

NOTICE AND AGENDA OF SPECIAL MEETING

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
FOR THE CENTRAL MANAGEMENT AREA
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER GROUNDWATER BASIN

WILL BE HELD AT THE
BUELLTON CITY HALL – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS*
140 WEST HIGHWAY 246, BUELLTON, CALIFORNIA
AT **10:00 A.M.**, MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

***AS PER SANTA BARBARA COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER ORDER NO. 2021-10.5
IN PERSON ATTENDEES MUST WEAR FACE COVERINGS AT ALL TIMES WHILE ATTENDING
THE MEETING IN AN INDOOR PUBLIC SETTING**

Remote participation also available via ZOOM

You do NOT need to create a ZOOM account or login with email for meeting participation.

ZOOM.us - “Join a Meeting”

Meeting ID: 836 9700 9492 Meeting Passcode: 543475

DIRECT LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83697009492?pwd=QXZRd3NHRzQ0dzlRT2VkVnpFZWt2UT09>

DIAL-IN NUMBER: 1-669-900-9128

PHONE MEETING ID: 836 9700 9492 # Meeting Passcode: 543475 #

If your device does not have a microphone or speakers, you can call in for audio with the phone number and Meeting ID listed above to listen and participate while viewing the live presentation online.

In the interest of clear reception and efficient administration of the meeting, all persons participating remotely are respectfully requested to mute their line after logging or dialing-in and at all times unless speaking.

Teleconference Meeting During Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will be available via teleconference as recommended by Santa Barbara County Public Health, authorized by State Assembly Bill 361, and Resolution CMA-2021-001 (passed on 10/20/2021).

Important Notice Regarding Public Participation in Teleconference Meeting: Those who wish to provide public comment on an Agenda Item, or who otherwise are making a presentation to the GSA Committee, may participate in the meeting using the remote access referenced above. **Those wishing to submit written comments instead, please submit any and all comments and materials to the GSA via electronic mail at bbuelow@syrwcd.com.** All submittals of written comments must be received by the GSA no later than **Friday, October 22, 2021**, and should indicate **“October 25, 2021 GSA Meeting”** in the subject line. To the extent practicable, public comments and materials received in advance pursuant to this timeframe will be read into the public record during the meeting. Public comments and materials not read into the record will become part of the post-meeting materials available to the public and posted on the SGMA website.

AGENDA ON NEXT PAGE

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
FOR THE **CENTRAL MANAGEMENT AREA**
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER GROUNDWATER BASIN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021, 10:00 A.M.

AGENDA OF SPECIAL MEETING

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. Introductions and review of SGMA in the Santa Ynez River Valley Basin
- III. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda
- IV. Public Comment (Any member of the public may address the Committee relating to any non-agenda matter within the Committee’s jurisdiction. The total time for all public participation shall not exceed fifteen minutes and the time allotted for each individual shall not exceed five minutes. No action will be taken by the Committee at this meeting on any public item.) *Staff recommends any potential new agenda items based on issues raised be held for discussion under Agenda Item “CMA GSA Committee requests and comments” for items to be included on the next Agenda.*
- V. Review and consider approval of meeting minutes of August 23, and October 20, 2021
- VI. Review comment letter from Santa Ynez Water Group legal counsel dated 09-21-2021
- VII. Receive update on SGMA Stakeholder Outreach
- VIII. Receive update on Citizen Advisory Committee meeting of October 8, 2021
- IX. Workshop and Q&A on Public Draft CMA GSP and Future Governance Options
- X. Next “Regular” CMA GSA Meeting: Monday, November 15, 2021, 10:00 AM
- XI. CMA GSA Committee requests and comments
- XII. Adjournment

[This agenda was posted 72 hours prior to the scheduled special meeting at 3669 Sagunto Street, Suite 101, Santa Ynez, California, and <https://www.santaynezwater.org> in accordance with Government Code Section 54954. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to review agenda materials or participate in this meeting, please contact the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District at (805) 693-1156. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the GSA to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.]

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Central Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin August 23, 2021

A regular meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Central Management Area (CMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Monday, August 23, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20 and in accordance with the latest Santa Barbara County Health Officer Order.

GSA Committee Directors Present: Art Hibbits, John Sanchez (Acting as Alternate)

GSA Committee Directors Absent: Ed Andrisek

Alternate GSA Committee Director Present: Cynthia Allen

Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Rose Hess, Amber Thompson, Matt Young

Others Present: Bryan Bondy, Len Fleckenstein, Larry Lahr, Deby Laranjo, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Miles McCammon (Stetson), Anita Regmi (DWR), Steve Slack (CDFW), and Brett Stroud (Young Wooldridge).

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m. and asked Mr. Bill Buelow to do roll call. A quorum was met.

II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone and video attendees.

Mr. Buelow reviewed history of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requirements including the GSP sections that have been previously reviewed during public workshops and meetings including today's presentations toward submitting a complete Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in January 2022. All documents are accessible on SantaYnezWater.org.

III. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

No additions or deletions were made.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Review and Approve Minutes

The minutes of the GSA Committee meetings on May 24 and July 26, 2021 were presented for GSA Committee approval. GSA Committee Director Hibbits pointed out a couple minor typographical corrections that were needed for the Minutes of July 26, 2021.

GSA Acting Alternate Committee Director John Sanchez made a MOTION to approve the minutes of May 24 and July 26, 2021, with corrections made for typographical errors. GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

VI. Receive CMA GSA Financial Update and Consider approval of CMA Warrant List

Mr. Buelow presented the financial reports of FY 2020-21 Periods 1 through 12 (through June 30, 2021) and the Warrant Lists for April, May, and June 2021 for GSA Committee review. There were no comments.

