



Sierra Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan Fall (Q3) 2023 Update

Hello All:

The early summer was relatively quiet regarding the Sierra Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan (Sierra Valley GSP) and we did not send out a Q2 Update. However, much has happened in the last few months to inform the Fall 2023 SVGSP Update. These updates describe key dates and activities relating to the Sierra Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and implementation activities. All updates are located in the documents section, towards the bottom of the webpage at www.sierravalleygmd.org/gsp-documents. Below is the latest!

GSP Updates



GSP Status

On July 27, 2023, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced decisions on several Groundwater Sustainability Plans. This included an approval of the SVGSP with recommended corrective actions to be addressed in the next Sierra Valley GSP Update (due by January 2027). The corrective actions are consistent with the approach proposed by the Sierra Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to address data gaps – and was described in the Sierra Valley GSP. The areas of corrective actions include:

- 1) further define and describe the principal aquifer(s);
- 2) revisit data relating to Chilcoot Subbasin;
- 3) refine the undesirable results for chronic lowering of groundwater levels;
- 4) explain why 2021 was selected for baseline water quality conditions;
- 5) refine the undesirable results for land subsidence and develop sustainable management criteria based on land elevation changes;
- 6) evaluate impacts of groundwater pumping on interconnected surface waters; continue filling in data gaps and coordinate with others on beneficial uses and users of interconnected surface water that may be impacted by groundwater pumping; and
- 7) further update the monitoring network.

The complete DWR determination document is available online at:
<https://sqma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsp/assessments/125>.

GSP Implementation Activities



Near-term GSP implementation activities include:

- enhancements to the monitoring systems and
- pursuing opportunities for recharge projects.

Initial activities to enhance monitoring will include:

- installing a GPS subsidence monitoring station: funded by DWR, this system would generate high frequency data – producing three-dimensional measurements and daily reports of data. The GPS system and frequent data can be compared with seismic activity to help assess factors that may contribute to subsidence. Steps for selecting a site are underway; and
- installing the second DWR (technical services) nested groundwater monitoring well: the location for the well will be coordinated with proposed locations for groundwater recharge efforts to better assess the effects of recharge projects.



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Proposals for possible recharge projects would use excess water from peak winter flows to divert to spreading areas in the Smith Neck and Badenaugh areas.

GSP Implementation Funding

The funding for GSP implementation activities will come from grants issued by DWR and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A funding proposal was also submitted to the Plumas Watershed Forum for projects related to agricultural irrigation efficiency and groundwater recharge; the Plumas Watershed Forum funding decisions are expected to be announced in November of 2023.



Technical Work for Implementation

To help ensure the timeliness of technical work, the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management Board issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from technical firms to provide services for tasks related to implementing the Sierra Valley GSP. The RFQ was issued in April 2024. Four firms responded. After review and scoring the responses across criteria for eight categories, the Board identified the following three firms as qualified vendors:

- Geosyntec Consultants, Inc.
- Larry Walker and Associates (with DBS&A, Stillwater Sciences, Judie Talbot, McGinley and Associates, and J-U-B Engineering)
- Stetson Engineers, Inc. (with Desert Research Institute)

This allows the Board to expedite technical task orders, while still allowing the Board to issue specific Requests for Proposals if desired.

Ongoing GSP Activities

Annual Report

The next SVGSP Annual Report will be submitted by April 1, 2024 to summarize basin conditions and GSP activities within Water Year (WY) 2023 – which spans October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. Work is expected to begin shortly on analyzing data for the next Annual Report.