

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

Meeting date/time: July 22, 2021, 3:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: Zoom Online Platform

Key contacts:

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

MEETING RECAP

- **Approval of Past Meeting Summary:** With the addition requested by Mr. Crawford, the committee approved its June meeting summary for posting on the Siskiyou County website.
- **Public Comment:** Public comments provided below.
- **District Staff and Other Announcements:** Pat Vellines provided information about DWR’s My Dry Water Supply tool.
- **Presentation of Updated GSP Adoption Schedule and Public Comment Process:** The Facilitator shared the updated GSP Adoption Schedule and provided an overview of the public comment process.
- **Review and Discussion of Draft GSP Chapter 1:** The technical team shared a high-level overview of the content in Chapter 1 and responded to questions.
- **Review and Discussion of Draft GSP Chapter 5:** The technical team shared a high-level overview of the content in Chapter 5 and responded to questions.
- **Review and Discussion of Substantial Updates to Chapters 2, 3, and 4:** The technical team shared a high-level overview of the changes that have been incorporated to Chapters 2, 3, and 4 and responded to questions.
- **Discussion: Recommendation of Release of Public Draft GSP:** After discussion on the Chapter 5 fee study memo, the Advisory Committee reached consensus to recommend that staff recommend the Board release the Public Draft GSP.
- **Meeting Adjourns.**

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Status/Deadline</i>
Facilitator will edit the meeting summary as requested by Mr. Crawford.	Facilitators	
Advisory Committee members who would like to receive a hard copy of the Public Draft GSP should send a mailing address to the Technical Team.	Advisory Committee members	
Technical Team will add language to clarify the fee/tax schedule plan.	Technical Team	
Technical Team will revisit Pat Graham’s comments to make sure they are incorporated to Chapters 2, 3,	Technical Team	

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and 4 to the extent possible.		
Technical Team will add specificity to Chapter 5 to expand on the funding mechanisms and sources. A paragraph describing the information in the fee study memo will be added.	Technical Team.	

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

MEETING SUMMARY

Call to Order, Agenda Review, and Virtual Meeting Platform

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

Review of Past Meeting Summary; Update on Action Items

The Facilitator obtained consent to post the previous meeting summary to the County Website. She indicated that the team would coordinate with Matt Parker to confirm modification of a meeting summary as requested by Mr. Crawford. The Facilitator informed the group that Josue Medellin Azuara had discussed relevant items with an AC member, and she would work to facilitate any conversation with others interested in discussing matters with Josue.

Public Comment Period

John Bennett asked about the DWR sessions – he asked whether DWR proposals would trump SMGA language/requirements. He was specifically interested in natural resources. The Facilitator clarified that the State Water Board, not DWR, was making recommendations. Matt Parker indicated that since the regulations are still in draft form and because the question is of a legal question, he would prefer to not discuss this yet. The Facilitator reminded the group that one of the Advisory Committee’s tasks is to demonstrate local cooperation with State entities.

District Staff Updates and Other Announcements

Pat Vellines, DWR, shared two items: [My Dry Water Supply](#) link to track dry wells in California (database submittal opportunity) and presented online resources regarding websites with information related to the GSP submittal process.

Presentation of Updated GSP Adoption Schedule and Public Comment Process

The Facilitator presented the GSP Adoption Schedule. The current effort is primarily related to release of the Draft GSP for public review. The Technical Team will hold a public open house and public comment session geared toward public participation. Advisory Committee workshops will follow in late October to review proposed public comment response and the Final Draft of the GSP. Adoption of the GSP is planned for December.

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Thomas Harter provided schedule clarifications. He indicated that the draft to be distributed to the Board is essentially the same as the version that was recently provided to the AC. The Facilitator indicated that the Advisory Committee meeting in October is intended to address any critical comments that might arise during the public comment period.

The Facilitator described the comment tracking and incorporation process. The significant technical and policy comments will be presented to the Advisory Committee in October to ensure appropriate comment response.

Review and Discussion of Draft GSP Chapter 1

Kelsey McNeill presented an overview of the content in GSP chapters 1 and 5. No comments were voiced with respect to Chapter 1.

Review and Discussion of Draft GSP Chapter 5

Kelsey McNeill identified the key components of Chapter 5. Kelsey displayed a road map for implementation of the GSP illustrating order of activities following submittal of the GSP through the 5-year update. SMC check-in points are annual. She also shared a 20-year implementation schedule and projection of preliminary costs.

Richard Nelson requested Chapter 5 include a specific outline of how financial mechanisms will be identified. The Facilitator clarified that Mr. Nelson is interested in identifying and assigning responsibility for obtaining various funding sources. Matt Parker noted that the current strategy is an 'all of the above' approach, with the fee or tax source as a last resort. He identified DWR's Prop 68 grant and a Watershed fund as potential funding options. He hopes to work with other local agencies. He indicated the GSA, if necessary, will create a work group to identify a palatable fee for Butte Valley.