GSA Acting Alternate Committee Director John Sanchez made a MOTION to approve the April, May, and June 2021 Warrant Lists as presented (Nos. 1033-1036) totaling \$164,309.62 and financial reports as submitted. GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

VII. Receive update from Citizen Advisory Group on Draft Water Budget

CMA Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) member, Mr. Len Fleckenstein, presented the CMA CAG Memorandum dated July 26, 2021, prepared by representative Sharyne Merritt, regarding CMA CAG's review and discussion of Chapter 3: CMA Sustainable Management Criteria and Monitoring Network. Discussion followed. CMA CAG members Deby Laranjo and Larry Lahr agreed with Mr. Fleckenstein's review of the memorandum. GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits thanked the CMA CAG members for asking great questions.

VIII. Receive Presentation from Stetson Team on "Summary and Overview of Draft GSP for the CMA"

Mr. Curtis Lawler (Stetson) presented "August 23, 2021, GSA 2021 Quarter 3 Meeting, Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan" for the CMA". Discussion followed.

- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director John Sanchez, regarding Section 2c.4 Projected Water Budget, asked for clarification on temperature data. Mr. Lawler and Mr. McCammon of Stetson explained the change in temperature for the City of Buellton was calculated by using a climate change tool provided by DWR with data available as far back as 1948.

- Bryan Bondy, on behalf of SY Water Group, asked for clarification regarding slide 15 and the comment “perched groundwater is not administered under SGMA”. Did consultants find a statute, SGMA water code or regulations verifying that statement? If so, he suggested they state water code or regulations in the GSP that provides definitive answer with regard to the perched water tables in the Uplands areas.
 - Mr. Lawler clarified the statement is based on the definition of groundwater and explained the difference between the regional groundwater table and waters that recharge the groundwater table.
 - Ms. Anita Regmi (DWR) added that the answer depends on which aquifer is recognized by the GSA as a primary principal aquifer. There is no clear language in the regulations on which aquifers should be managed. Therefore, she understands that it is left for GSAs to decide.
- Deby Laranjo asked about the difference between a truck crop and field crop on slide 20, Uses and Users of Groundwater. Mr. Lawler said a truck crop is a different subset of crops. He clarified that the Active Agriculture Area map used on slide 20 is from 2016. Ms. Laranjo asked since the newer alternative crop sites are not shown, will cannabis be shown as a truck crop? Mr. McCammon verified cannabis crop sites are not shown on the 2016 map and explained that a field crop is wheat or similar crops while a truck crop is vegetables or fruit type crops. Therefore, cannabis would fall into the truck crop category since it has similar water demand and will be shown as such on future maps.
- Len Fleckenstein suggested that the Executive Summary should highlight key issues that will be addressed at a later date. He recalled that the CAG had advised that key issues, including data gaps to be addressed in the future should be included in the Executive Summary.
- Len Fleckenstein requested that the Executive Summary include the steps for public outreach and getting public input for the future. Discussion followed.
- Len Fleckenstein asked if CAG involvement was intended on all draft chapters in the GSP. Mr. Buelow replied that the timing of draft document releases and due dates did not allow for a separate CAG meeting to discuss the draft Projects and Management Actions section. However, that section will be reviewed and discussed by the CAG when it released as part of the entire Public Draft GSP. Mr. McCammon added the only sections that have not already been reviewed by the public and CMA CAG are Chapter 1 and the Projects and Management Actions Chapter.
- Len Fleckenstein asked if there is a reason the Basin is addressing each management area Groundwater Sustainability Plan separately versus just submitting one large basin plan. Mr. Lawler clarified there are physical geologic barriers as well as political reasons for establishing the three management areas thus three plans. Governance will be discussed in the next presentation during today’s meeting.

- Anita Regmi asked if there is a date set for a public hearing prior to adoption of Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and advised that the public hearing needs to be held 90 days after giving notice to city and county. Mr. Buelow advised that the December 15, 2021 GSA Special Meeting will include a public hearing and that notices were sent to the City of Buellton and the County of Santa Barbara at the beginning of August 2021. He also added there will be at least two more CMA GSA public meetings and CMA CAG meetings to discuss the GSP during the public comment period and prior to the planned public hearing and adoption meeting.
- GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits said he felt that using a 2016 crop map for a 2021 report is not acceptable as so much land use has changed in the last 5-6 years. Mr. Lawler replied that the 2016 map is similar to the 2018 land use map. Mr. McCammon and Mr. Lawler advised that work on the GSP began two years ago when the 2018 land use map was the latest map available. Because there will be opportunities for changes in the required annual reports and every five-year re-evaluation, the consultants decided to keep that chapter with the 2016 map especially since current land use trends have been reviewed and show the footprints of land use have not changed much. Consultants confirmed that they are aware of the new crops, particularly cannabis, being introduced in the CMA over the last year or two and advised that it appears most of the permits in the area for cannabis crops are using surface water which is administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. Discussion continued.
- GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits emphasized the need for well meters to assure accurate reporting of groundwater pumping. Mr. Lawler advised that installation of well meters is identified in Project and Management Action chapter to be implemented as soon as possible after GSP submission.

IX. Receive Presentation from Young Wooldridge on “SGMA Governance and Funding Options”

Mr. Brett Stroud (Young Wooldridge) presented “Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin Governance and Funding Proposals”. Discussion followed.

- GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits asked if the presented options will go to the CMA CAG for review and comment. Mr. Buelow advised the individual member agencies that form the three GSAs need to form conclusions on their own. GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits recommended that public input and thorough discussion happen before a decision is made.
- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director John Sanchez asked if the City of Buellton would be charged SGMA fees if a funding option involved acre-feet or extraction fees. Mr. Stroud explained the funding options for whoever pumps groundwater will pay for the groundwater pumped. Mr. Buelow verified the City of Buellton currently provides funding for the GSA through a cost share agreement and that a future plan is needed to fund the GSA after GSP submittal. Discussion continued.

- GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits asked if meters are required, who will pay for meters, meter installation, meter maintenance and meter readings. He expressed concern that the SGMA process creates another bureaucracy without designating who will pay for it. Since the State of California mandated SGMA but all the required studies and meters are all very costly, he feels the State should help fund the implementation, so the costs are not forced on the City of Buellton or the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District. Mr. Stroud explained economies of scale options. Mr. Bulow spoke about a possible rebate expected to be offered by the County of Santa Barbara to support required metering efforts. Discussion continued.
- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director John Sanchez asked for clarification on project discussed of taking videos of wells. Mr. Buelow advised that construction details for wells to be used in the monitoring network is needed. Not all wells would be videoed only those potential monitoring wells where construction is unknown.
- Mr. Buelow added, to help support the GSAs financially, DWR offers technical support services that we can apply for to complete videos of wells as well as we will be eligible for another round of DWR grants for implementation funds once GSP is submitted. Three sources of future funding for GSAs is planned to be fees collected from individual groundwater pumpers, contributions from member agencies and grants through the State.
- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director John Sanchez asked for clarification on when the State of California will advise if the submitted GSP is accepted or will they come in and take over. Mr. Buelow spoke about DWR's SGMA process, implementation timeline and possible course of action if GSP is not submitted or accepted.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked how the GSA plans to continue outreach to stakeholders. He recommended significant outreach and engagement of landowners regarding the governance and finance proposals.
 - Len Fleckenstein added that outreach to various sectors in the region as well as inter-agency communications will increase costs and should be considered in the future funding needed.
- Deby Laranjo asked since surface water is not administered under SGMA, where do surface water diverters fit in to the potential SGMA fee schedule? Mr. Stroud commented that surface water diverters would typically not be charged a SGMA fee unless they are also a groundwater extractor as well. Mr. Buelow clarified that surface water diverters would still pay their pumping fees to SYRWCD and report also to the State Water Resources Control Board, as they do now. Now the State is mandating groundwater pumpers be subject to similar reporting.
- Len Fleckenstein asked if a JPA can charge fees or assessments or do fees need to be established through a city or county. Mr. Stroud advised that the SGMA law directly grants the GSA authority to implement funds. Since the GSAs would be signatory to the JPA, the GSAs can delegate their power to the JPA. Inclusion of the County as a

JPA member can be valuable since SGMA allows use of certain enforcement mechanisms for funding that come from the original statute that formed the individual member agency which is chosen to be the JPA procedure agency especially since the County already has an efficient system in place.

- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director John Sanchez wants to discuss future governance and funding with City of Buellton staff before making a decision.
- GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits asked Mr. Buelow about addressing comments received regarding direct landowner/stakeholder engagement for the governance and funding proposals.
 - Mr. Buelow suggested having a CAG meeting and possibly another CMA GSA meeting specifically about future governance and funding topics. He confirmed all three GSA meetings this month will include this same presentation on governance and funding proposals.
 - GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits suggested having a joint GSA meeting with all three GSA Committees at one time to discuss future governance and funding.
 - Mr. Buelow asked the GSA Committee to consider the size of the CMA versus costs of required reports and work. Since the producers in the CMA pump less acre-feet of water per year than those in either of the other GSAs but the costs of required reports and work for each GSA are relatively the same, a fee per acre-foot will be a lot higher to the producers in the CMA if the CMA GSA chose to be stand-alone as a GSA and not combine with the other GSAs.
- GSA Committee Acting Alternate Director John Sanchez asked, with respect to stakeholder engagement, how large landowners were represented in this process. Mr. Buelow said that large landowners outside the City of Buellton limits have been represented by Director Hibbits as the representative from Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD); various farmers and farming entity representatives are members of the CMA CAG; some landowners in CMA are part of an ad-hoc group called the Santa Ynez Water Group to coordinate and work with GSAs; individuals are able to provide input on their own and not required to be part of any entity. Citizens and landowners in the City of Buellton are represented by City of Buellton representatives, Council Members Ed Andrisek and John Sanchez. Citizens and landowners outside the jurisdiction of SYRWCD or the City of Buellton are represented by the Supervisor Joan Hartmann or her alternate, Meighan Dietenhofer, representatives to the CMA GSA for the County of Santa Barbara.

X. Next “Special” CMA GSA Meeting: Monday, October 4, 2021, 10:00 AM

Mr. Buelow announced the next proposed meeting for the CMA GSA Committee will be a Special Meeting on Monday, October 4, 2021 at 10:00 am.

XI. Next Regular CMA GSA Meeting: Monday, November 15, 2021, 10:00 AM

Mr. Buelow announced that the next CMA GSA Committee Regular Meeting will be on Monday, November 15, 2021, 10:00 am, location to be determined. The meeting is being held one week earlier than normal 4th week to accommodate the Thanksgiving holiday.

XII. CMA GSA Committee requests and comments

There were no requests or comments.

XIII. Adjournment

GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits adjourned the meeting at 12:46 pm.

