Meeting Summary

The Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee (GSPAC) met on January 28, 2022, via Zoom videoconference. Below is a summary of key items discussed during the meeting. This document is not intended to be a meeting transcript; it focuses on the main points of the group’s discussion and highlights action items and recommendations that arise from the meeting. The agenda and full recording of the videoconference meeting is available on the Lake County Water Resources website at http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs__Projects/Big_Valley_GSP/Advisory_Committee_Documents.htm

**ACTION ITEMS**

- For all GSPAC meetings and related topics, comments may be submitted to the committee via email at water.resources@lakecountyca.gov. Please include “GSPAC” in the subject line of all related emails.

**GSPAC RECOMMENDATIONS**

- During this meeting, the GSPAC did not provide any recommendations to the Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Board of Directors.

1. **ROLL CALL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GSPAC Attendee Name</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brenna Sullivan</td>
<td>Lake County Farm Bureau</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Scully</td>
<td>Scully Packing Company</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Weiss</td>
<td>Bella Vista Farming Company</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Windrem</td>
<td>Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Reams</td>
<td>Kelseyville Unified School District</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Ryan</td>
<td>Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Hornung</td>
<td>Lake County Special Districts</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie Nixon</td>
<td>Lake County Land Trust</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky Hoyt</td>
<td>Domestic Well Owner</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina Deligiannis</td>
<td>Lake County Watershed Protection District</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **REVIEW AND APPROVE DECEMBER 17, 2021, MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting minutes from December 17, 2021 had already been approved in preparation for the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) adoption process. The GSPAC was provided another opportunity to provide comments on the minutes. GSPAC Lead, Marina Deligiannis, asked if there were any questions or comments on the December 17, 2021 meeting minutes.
Sarah Ryan wanted to provide clarification on an excerpt from material that was submitted during the Draft GSP public comment period. A member of the public, Joan Moss, had submitted a packet of written comments in response to the Draft GSP. Ryan was unsure if a particular statement from Moss was made as part of the December 17, 2021 GSPAC meeting, but Ryan asked to respond to Moss’ comment, for the record. Lead facilitator, Christy Clark, suggested that Ryan share the public comment provided by Moss, and for Ryan to also provide a statement clarifying Moss’ comment. Ryan wanted to correct a statement in Moss’ letter regarding Ryan’s reference to dead fish and mercury in their tissue that killed them. Ryan clarified that she had not stated that animals have died from mercury or cyanotoxins, and therefore, the comment in Moss’ letter attributed to Ryan was not accurate. Clark stated that Ryan’s statement of clarification will be accounted for in the January 28, 2022 GSPAC meeting minutes as follow up to the public comments submitted on the Draft GSP.

Valerie Nixon made a motion to approve the December 17, 2021 meeting minutes. Ryan seconded the motion.

3. BIG VALLEY GROUNDWATER UPDATES

3.1 Brief report of current groundwater conditions and drought-related information

Deligiannis gave an update on groundwater conditions and drought-related information. Lake County Water Resources and Environmental Health have not had additional reports of wells running dry. They are in the process of developing a tracking form that will be made public. A GIS hub is likely to be developed that tie into dry well reports. The GIS hub would be similar to the California Department of Water Resources’ (DWR) site: https://mydrywell.water.ca.gov/report/. Once the GIS hub is developed, it will be shared with the interested parties list and the GSPAC.

Ryan asked how communication with DWR on the dry well list is going to happen, or if it will happen, knowing that several people in the community are hesitant to share dry well information. Will there be an informal list, that will not be shared with the state, to have a more accurate listing of dry wells? Deligiannis is in communication with DWR and believes that there will be informal reporting by Water Resources/Environmental Health. DWR tracking is more formal, and people don’t always feel comfortable submitting information to the state. Informal reporting will be useful to have a better sense of where dry wells are and to help in pursuit of future funding opportunities.

3.2 Technical Support Services (TSS) Update

Eddy Teasdale, Project Manager from Luhdorff & Scalmanini (LSCE), provided an update on TSS, a program offered by DWR. Water Resources submitted an application to help fund several monitoring wells in the basin. There is a multi-step process to submit an application to DWR. An application was submitted to request help and another application was submitted that listed the preferred location of the wells. At the moment DWR is reviewing the list of preferred well locations. Once approved, site visits will be conducted and then a schedule will be provided as to when these wells can be constructed. The proposed wells are all on County-owned property; this is of benefit since it makes the wells consistently accessible. Water Resources will continue to coordinate with DWR.

