

MEETING MINUTES

Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Western Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin April 28, 2021

A SPECIAL meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Western Management Area (WMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Wednesday, 28 April 2021. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by 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.

GSA Committee Directors Present: Chris Brooks, Meighan Diethofer (Acting as Alternate), Myron Heavin, Steve Jordan, Kristin Worthley (Acting as Alternate)

Alternate GSA Committee Director Present: Katherine Stewart

Staff Present: Mr. Joe Barget, Mr. Bill Buelow, Ms. Amber Thompson, Mr. Matt Young

Others Present: Mr. Bryan Bondy, Mr. Doug Circle, Mr. John Fio (EKI), Ms. Karen Kistler, Mr. Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Ms. Jean Moran (Stetson Engineers), plus 1 other member of the public whose name was not registered.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

GSA Committee Director Brooks called the meeting to order at 10:05 am and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. Three Committee Directors and two Acting Alternate Directors were present providing a quorum.

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

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone attendees.

Mr. Buelow reviewed history of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requirements and what has been completed so far in the Santa Ynez River Basin including: the creation of the three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Basin (EMA, CMA, WMA), coordinating efforts between the eight agencies participating in the three GSAs, establishing a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) in each of the Management Areas of the Basin and Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) development milestones. The GSPs are due in January 2022. The WMA GSA Committee has so far prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, a Data Management Plan, a Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model, Draft Groundwater Conditions Technical Memorandum and Draft Water Budget which has a public comment period ending soon.

III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda

No additions or deletions were made.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Receive Staff Memorandum summary of conversation between SYRWCD and DWR Staff members regarding Santa Ynez River and River Alluvium and SGMA GSPs and GSAs

Mr. Buelow presented Staff Memorandum dated April 19, 2021 regarding summary of telephone conversation with A. Regmi 04-15-2021. Discussion followed.

VI. Receive Presentation from Stetson Team on “Numeric Groundwater Model and Model Documentation”

Ms. Jean Moran (Stetson Engineers) presented the April 2021 Stakeholder Workshop. She discussed the Numerical Groundwater Model and Model Documentation. She requested detailed comments and questions be made via the portal at SantaYnezWater.org.

There was public comment, GSA Committee Member, consultant, and staff discussion following each section of the presentation.

Ms. Moran Reviewed Numerical Groundwater Construction

- GSA Committee Alternate Director Katherine Stewart asked what constitutes a fully saturated unit. Ms. Moran explained water flowing in different layers. She pointed out on Slide 8, the denominator of hydraulic conductivity ratios reflects a fully saturated unit.
- GSA Committee Director Myron Heavin asked for clarification on aquifers used by MHCS D and VVCSD vs. City of Lompoc as it is hard to see on the slides. Ms. Moran verified modelers are developing separate budgets for separate sub-areas Lompoc Plain (City of Lompoc) and Lompoc Uplands (MHCS D and VVCSD). Mr. Lawler further clarified for the purpose of SGMA, the difference between pumping from the two principal aquifers, Upper Aquifer and Lower Aquifer. Lompoc Uplands (MHCS D and VVCSD) pumps from Lower Aquifer while Lompoc Plain (City of Lompoc) pumps from Upper Aquifer.
- GSA Committee Director Steve Jordan asked if this model considers recharge for upper and lower percolation curves. Curtis confirmed the percolation curves from studies done in 1970s were used in the model and verified model data. GSA Committee Director Steve Jordan advised of need to revisit and specify upper & lower percolation curves. Curtis agreed and stated it will be revisited when evaluating potential impacts to stream flow from pumping.

- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked since the water budget technical memo for WMA has been released but model still being calibrated, how and when will the two be matched up and will the water budget technical memo need to be revised after model is finalized. Ms. Moran explained that the numerical groundwater model informed the water budget technical memorandum and model calibrations created only small sub-flow refining while larger components were not changed. He asked if the numeric groundwater model will be revisited and possibly adjusted based on comments received for the draft water budget tech memo. Ms. Moran confirmed.
- GSA Committee Director Steve Jordan asked about water levels in layers 3 and 4 of this model and advised that USGS observation wells are located in this area. Ms. Moran will double check well data in those areas.

VII. Receive Draft Numeric Groundwater Technical Memorandum and consider public comment period and assignment to CAG

Mr. Buelow announced that the Draft Numeric Groundwater Technical Memorandum will be released for public review and comment in the next few days. Staff recommended setting a 21-day Public Review and Comment Period for this document. By unanimous consensus, Committee Members agreed with receiving and releasing the document for public review and comments, setting a 21-day public comment period and requested the WMA CAG meet to review and discuss the Tech Memo.

VIII. Next Regular WMA GSA Meeting: Wednesday, May 26, 2021, 10:00 AM


Mr. Buelow announced that the next WMA GSA Committee Regular Meeting to include conducting quarterly business will be Wednesday, May 26, 2021, 10:00 AM, via video/teleconference.