Art Hibbits, Vice-Chair

William J. Buelow, Secretary

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Central Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin October 20, 2021

A special meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Central Management Area (CMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 2:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency, this meeting occurred solely via teleconference as authorized by AB361 and in accordance with the latest Santa Barbara County Health Officer Order.

GSA Committee Directors Present: Ed Andrisek and Art Hibbits

Alternate GSA Committee Director Present: Cynthia Allen and Meighan Diethofer

Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Rose Hess, Amber Thompson, Matt Young

Others Present: Sean Diggins and Brett Stroud (Young Wooldridge).

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

GSA Committee Director Ed Andrisek called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm and asked Mr. Bill Buelow to call roll. Two Committee Directors were present providing a quorum. Mr. Buelow announced names of phone and video attendees.

II. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

No additions or deletions were made.

III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Consider adopting Resolution CMA-2021-001, “Resolution Initially Authorizing Remote Teleconference Meetings Under AB361”

Mr. Buelow provided background of and purpose for AB361. Mr. Brett Stroud (Young Wooldridge) explained the code, history leading up to passing of AB361 and benefits of invoking AB361 to change teleconference rules while abiding by the Brown Act. There was no discussion or public comment.

GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits made a MOTION to approve Resolution CMA-2021-001, RESOLUTION INITIALLY AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS UNDER AB361. GSA Committee Director Ed

Andrisek seconded the motion, reading of the Resolution was waived and the Resolution was passed 2-0 by roll call vote.

V. Next “Special” CMA GSA Meeting: Monday, October 25, 2021, 10:00 AM

Mr. Buelow announced the next proposed meeting for the CMA GSA Committee will be a Special Meeting on Monday, October 25, 2021, 10:00 am at the Buellton City Council Chambers with remote participation provided via ZOOM. Those meeting in person at the Buellton City Council Chambers will be required to wear masks while indoors, as per Santa Barbara County mandate.

VI. Next Regular CMA GSA Meeting: Monday, November 15, 2021, 10:00 AM

Mr. Buelow announced that the next CMA GSA Committee Regular Meeting will be on Monday, November 15, 2021, 10:00 am, at the Buellton City Council Chambers with remote participation provided via ZOOM. Those meeting in person at the Buellton City Council Chambers will be required to wear masks while indoors, as per Santa Barbara County Health Order No. 2021-10.5.

VII. CMA GSA Committee requests and comments

There were no requests or comments.

XIII. Adjournment

GSA Committee Director Art Hibbits made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 2:50 pm. GSA Committee Director Ed Andrisek seconded and the motion passed by Roll Call vote 2-0.

Ed Andrisek, Chairman

William J. Buelow, Secretary

September 21, 2021

VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Chris Brooks, Chairman
WMA GSA
P.O. Box 719
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cbrooks@vvcasd.org

Ed Andrisek, Chairman
CMA GSA
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Brett Marymee, Chairman
EMA GSA
P.O. Box 719
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Re: Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Gentlemen:

We are counsel for the Santa Ynez Water Group (Group), which is a coalition of farmers and ranchers within the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin (Basin). These agricultural landowners formed the Group to protect their overlying rights to groundwater in the Basin. This includes engaging with your three groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) as you develop and administer your respective groundwater sustainability plans (GSP) under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

The Group has been monitoring the activities of the Western Management Area GSA, the Central Management Area GSA, and the Eastern Management Area GSA. We have several concerns regarding the current course of events and the burdens your GSAs apparently intend to place solely on agricultural landowners. The purpose of this letter is to express those concerns and request the ability to participate directly regarding the GSPs and the activities of the GSAs.

1. Landowner Representation

There is no exclusive agricultural landowner representation on any of the GSAs' governing committees. Each committee is composed of representatives from governmental agencies with non-agricultural constituencies. For example, the Western Management Area GSA Committee is made up of (1) Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District; (2) the County of Santa Barbara; (3) the City of Lompoc; (4) Mission Hills Community Services District; and (5) Vandenberg Village Community Services District. Both the Central Management Area GSA Committee and the Eastern Management Area GSA Committee are similar. This does not represent the entirety of the water users and interests in the Basin and excludes any direct representation from the agricultural community. Thus, at the outset, the make-up of the GSAs was flawed.

The only avenue your GSAs allowed agricultural landowners to voice their unique opinions or concerns is through the Citizens Advisory Groups. But, just as the name suggests, those groups are only advisory, are weighted toward non-agricultural interests, and carry no decision-making authority. Put simply, agricultural landowners have been intentionally disenfranchised from the decision-making.

We are aware that the GSAs are exploring a potential reorganization of their governance structure. Whether that reorganization results in each GSA remaining as three separate GSAs or forming a single coordinated GSA, it is likely that each GSA will revisit or draft new organizational documents. When doing so, we ask that each GSA include a voting director position for an agricultural landowner representative on each decision-making body formed or otherwise reorganized.

2. Implementation of Projects and Management Actions

We are also concerned with the projects and management actions identified by the GSAs in the draft GSPs. While we understand that many of the GSAs' respective Group 1 projects and management actions focus primarily on monitoring and reporting efforts, all other projects single out and discriminate against agricultural landowners. The burden of sustainability is therefore placed solely on the backs of agricultural landowners.

Funding for these projects and management actions mirrors that problem. We are aware that the GSAs are considering a groundwater extraction fee, assessment, or other property-related fee to fund the GSAs' projects and management actions. As those considerations continue, we encourage the GSAs to pursue the most equitable option in levying that financial burden. Agricultural landowners should not be unfairly targeted with projects and management actions, and then be forced to pay for their development and implementation.