Ryan asked what the wells will monitor. Teasdale shared that the wells will monitor groundwater levels and water quality. There will be two wells at each site to monitor the deep and shallow system.
Ryan asked that since these well locations are not final, will there be an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the well locations? Teasdale shared that the proposed well locations are on County-owned land, therefore accessibility will be available. Once DWR has reviewed the application and provided feedback, there should be an opportunity to pull together a small group to obtain additional feedback.

David Weiss asked if there will be two wells on each site. Teasdale said there will be nested wells installed that will measure water levels and water quality at two different levels. These wells will be installed and paid for with state funding.

Ryan commented that she would like to look at the TSS application in light of projects that the GSPAC has identified. She would like to know where the TSS application was on the proposed project list, and how the GSPAC will move through the rest of the project list. Teasdale reminded everyone that the TSS application was submitted because there were data gaps in the GSP. The wells in the TSS application will provide a better understanding of subsurface characteristics. Data gaps were included in the project and management action section of the GSP, but they didn’t specify the exact locations from where the data would be taken to fill in data gaps. This was done to not put the costs on the stakeholders if there are other opportunities for funding, for example through DWR. Regarding the project and management actions listed in the GSP, they will need to be funded by the stakeholders or by the state. TSS isn’t tied to the GSP costs, TSS is primarily aimed at helping collect missing data gaps.

4. GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (GSP) ADOPTION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION

4.1 Recap of January 11, 2022 GSP public hearing and adoption and
4.2 GSP submission process to be completed by January 31, 2022

Deligiannis shared that the GSP is in the process of being submitted to the Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGMA) Portal, but the site is currently down. GSPs are due January 31, 2022. Once the GSP is submitted, the GSPAC and interested parties list will be notified. It will take up to 20 days for the GSP to appear on the SGMA Portal for DWR’s 75-day public review. Lake County will give notification when the GSP is in its DWR public review period.

Ryan asked if Deligiannis could confirm what will be posted on the SGMA Portal. Deligiannis shared that everything tied to the GSP will be posted. This includes all references, the monitoring network, and public comments. DWR has a checklist of items that must be submitted, the items will all be uploaded on the SGMA Portal. Once the GSP is uploaded on the SGMA Portal, Water Resources will link to the county website.

5. NEXT STEPS FOR GSP IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Recharter GSPAC, establish standing meetings for 2022
Covered under agenda item 6.

5.2 Overview of anticipated groundwater-related data forthcoming in 2022

Teasdale described the activities for 2022. Conversations have occurred with the County and there is an interest in improving the ways that data is exchanged. Water Resources is pursuing United States Geological Survey (USGS) opportunities to install new transducers. DWR Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM)
Survey data should be available and will help fill data gaps. Later this year, there should be grants to support GSP implementation. The GSP team will need to find ways to collaborate on ongoing efforts (i.e., groundwater/surface water interaction efforts done by the Tribe, Hitch Conservation Strategy, and Irrigated Lands). There also needs to be coordination for well permitting. Teasdale asked the GSPAC if it makes sense to have a technical advisory committee on how to improve technical coordination and the sharing of information. Brenna Sullivan commented that she is willing to participate in a technical subcommittee.

Ryan commented, we have discussed data through this process, there were some points that Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians made about wells and data gaps. Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians have wells that are monitored twice a year, it would be helpful if the wells were monitored monthly. She is unsure if TSS covers more regular monitoring. Teasdale shared that TSS will not cover more frequent monitoring. Ryan would like to see wells monitored more often. Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians have wells near Adobe and Kelsey Creeks, and their data is collected every 15 minutes, and then data is being shared with the owners of the wells. Ryan would like to see more data on agricultural water use, including frost protection. She would like to see more quantification of agricultural water use. She stated that it would be great if there was some type of pilot project. Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians is sharing information, but she feels agricultural water users are not.

Sullivan stated that Ryan’s comments are well taken. It is a good point that we need more data. There have been discussions in the farm community on how to get more data. There is an opportunity and interest in getting more data. Sullivan asked Ryan to clarify what data the agriculture community is withholding and not sharing. Groundwater pumping data is currently not available.

Peter Windrem asked Ryan about the data she has shared during GSP development. From his experience, there isn’t a lot of data shared.

