current and projected groundwater extraction not anticipated to broadly deplete interconnected surface waters



FIGURE 5. - Generalized geologic section of Ukiah Valley.

SGMA Governance

Who can be a GSA?

- Local agency or combination of local agencies overlying a groundwater basin that has water supply, water management or land use responsibilities
 - GSAs must be formed by June 30, 2017
- What does a GSA Do?
 - Primary agency responsible for achieving groundwater sustainability
 - Develop and implement a GSP that considers the interests of all beneficial uses and users to ensure long-term sustainability
 - Ukiah Basin

Options for Governance

- Centralized/Single GSA
- Distributed/Multiple GSAs
- Combination

Centralized GSA

Single GSA

- Covers entire basin
- Assumes all authorities and responsibilities
- New or existing agency
- Board can include existing agencies/interests
- Likely legal structure- JPA, Special District, County, Water District

Distributed GSA

Coordination Agreement/MOU



- Each GSA assumes all responsibilities for it's service area
- Coordination Agreement required if multiple GSPs
- MOU/agreement can support coordination of tasks
- Likely legal structures -new or existing agency:
 - County, City, Water District, JPA, Special Dist.

Combination GSA



- Centralized GSA: assumes some shared responsibilities
- Multiple GSAs: assume remaining responsibilities
- Likely legal structures, new or existing:
 - County, City, Water District, JPA, Special Dist.

GSA Responsibilities

- Form follows function
- Different GSAs can have different functions
- Range of Functions
 - Coordination
 - Public outreach & stakeholder engagement
 - Planning (GSP)
 - Monitoring and reporting
 - Implementation
 - Enforcement

Focus Points

- No evidence of overdraft now or projected future for Ukiah Basin
- Basin boundary revisions possible exclude low producing older alluvium
- Consider process to identify priority areas with high potential for stream depletion along with BMPs to mitigate potential adverse impacts
- Identify and/or install additional monitoring wells for CASGEM program

Roundtable Questions

- What are the desired outcomes of forming and administering a GSA?
- What is your preferred structure?
- Is there additional information you need on the current status of groundwater in the Ukiah Valley Basin?
- Are there existing groundwater management efforts to build upon or coordinate with?
- What needs to be done to move the discussion forward?
- How would your agency like to engage in the formation process?

Next Steps

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- Additional meetings
- Coordinating committee
- Cooperative efforts