3. Consideration of Overlying Groundwater Rights

Our last concern underlies all that the GSAs are doing. None of the GSAs have considered the effects their actions will have on overlying groundwater rights of agricultural landowners. This omission is evident in the draft GSPs as the GSAs focus exclusively on the interests of municipal groundwater users. This violates the mandates of SGMA requiring your GSAs to consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater. Specifically, Water Code section 10723.2 provides, in part:

“The groundwater sustainability agency shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans. These interests include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

Chris Brooks, Chairman
Ed Andrisek, Chairman
Brett Marymee, Chairman
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(a) Holders of overlying groundwater rights, including:

(1) Agricultural users, including farmers, ranchers, and dairy professionals.

...”

Our hope is that the GSAs expand their focus and discharge their duty to consider *all* interests in the Basin as required by SGMA.

We understand the complexities of the issues and the challenges in developing a GSP. Our desire is a successful GSP, and to be part of the process. But we cannot do that if the GSAs intentionally disenfranchise agricultural landowners and their senior overlying rights in the Basin.

Please have the attorney advising the GSAs on these issues contact me so that we can discuss how best to resolve our concerns.

Very truly yours,



Joseph D. Hughes

JDH/sbh

cc via e-mail only: Santa Ynez Water Group
Bill Buelow bbuelow@syrwcd.com
Matt Young wateragency@cosbpw.net
Cynthia Allen callen@syrwcd.com
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Matt Vanderlinden – matt.vanderlinden@cityofsolvang.com
Paeter Garcia - pgarcia@syrwcd.com

DRAFT FINAL GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW. PUBLIC COMMENT IS ENCOURAGED

(Santa Ynez, California, September 15, 2021) - The public is invited to review and comment on the Draft Final (Public Draft) Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) prepared by the three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin). The three GSAs were established for the Eastern, Central and Western Management Areas of the Basin (EMA, CMA and WMA). The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2015 requires each basin in California to be sustainable with respect to groundwater by 2042. Three GSPs (one for each management area) were prepared through the efforts of eight local government agencies and their elected officials working together since 2017. Sustainable groundwater management will be implemented at the local level using the GSPs, and is designed to ensure that:

- (1) Long-term groundwater elevations are adequate to support existing and future reasonable and beneficial uses throughout the Basin,
- (2) A sufficient volume of groundwater storage remains available during drought conditions and recovers during wet conditions,
- (3) Groundwater production, and projects and management actions undertaken through SGMA, do not degrade water quality conditions in order to support ongoing reasonable and beneficial uses of groundwater for agricultural, municipal, domestic, industrial, and environmental purposes.

The three GSPs are available on the Basin's SGMA website, SantaYnezWater.org. The public is encouraged to review and provide comments on the GSPs.

- The EMA GSP is available for review and comment until October 24, 2021 (11:59 pm).
- The CMA GSP and WMA GSP are both available for review and comment until October 26, 2021 (11:59 pm).

Public Meetings of the Citizens Advisory Group and the GSA Committee for each management area will be held during September/October to discuss the GSPs. Please register as an Interested Party on SantaYnezWater.org to receive email notices of these public meetings as well as future public meetings or hearings.

Additionally, a hard copy of each GSP is available for review in a local library. The EMA GSP is available at the Solvang Public Library, the CMA GSP at the Buellton Public Library and the WMA GSP at the Lompoc and Vandenberg Village Public Libraries. Comments on the GSPs are encouraged to be uploaded via the Comment Form located on SantaYnezWater.org or may be submitted at the address below.

For questions please contact:

Mr. Bill Buelow, P.G.

GSA Coordinator for Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin
and Groundwater Program Manager for Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District
Tel: 805-693-1156, ext. 403

Email: bbuelow@syrrwcd.com

Mailing Address:

Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District
P.O. Box 719
Santa Ynez, CA 93460

**CMA GSA Committee Meeting - October 25, 2021
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Wind turbines in Lompoc



COURTESY PHOTO

Loads of wind turbines were transported Friday in Lompoc, where the Strauss Energy Wind Project is building a wind farm southwest of the city. The company is continuing its efforts, which began in late August, to transport more than 200 oversized loads through the city. The movement is expected to continue through late November or early December. Most loads require traffic delays lasting a minute or two, according to a news release from the city of Lompoc. For more information, go to cityoflompoc.com.

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HONORING GERD JORDANO
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2021
TWO O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON

- Music by The Idiomatiques
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- Dinner presented by Lorraine Lim Catering

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SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

PRESS RELEASE

The public is invited to review and comment on the Public Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) prepared for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin by **October 24, 2021**. The three GSPs provide a roadmap for how the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin will reach long-term sustainability. The GSPs are available on SantaYnezWater.org and at the Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc and Vandenberg Village Branch Libraries.

For questions, please contact Mr. Bill Buelow
805-693-1156, ext. 403; bbuelow@syrwcd.com

Exiled in Montecito: History repeats itself with Prince Harry and Meghan

Royalty, as an institution, always wins in the long run. And its strays always lose.

Just summon the spirits of Britain's Duke and Duchess of Windsor, exiled for almost four decades in France after the Duke, then King Edward VIII, abdicated his throne (in 1936) — supposedly for “the woman he loved” — and this is what they would probably tell you: Money improves your style of misery but won't bring you happiness.



THE INVESTIGATOR
ROBERT ERINGER

Truth is, they (especially Edward) were homesick for Blighty, which, for the rest of his life, would no longer tolerate their presence and whose rulers (the Royal Family and government alike) strove to keep them both at arm's length.