Ryan responded to Sullivan that farmers may have internal records on water use. She agrees that getting funding can help the data collection process on water use. In terms of the data Ryan has provided, it is water quality data uploaded on the Water Quality Exchange Federal Database. This data has been shared with Water Resources and the technical team. Pressure transducer data from Adobe Creek has also been shared. Data on water rights has also been shared. Well use was not shared.

Windrem asked Ryan if the water quality data is from the lake and the creeks. Ryan, said that the water quality and quantity data is from the lake and the creeks. The Water Quality Exchange Federal Database is where the data is stored.

Via the chat Jessica Boyt (jboyt) from DWR shared the link to the water quality database Ryan discussed: https://www.waterqualitydata.us/.

Via the chat Ryan commented, the link jboyt posted is correct - National Water Quality Portal.

5.3. GSP Implementation and Financing Subcommittees

Teasdale shared that the priority of 2022 will be on the financing of the GSP. This will be the focus for the first quarter of implementation. As previously discussed, estimates were made on how much it may cost to implement the GSP. On average, it may cost $285,000/year to do the annual reports, administration
and monitoring—but this does not account for the 5-Year Update. To account for the 5-Year Update, that is an additional $115,000/year that accumulates for the 2027 update.

There are different options to fund the GSP implementation. It is unclear what the County can cover. It is likely that Big Valley Basin will follow the Prop 218 Process. In the next few months, the County will provide recommendations on a path forward.

Teasdale reviewed the option of cost-per-acre financing. Irrigators and non-irrigators would pay different costs. The other funding example was reviewed: cost-per-well. This example may require a well registration program. Overall, the GSP team will need to find a way to finance the GSP implementation.

Sullivan asked if there is a timeline to roll out the funding mechanism. Teasdale shared that there are resources remaining to cover the annual report that’s due in April of this year. By this time next year, there will need to be a funding mechanism in place.

Ryan asked if Teasdale could explain non-irrigated acreage. Are these properties that have wells that don’t have agriculture? Teasdale and team looked at land use data, if there were crops on land it was considered irrigated. Teasdale is aware that some people irrigate some years and not in others. The challenge is to keep track of when irrigation happens. This a GIS exercise that has not been ground truthed.

**5.4. Initial Annual Report due April 1, 2022**

Teasdale shared that the annual reports must be submitted to DWR by April 1 of each year. The first annual report is due in April 2022. This will include a summary of groundwater conditions and GSP implementation progress. The reporting period will be from 2019 to 2021.

Ryan asked, since the groundwater extractions component of this is scarce, will the model be used to provide information on groundwater extractions? Teasdale answered that land use will be looked at and will extrapolate water use based on what is needed to irrigate the specific crops. Ryan asked if DWR 2020 land use will be used. Teasdale confirmed that land use from 2020 will be used. In the GSP, 1996 through 2020 land use data was used.

Ryan asked if the land use maps that DWR releases are from local government surveys. Teasdale responded that Land IQ is contracted by DWR to provide the data.

**6. GSPAC RECHARTING PROCESS**

**6.1. GSPAC rechartering process and Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) guidance**

Clark provided an overview on how the GSPAC was formed. During March and April of 2021, stakeholder working sessions began. In April 2021, the GSPAC charter was developed, and on April 27, 2021 the GSPAC was established through a Board of Directors’ resolution. This January 2022 meeting is the last meeting for the GSPAC under its current charter. The GSPAC will need to be rechartered. February 2022 is when the GSPAC group will begin the rechartering process.
6.2. Roll call of returning GSPAC members and open seats, review beneficial users and uses

A roll call was taken to account for GSPAC members who would be returning in February to recharter a new GSPAC group focused on GSP implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GSPAC Attendee Name</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brenna Sullivan</td>
<td>Lake County Farm Bureau</td>
<td>Will continue participating in GSPAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Scully</td>
<td>Scully Packing Company</td>
<td>Not Present – Will continue participating in GSPAC, as he informed Clark before the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Weiss</td>
<td>Bella Vista Farming Company</td>
<td>Will continue participating in GSPAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Windrem</td>
<td>Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch</td>
<td>Will continue participating in GSPAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Reams</td>
<td>Kelseyville Unified School District</td>
<td>Will not continue participating in GSPAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Ryan</td>
<td>Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians</td>
<td>Will continue participating in GSPAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Hornung</td>
<td>Lake County Special Districts</td>
<td>Not Present – Will continue participating in GSPAC, as he informed Clark before the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie Nixon</td>
<td>Lake County Land Trust</td>
<td>May continue participating in GSPAC. Will see if anyone from the Lake County Land Trust can share her seat with her, as she’d like them to continue to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky Hoyt</td>
<td>Domestic Well Owner</td>
<td>Not Present – Will not continue participating in GSPAC, as he informed Clark before the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina Deligiannis</td>
<td>Lake County Watershed Protection District</td>
<td>Will continue participating in GSPAC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3. Overview of key focus areas for GSPAC in 2022