Mr. Nelson voiced concern that there is language describing disinterest in metering wells followed by discussion of fee options. Matt Parker clarified that the fee study memo does not advocate for any particular course of action. Richard Nelson added that the inclusion of the memo at all indicates an intention to enact fees and/or tax schedules. He proposes adding language to indicate the Advisory Committee will be involved in determining additional revenue needs. The Technical Team agreed to amend the language.

The group discussed illegal well drilling as it relates to metering.

The Facilitator read questions in the chat from John Bennett: (1) Is there a worst-case cost estimate for this program and who are the rate payers? (2) Was there not verbiage in this plan that indicated a well would have to be retired before a new one drilled?

The Technical Team and Facilitator explained that the costs shown in the preliminary cost table come from a study that presented a range of costs, not necessarily best- and worst-case scenario costs. Matt Parker noted that the GSA/Flood Control District has limited options for

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imposing fees. He shared that there are a number of complicated processes that are required prior to the creation of any fees.

Dr. Harter displayed language from the GSP draft describing well replacement language. The plan advocates preventing consumptive use to the extent possible but does not prevent drilling new wells.

Review and Discussion of Substantial Updates to Chapters 2, 3, 4

Katrina described changes to GSP Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

Richard Nelson provided specific corrections related to strawberry, alfalfa, and garlic production (Chapter 2 page 15). He also requested changes to market price language in Chapter 2. Dr. Harter confirmed the changed values have already been communicated to Josue.

Pat Graham asked Matt Parker to clarify whether the Advisory Committee members have the opportunity to provide additional comment on Chapters 2-4, since his earlier email requesting no additional comments. The Facilitator and Technical Team clarified that the documents were provided as reference to offer a roadmap of changes to prepare the group to move the document to the public review phase. Mr. Graham indicated that he has a number of comments that have not been incorporated and he has more comments, which he will offer in the upcoming public comment stage.

One of the attendees asked whether comments previously submitted by the Advisory Committee on earlier drafts of the GSP will be included in the formal public comment response document. The Facilitator noted that the technical team's response to significant comments made by the Advisory Committee are reflected in previous meeting notes. The comments collected during the public comment period will be incorporated in the GSP via Appendix. The Technical Team added that they would revisit the comments previously submitted by Pat Graham and incorporate relevant changes.

Discussion: Recommendation of Release of Public Draft GSP

The Facilitator asked each Advisory Committee member to weigh in on whether they recommend Matt to recommend the Board release the Public Draft GSP for public review and comment.

Don Crawford requested resolution on funding source designation. He would like to see additional specificity related to funding sources in the event the GSA is not able to secure sufficient funds through grant or non-fee/tax sources. Mr. Harter explained that the expectation from DWR is to show significant effort to identify costs required to implement the GSP. He added the agency would be responsible for identifying sources early in the implementation phase. Matt Parker agreed that the question was fair and the County plans to convene working groups to discuss funding sources. He shared that alternative funding

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methods would involve significantly less public input and might be less palatable to the community.

Don Crawford indicated that he would prefer iron clad answers prior to acceptance. He noted that he would prefer a \$50/acre foot type assessment rather than a “pie-in-the-sky” approach that fails to be up-front about the potential impacts to water users. The Facilitator asked whether Mr. Crawford’s perspective relates specifically to the release of the public draft. He affirmed it does. Specifically, he’s concerned, from an agricultural context, about putting growers out of business. He would like to see a base plan in place before moving forward. The Facilitator noted that it is difficult to set these funding sources in stone in the initial draft of the GSP since many of the grants the County is currently positioning for are not available yet. She noted that the current GSP outlines a plan for identifying funding sources.

Pat Vellines shared that (1) PMAs must be laid out in the GSP before the GSA can apply for grants to cover them and (2) Prop 218 fee assessments are in the range of \$1-10 dollars per acre, so the fees are not as draconian as Mr. Crawford suggests.

Greg Herman noted the GSP could provide a numbered list of preferred funding sources or details of how fees would be created. He stated that if the handful of little changes were made appropriately, then he would support release of the GSP. Dr. Harter suggested making the changes on screen. Mr. Herman agreed that this may be appropriate after the other AC member voiced input.

Howard Wynant expressed broad support of the sentiments shared by other Advisory Committee members. The Facilitator explained that comments need to be very specific in order to make progress. Mr. Wynant clarified that he would support release of the public draft GSP when the previously-voiced comments are incorporated.

Jeffrey Volberg supports the release of the draft GSP to the public and conveyed that he will be submitting additional comments during the public comment period.

Pat Graham supports the release of the draft GSP, although he also voiced some dissatisfaction with the process.