Notice I wrote “supposedly” about Wallis Simpson's involvement in what was a huge drama a century ago but was actually a whopping red herring that the populace swallowed hook, line and sinker.

That is because there was a far more important reason for evicting King Edward VIII from his throne, if much less known —

except, that is, by those who had a need to know as war clouds began to darken over Europe back in the mid-1930s.

Before World War II officially commenced, Edward, while still heir apparent as Prince of Wales, was partial to Nazi Germany and liked to point out to his friends that 100% Teutonic blood ran through his veins. A little context: The British Royal Family's last name is Gothe-Saxe-Coburg, but during World War I, the British Cabinet found it unseemly that a family imported from Germany with a German name should be ruling the waves of Britannia while tens of thousands of British lads were being mustard-gassed in

the trenches by German soldiers. (All boiled down, World War I was a royal family squabble whose hapless subjects paid the ultimate price).

Thus, the Cabinet compelled the British Royal Family to adopt the name Windsor, chosen because it sounded, well, so quintessentially English.

And then, upon being crowned king, Edward VIII put his misplaced sympathies to practice: He shared British state secrets from his dispatch boxes with the German Reich's leadership.

British Intelligence chief Robert Vannistat, whose officers kept a watchful eye on the new king, dutifully reported Edward VIII's duplicity — it ran contrary to the government's anti-Third Reich stance — to 10 Downing Street, where Stanley Baldwin, prime minister of the day, was as flabbergasted as he was horrified.

Something extraordinary had to be done.

And thus, Prime Minister Baldwin and his spy chief plotted to dethrone the king.

Their ruse? Wallis Simpson, an American divorcee detested by many in British political

Please see **INVESTIGATOR** on **A4**

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MON-SAT 10 AM - 3 PM
(Or by appointment)

GMA GSA Committee Meeting - October 25, 2021
www.missionpooltables.com
info@missionpooltables.com

Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin

The three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin have prepared **Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)** as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of January 2015. Final Drafts of the three GSPs are available for public review and comment online at SantaYnezWater.org. The Final GSPs must be submitted to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) by January 31, 2022. Upon submittal, DWR will host a public comment period on the Final GSPs via its website.

Schedule of Public Meetings, Workshops, and Comment Periods located at SantaYnezWater.org

COMMENT NOW

SGMA is implemented at the local level

Public Review and Comment on the Groundwater Sustainability Plans

All three Draft GSPs are available on-line SantaYnezWater.org

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS:

See website for exact dates or sign-up for email notifications.

Draft GSP: 45 days in September - October, 2021

Final GSP: 75 days in February-March 2022

Final GSPs will also be available online.

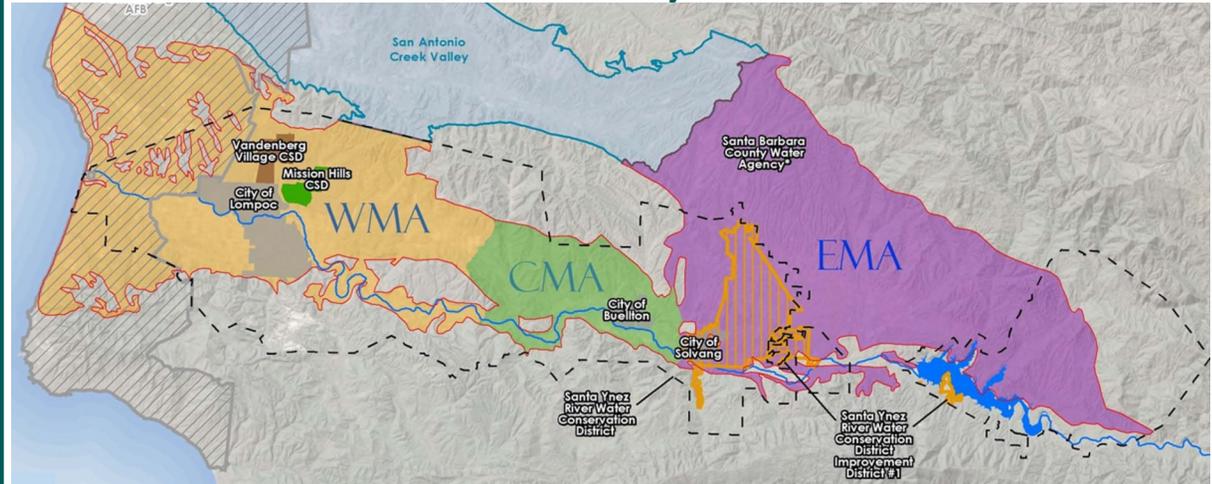
Western Management Area GSP

Central Management Area GSP

Eastern Management Area GSP

A printed copy will be available for review at the following public libraries: Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, and Vandenberg Village.

Three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin



Next Steps:

- **September/October 2021:** Public Review of Draft GSPs
- **October 2021:** Citizen Advisory Groups Meetings to discuss Draft GSPs
- **October 2021:** GSA Committee Meetings to discuss Draft GSPs
- **December 2021/January 2022:** GSP Adoption by GSA Committees
- **January 31, 2022:** Final GSPs due to DWR
- **February/March 2022:** Public Review of Final GSPs (comment via DWR website)

For more information, meeting announcements, and to review and comment on draft documents, please visit

SantaYnezWater.org or call (805) 693-1156 ext. 403



Cuenca de Aguas Subterráneas del Valle del Río Santa Ynez

Las tres Agencias de Sostenibilidad de Aguas Subterráneas (GSAs) en la Cuenca de Aguas Subterráneas del Valle del Río Santa Ynez han preparado **Planes de Sostenibilidad de Aguas Subterráneas (GSPs)** como lo requiere la Ley de Gestión Sostenible de Aguas Subterráneas (SGMA) de enero de 2015. Los Borradores Finales de los tres GSP están disponibles para su revisión pública y comentarios en línea en SantaYnezWater.org. Los GSP Finales deben ser presentados al Departamento de Recursos Hídricos de California (DWR) antes del 31 de enero de 2022. Una vez presentados, el DWR organizará un período de comentarios públicos sobre los GSP Finales a través de su página web.