IX. WMA GSA Committee requests and comments

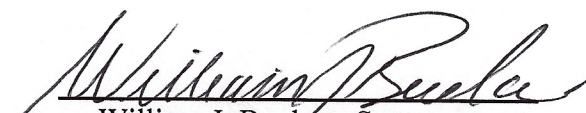
Mr. Buelow announced that if consultants have another GSP section ready to present soon, then another special meeting may be scheduled before the next scheduled Regular Meeting. If so, an eblast will go out to all registered WMA interested parties.

X. Adjournment

GSA Committee Director Brooks adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.



 Chris Brooks, Chairman



 William J. Buelow, Secretary

STAFF MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 19, 2021
TO: File
FROM: B. Buelow
SUBJECT: Summary of Telephone Conversation with A. Regmi 04-15-2021

As a follow up to several emails (attached) from Anita Regmi at DWR, a call was scheduled between Bill Buelow of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) and Anita Regmi of the southern regional office of the State of California, Department of Water Resources (DWR) to discuss the issue of the Santa Ynez River Alluvium (River Alluvium) in the three Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) currently being prepared for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin).

Ms. Regmi said that DWR needs to know more about this subject as it has come up during several recent GSA meetings and there have been specific questions that have been asked by various agencies such as NOAA.

Ms. Regmi reiterated that DWR had received some information from SYRWCD in response to earlier requests, but that she still did not understand the source of the boundary of the Santa Ynez River Alluvium. Mr. Buelow reiterated the previous request of January 25, 2021 by Ms. Regmi was about data collected by riparian pumpers and where it was sent and stored. Mr. Buelow sent Ms. Regmi a link to the eWRIMS system, where riparian pumpers upload pumping records to maintain compliance with the State Board.

Mr. Buelow then clarified that the extent of the River Alluvium extends upstream from the Lompoc Narrows to Bradbury dam and corresponds to the District's Zone A plus some additional areas of River Alluvium between the two non-contiguous sections of the District. The management of the River Alluvium as surface water or surface water underflow accords with the State Water Resource Control Board's (State Board) assertion of jurisdiction over River surface and subsurface water as underflow. This is documented in various State Board Orders, including D886, 73-37, 89-18, and most recently, 2019-0148, and has been accepted for a long time.

Mr. Buelow further explained that SGMA's definition of groundwater specifically excludes subsurface "water flowing through a known and defined channel," which is essentially how the State Board has defined subsurface water in the River Alluvium. Mr. Buelow pointed out this was done intentionally by the two agencies so there would be no jurisdictional overlap. Ms. Regmi she appreciated and understood the clarification.

Ms. Regmi stressed that all three GSPs need to more clearly document the status of wells screened in the River Alluvium. She added that there needs to be a better explanation of the process of evaluating each well and the GSAs will need to provide DWR with documentation of sources and citations. She further explained that as currently drafted, the reviewers of the GSPs will not understand the assertion of the exemption of wells in the River Alluvium. Mr. Buelow thanked Ms. Regmi for the feedback and said he would pass along the information to the GSAs.

Ms. Regmi indicated that the declaration of the exemption to SGMA “is a big deal” and further explained that DWR’s request for more information is a “heads-up” to the GSAs. Mr. Buelow explained that the GSAs will provide additional details about the status of wells in the River Alluvium and explained that the GSAs are currently contemplating how this will be done (either in the body of the GSPs and/or adding an appendix with technical information to each GSP). Ms. Regmi appreciated the information and indicated that DWR will require the GSAs to verify that every well that classified as “exempt from SGMA” is reporting its pumping to the State Board. In addition, DWR will need to know how each exempt well was surveyed or screened to determine its status as a riparian well and exempt from SGMA.

Mr. Buelow offered to send Ms. Regmi a link to the current State Board order 2019-0148. Ms. Regmi said she would appreciate the information.

Mr. Buelow asked Ms. Regmi about other basin’s that consolidate or separate post GSP submittal and asked if there was a specific process that GSAs must follow. Ms. Regmi said that she thought it was straight forward so long as there are no material changes. If there are material changes, then a public hearing process would need to be followed. Ms. Regmi said that she would ask her manager for more information on the process and pass it along.

From: [Regmi, Anita@DWR](mailto:Regmi.Anita@DWR)
To: Bill Buelow
Cc: "[Lawler, Curtis \(curtisl@stetsonengineers.com\)](mailto:Lawler, Curtis (curtisl@stetsonengineers.com))"
Subject: RE: Status of wells in River Alluvium
Date: Thursday, April 01, 2021 7:50:37 AM

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Good morning Bill,

I would like to follow up on the topic discussed in the email below. We have been receiving inquiries related to the GSA's process of SGMA implementation and specifically regarding the subarea identified as River Alluvium. Therefore, it is even more important for us to understand the source of the River Alluvium boundary so that we can provide guidance to all interested parties. I am interested in knowing the data source of this boundary and who determined this boundary. I will appreciate a response.