Richard Nelson indicated that specific errors needed to be corrected before he provides his support. He specifically requested the plan include a list similar to the one described by Mr. Herman. The Facilitator asked the Technical Team to weigh in on whether a list of this nature is already included in Chapter 5. She asked Mr. Nelson whether he would support public release pending corrections and he confirmed he would.

Steve Albaugh voiced his discomfort with creating a body to carry out a task that is “not necessarily known to be a problem.” He requested the Advisory Committee revise the charter to include detail about the sunset plan for ending the GSA once it has achieved its goal. The

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Facilitator requested confirmation that Mr. Albaugh agreed to release the public draft. Mr. Albaugh indicated support to release the public draft.

Steve Lutz agrees with Mr. Albaugh's sentiments and indicated his support to release the draft.

Melissa High indicated her support to release the public draft.

Don Crawford indicated dissatisfaction with the subconsultant hired to come up with a funding plan. He wants resolution on the question prior to public comment. He believes the Valley will end up paying for implementing the GSP, therefore the cost should be included for public review.

Dr. Harter suggested including language in Section 5.4 and shared his screen. He noted that Butte Valley's expenses will concentrate primarily on administrative costs associated with reducing groundwater usage expansion. He offered to express the total implementation cost in terms of dollars per acre or another unit of measure.

Matt Parker expressed interest in utilizing wording in the funding memo to address requests made by the AC members. The Facilitator read the game plan section of the memo to the Advisory Committee.

Richard requested additional specificity so that a public member would understand the hierarchy and costs associated with the individual options in the Chapter 5 text. Mr. Herman asked that the Technical Team define a rate payer in Chapter 5. The Facilitator reiterated the requests from the AC members: (1) costs for implementation and (2) how those costs are met. These should be included in Chapter 5 itself. She also noted that there seems to be consensus among the Committee members for the formation of a sub-group once the plan is implemented to further investigate funding mechanisms.

Dr. Harter indicated his preference to work through the concerns live, leaving comments for the technical team directly in the document. He added examples of ratepayers to the document. He will incorporate the "game plan" to the text of Chapter 5. Matt Parker noted that GSA staff would lead grant writing and coordination efforts, potentially with the support of subcontractors.

Mr. Lutz asked how the RCD would help with funding. Matt Parker indicated that the GSA would identify a funding need and work with the RCD on mutually beneficial projects. Mr. Lutz noted general trends to cut back funding at RCD and that this is generally difficult to accomplish this goal. Matt Parker asked whether there are additional entities in the Valley that perform similar tasks.

Dr. Harter noted that federal and state entities which own land within the Valley would be appropriate partners for these types of activities.

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Dr. Harter asked whether the commented changes, when incorporated, would provide necessary reassurance to proceed with release of the Public Draft GSP. The Facilitator asked for AC comment on Dr. Harter's question.

Pat Graham supports release of the draft. He noted his desire to identify funding so that groundwater users would not be negatively impacted.

Don Crawford asked for a worst-case scenario estimation and reiterated his lack of support to proceed with the current funding descriptions.

The Facilitator asked whether the Technical Team could add specificity to Chapter 5. She asked whether a paragraph description of the memo information (summary and key components) could be added to Chapter 5.

The Facilitator indicated that consensus (though not unanimous) has been obtained for release of the Public Draft GSP, following incorporation of comments to Chapter 5. She added that the draft GSP would go through the Board's process to release the draft.

The Facilitator noted another role of the AC is to make their communities aware of the plan so that they might also provide comment and perspective. She also responded to a question in the chat about the Tulelake GSP process and Matt Parker indicated that their materials are available on their webpage.

Matt Parker thanked all for their honest input in the overall effort to satisfy Butte Valley needs.

Dr. Harter thanked all for their time, engagement, information, discussions, concerns, and willingness to collaborate. He requested that any additional concerns be expressed as a public comment.

Meeting Adjourns

Dr. Harter thanked all for participating and adjourned the meeting.

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MEETING ATTENDEES

Advisory Committee Members

Melissa High, City of Dorris
Patrick Graham, CDFW Butte Valley Wildlife Refuge
Don Crawford, Private Pumper
Howard Wynant, Tribal Representative
Greg Herman, Private Pumper
Jeffrey Volberg, Environmental/Conservation
Steve Lutz, Butte Valley Irrigation District
Steve Albaugh, Private Pumper
Richard Nelson, Private Pumper

Absent Committee Members

Don Bowen, Residential

District Staff

Matt Parker, County of Siskiyou Natural Resources Specialist

Technical Team

Dr. Thomas Harter, UC Davis
Katrina Arredondo, LWA
Kelsey McNeill

Agency Staff

Janae Scruggs, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pat Vellines, Department of Water Resources

Facilitator

Katie Duncan, Stantec
Elizabeth Simon, Stantec
Marisa Perez-Reyes, Stantec
Craig Moyle, Stantec

Members of the public

John Bennett
Giuliano Carneiro Galdi, UC Cooperative Extension