Calendario de Reuniones
Públicas, Talleres y Períodos
de Comentarios en
SantaYnezWater.org

COMENTE AHORA

*La SGMA es aplicada
a nivel local*

Revisión y Comentarios Públicos sobre los Planes de Sostenibilidad de Aguas Subterráneas

Los tres Borradores de los GSP están disponibles
en línea SantaYnezWater.org

PERÍODOS DE COMENTARIOS PÚBLICOS :

Consulte el sitio web para conocer las fechas exactas o regístrese para recibir notificaciones por correo electrónico.

Borrador del GSP: 45 días en septiembre - octubre, 2021

GSP Final: 75 días en febrero - marzo, 2022

Los GSP Finales también estarán disponibles en línea.

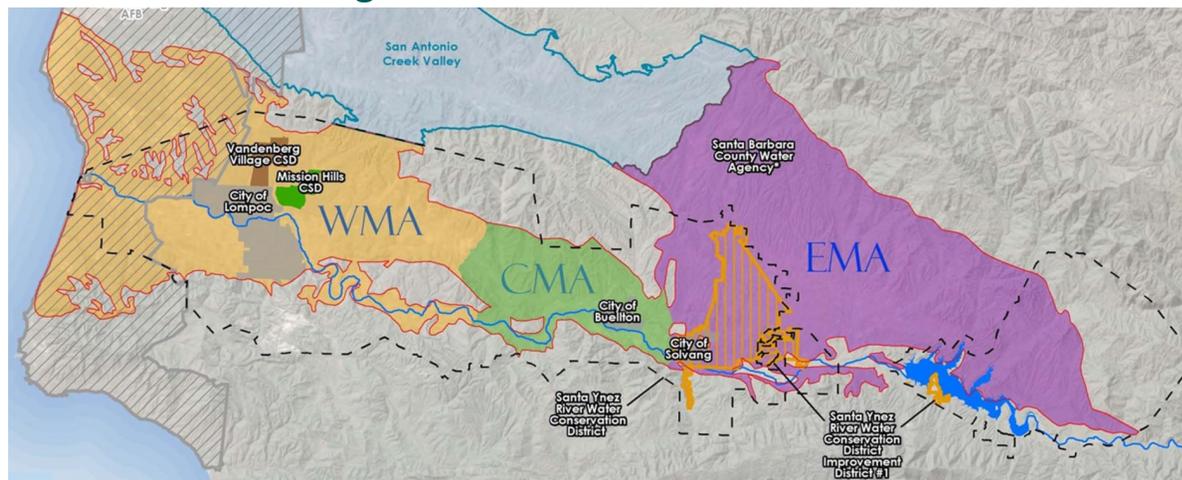
GSP del Área de Gestión Occidental (WMA)

GSP del Área de Gestión Central (CMA)

GSP del Área de Gestión Oriental (EMA)

En las siguientes bibliotecas públicas, estará disponible una copia impresa para su revisión: Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc y Vandenberg Village.

Tres Agencias de Sostenibilidad de Aguas Subterráneas (GSA) en la Cuenca de Aguas Subterráneas del Valle del Río Santa Ynez



Próximos Pasos:

- **Septiembre/octubre 2021:** Revisión Pública de los Borradores de los GSP
- **Octubre 2021:** Reuniones de Grupos Consultivos de Ciudadanos para discutir los Borradores de los GSP
- **Octubre 2021:** Reuniones del Comité de la GSA para discutir los Borradores de los GSP
- **Diciembre 2021/enero 2022:** Aprobación del GSP por los Comités de la GSA
- **31 de enero, 2022:** GSP Finales por el DWR
- **Febrero/marzo 2022:** Revisión Pública de los GSP Finales (comentarios a través del sitio web del DWR)

Para más información, anuncios de reuniones y para revisar y comentar los borradores de los documentos, visite

SantaYnezWater.org o llame al (805) 693-1156 ext. 403



CENTRAL MANAGMENT AREA
CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP
MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 8, 2021

TO: CMA GSA Committee

FROM: CMA Citizen Advisory Group
(representative Sharyne Merritt)

SUBJECT: Workshop on Public Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and Future Governance

Attendees

CMA CAG Members in attendance: Sharyne Merritt, Cindy Douglas, Len Fleckenstein; Sean Diggins, and Larry Lahr

Staff in attendance: Bill Buelow and Kevin Walsh (SYRWCD), Matt Young (County Water Agency)

Consultants in attendance: Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers),

Purpose

The CMA GSA Committee requested staff for the GSA agencies to coordinate meetings of the CMA CAG. Through a coordinated effort, the CAG held a meeting via teleconference. The meeting was held on October 8, 2021. The purpose of the meetings was for the CMA CAG (CAG) to review the Public Draft of the GSP and future governance options. The GSP was prepared by the Stetson Engineer's team. A copy of the documents was made available to the CAG prior to the meeting at www.SantaYnezWater.org.