Thank you.

Anita

Anita Regmi
DWR-Southern Region Office
Cell Phone: (818) 429-2414

From: Regmi, Anita@DWR
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 10:27 AM
To: Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>
Cc: 'Lawler, Curtis (curtisl@stetsonengineers.com)' <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>
Subject: RE: Status of wells in River Alluvium

Good morning Bill,

I have a follow up request for information regarding the subareas where the wells are identified as River wells in the Santa Ynez River Valley groundwater basin. I reviewed the information available under the State Board on its Electronic Water Rights Information Management System which provides information about surface water diversions and wells with existing water rights. I have also reviewed the information pertaining to the River Alluvium Subarea from the draft HCM. I am trying to understand how the boundary of the subarea "River Alluvium" was drawn. Your email below says "It is well documented that wells in the River and River alluvium are under the jurisdiction of the State Water Resources Control Board". My recollection from one of the GSA meetings is that the River Alluvium boundary was drawn by the State Board. I will appreciate it if you could direct me to the document which discusses how the boundary is drawn. BTW, I also checked the reference made in HCM about the boundary in question, the referenced document does not discuss anything about the scientific or the legal basis of the boundary and about who created this boundary.

Thank you.

Anita

Anita Regmi
DWR-Southern Region Office
Cell Phone: (818) 429-2414

From: Regmi, Anita@DWR
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>
Cc: 'Lawler, Curtis (curtisl@stetsonengineers.com)' <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>
Subject: RE: Status of wells in River Alluvium

Good morning Bill,

Thank you for your email. The link you have provided below is helpful. The database and documents available through the link below shows that many of the water users in the Santa Ynez Valley Groundwater Basin have various types of water rights. The State Water Board and the state courts have authority to administer the water rights and they enforce water right laws. I will look into details to understand how the existing water rights address the groundwater in the Basin. SGMA does not change any of the existing water rights, therefore, I will dig further to understand if the area with existing water rights are exempt from management under SGMA. I will get back to you on this topic in near future.

Thank you.
Anita

Anita Regmi
DWR-Southern Region Office
Cell Phone: (818) 429-2414

From: Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 5:32 PM
To: Regmi, Anita@DWR <Anita.Regmi@water.ca.gov>; 'Lawler, Curtis (curtisl@stetsonengineers.com)' <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>
Subject: RE: Status of wells in River Alluvium

Hi Anita,

Thanks again for touching base with us on this matter. My apology for the delayed response, it has been a busy time for the three GSAs and the District.

The purpose of my email is to address your question during the last CMA meeting and follow-up email below relating to current data, data reporting, and well construction information for wells in the Santa Ynez River and Santa Ynez River alluvium (River). It is well documented that wells in the River and River alluvium are under the jurisdiction of the State Water Resources Control Board. As such, all applicable reporting data for the River, such as diversions, well locations, well construction data, maps, etc. are filed with the State Board (not the Regional Water Quality Control Board). The data is made publicly available by the State Board on its Electronic Water Rights Information Management System (referred to as "eWRIMs"). The eWRIMs system is very comprehensive and can be found at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/ewrims/.

As you know, under SGMA surface water is analyzed and handled differently than groundwater. The three GSAs are in the process of addressing both the River and Basin groundwater resources in accordance with the SGMA statute and implementing the SGMA regulations with the preparation of three GSPs.

We sincerely appreciate your follow-up and look forward to our ongoing work together.

Regards,
Bill

Bill Buelow, PG

BOARD TREASURER
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Main: (805) 693-1156 ext. 403
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BBuelow@SYRWCD.com

From: Regmi, Anita@DWR <Anita.Regmi@water.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 11:05 AM
To: Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; 'Lawler, Curtis (curtisl@stetsonengineers.com)'
<curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>
Subject: RE: Status of wells in River Alluvium

Hi Bill and Curtis,
Thank you for reaching out. As I mentioned in the meeting today, I would like to see the current data, how and where these data are being reported. If these data are being reported as surface water data to the regional water quality control board, please provide some information on the

program, water quality management plan (if any), and the well constructions (screen-interval) for the wells in question if possible.

Thank you.
Anita

Anita Regmi, P.G.
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From: Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 10:53 AM
To: Regmi, Anita@DWR <Anita.Regmi@water.ca.gov>
Cc: 'Lawler, Curtis (curtisl@stetsonengineers.com)' <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>
Subject: Status of wells in River Alluvium

Anita,
Thanks for your comment during today's CMA meeting.
We would like to follow up with you regarding this topic at your earliest convenience.

Thanks,

Bill Buelow, PG

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