CAG Comments o

Each member of the CAG was given the opportunity to ask questions or make comments on the Public Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin. Discussion occurred with each question and comment by various members of the CAG, Staff and Consultants. Below is a summary of the comments and questions by topic.

Data gaps

- CAG members noted concern about monitoring the *Buellton Aquifer*. There are a number of places in the document where argument could be made that current monitoring is not adequate, but the document says it is adequate. Most of the acreage within the CMA is

unmonitored. The argument is stronger for getting more monitoring wells if the document says monitoring is currently inadequate.

- Consultant/Staff noted more monitoring wells are needed just to be on par with other areas. They acknowledge this is a data gap and it is desirable to add more monitoring wells
 - Consultant/Staff noted there are 4 wells in the *Buellton Aquifer*: two on the east are drilled through the in Santa Ynez River Alluvium into the *Buellton Aquifer* below. They are 500 feet below the surface; two additional wells are completed on the west and are in the highlands.
- CAG members suggested a need for a stream gauge within the CMA boundaries – there is one upstream of the CMA and one downstream of the CMA, but none within the CMA boundaries.
 - Consultant/staff noted the gauge at the eastern end is close to the boundary, so it supplies a good estimate of flow in that area. The next gauge is at Lompoc. The groundwater contribution to surface water is minimal. Surface water is affected by releases from Lake Cachuma, flows from tributaries, and pumping by diverters. The surface water is least impacted by groundwater, so it was decided to not put one at the western edge of the CMA.

Surface water (River and River Alluvium) - Ground water interconnectivity, and GDE's

- CAG members asked if SGMA has an obligation to keep surface water contribution at current level
 - Consultant/staff responded that 15-feet below the surface of the river in the alluvium is the root level for riparian trees. Consultant stated that these were groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDE) though this was questioned by the CAG – see below.
- CAG members asked if there is interconnectivity between ground water and the River Alluvium. Pointing to Table 2b.6-2, which shows 11-acres of potential GDE Associated within a Principal Aquifer [*Buellton Aquifer*], 1,223-acres of potential riparian areas not subject to SGMA, 501-acres not likely to be affected by groundwater management, and 807-acres of riparian vegetation that according to the text “may have some influence from the *Buellton Aquifer* water levels”
 - Consultant/staff responded that interconnectivity between ground water and Alluvium was unknown currently
- CAG members asked how the 15-feet below the surface water threshold was derived.
 - Consultant/staff responded that they wanted to monitor undesirable results related to flux.
 - Consultants further explained: The surface water of the Santa Ynez River flows on top of the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium* and within the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium*. Water flowing beneath the surface of the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium* is also referred to as the “underflow” and “subflow”. Below the *Santa Ynez River*

Alluvium is the *Buellton Aquifer*. Riparian vegetation has its roots in the first 15-feet of the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium*. *Santa Ynez River Alluvium* is between 0 to 150-feet deep.

- CAG members observed that there were likely few if any acres of the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium* that were less than 15-feet deep allowing the *Buellton Aquifer* to be within 15 feet of the surface. It would therefore be unlikely for the Santa Ynez River riparian ecosystem to be groundwater dependent.
- CAG members noted that it is not likely observed water level decreases in the *Buellton Aquifer* will affect the surface water or habitat for riparian vegetation. The CAG noted that in the CMA, riparian vegetation is better classified as Surface water Dependent Ecosystems (SDE) rather than Groundwater Depend Ecosystems (GDE).
- A member of the public commented that there should be explicit and strong caveats explaining that riparian vegetation primarily relies on the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium*. There is virtually no way the *Buellton Aquifer* would be a materially contributing cause to riparian vegetation; SGMA was not intended to manage surface water

Management

- CAG members asked about the trigger of two consecutive non-drought years for Minimum Thresholds, noting there may not be two consecutive non-drought years in the future.
 - Consultant/Staff said this was the best route to go at this time however these thresholds could change, if needed. Further, sustainable yield will be updated during revisions to the GSP.
 - Sustainable yield refers to the difference between inflow and outflow. There is uncertainty in the water budget due to some estimated parameters. Consultants will corroborate the model with groundwater levels to refine the budget in the future.
- CAG members asked when Group 1 Management Actions will begin; who determines timing of metering and amounts of fees; who pays for the meters; given delays experienced by well companies, how long will this take?
 - Consultant/Staff offered that Group 1 Management Actions will begin immediately. Timing of metering and amounts of fees will be determined by GSA. It will take a lot of time to initiate all of these actions.
 - Other basins have left paying for meters up to the owner; Santa Barbara County supervisors are looking at some sort of defrayment of cost; up to \$500 or \$600 per well; The GSA will have to come up for standards for calibration; must be installed by certified person. CAG members suggested that the GSA look at SB88 for lessons learned.
- CAG members suggested that since Surface Water users have to report use to the State using State approved techniques, CMA should allow use of any techniques approved by the State.

- Consultants/Staff reviewed the GSP timeline: the GSP gets adopted and uploaded in December 2021 and January 2022; then DWR has 2 years to approve it; GSA will continue to meet quarterly with annual reporting; The GSAs need to figure how we are going to fund implementation.
- The CAG discussed how will the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District will relate to GSA.
 - Consultant/Staff if GSA's want the District to continue supporting SGMA, it will.
 - Consultant/Staff said it is possible the GSA will monitor wells in the *Santa Ynez River Alluvium*.
- A member of public noted that on other GSA boards there are stakeholder directors, for example, an environmental director and an agriculture director.

There was no further discussion, and the meeting was adjourned.