6.3.1. Develop targeted outreach and engagement with domestic well owners in Big Valley Basin

6.3.2. Establish outreach activities to engage disadvantaged community, including finding a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) representative for the GSPAC

6.3.3. Tribal engagement workshop to discuss GSP and areas for collaboration

Deligiannis reviewed the focus areas for 2022 include the following:

- Rechartering the GSPAC for GSP implementation
- Produce and submit the first SGMA-required Annual Report in April 2022
- Provide frequent Board of Directors’ updates
- Manage ongoing review of incoming data
- Identify new areas for analysis, data, or collaboration
• Coordinate focused subcommittee work for potential projects and financing
• Provide general public education on groundwater and GSP implementation
• Offer outreach and engagement with specific audiences

Deligiannis asked if GSPAC members saw any missing actions, or if they’d like to add something.

Ryan commented that it would be helpful to understand the land use in Big Valley Basin: how much is agriculture, private homes, open land, etc. This would be a good way to engage the public. This will help the community have a better appreciation of their basin if they know more about it in all aspects, regarding water resources.

Windrem commented, he is concerned on two things: 1) setting the right tone going forward for the public and 2) an emphasis on ways to build trust, which does not exist now. An example is that it’s easy to frighten people by telling them that the groundwater situation in Big Valley Basin is dire. By telling people to conserve water, that may mean we’re about to run out of water. When looking at the Executive Summary of the plan, it says that DWR estimates the storage capacity of Big Valley Basin to be 105,000 acre-feet (AF), but usable groundwater storage is 60,000 AF. The total use now is approximately 13,000 AF, and this shows we are not in a dire situation of running out of water. He is not sure how to do the trust building at this point. The question is how can this be approached such that it benefits everyone: agriculture, Hitch, etc.? A comment to all leadership is that there must be a vast amount of effort and strategies to develop trust in this situation, because it doesn’t exist.

Clark shared that the new version of GSPAC may be less intimidating for the community to be engaged. Reviewing vast and technical documents for the first phase of the GSPAC may have been prohibitive for community members. Moving forward, the GSPAC will have education and outreach components that will help the community to get involved more easily.

Valerie Nixon asked, what has been done to reach out to the disadvantaged communities? We have Latinos United of Lake County that maybe we could reach out to, and she also asked: what is a disadvantaged community? Deligiannis shared that a disadvantaged community is defined by Public Resource Code § 75005: “Disadvantaged community” means a community with a median household income less than 80% of the statewide average. Regarding Big Valley Basin, the community of Kelseyville is a disadvantaged community. Clark shared that people have been contacted to be part of the GSPAC, to represent the disadvantaged community, but nobody has agreed to be a DAC representative. There have been some nongovernmental organizations involved in the process, but they do not have a local representative who could serve on the GSPAC. DWR has developed a document, found on their website under the communication tools, on engagement with underrepresented users.

Deligiannis encouraged everyone to share names of people that she can contact, to potentially bring those people to the table for the disadvantaged community seat, or for any new seats that may be open in the GSPAC.

Via the chat, Ryan asked: Marina did you say there was a water code for who needs to make up the beneficial users of gw? can you please share that?

To address Ryan’s comment Deligiannis shared the following: In accordance with California Water Code (CWC) § 10723.2, the GSA “shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans.” The interests named in CWC
§ 10723.2 include, among others: (1) domestic well owners, (2) municipal well operators, (3) public water systems, (4) environmental users of groundwater, (5) “surface water users, if there is a hydraulic connection between surface and groundwater bodies,” (6) California Native American tribes, and (7) “disadvantaged communities, including, but not limited to, those served by private domestic wells or small community water systems.”

Deligiannis’ objective moving forward is the following in Water Resources:

- Expand Groundwater Monitoring Network
- Ensure Proper Land Use Planning
- Co-Management of Clear Lake Watershed
- Proper Planning for a Changing Climate

Ryan commented that there are a few drought-related meetings still going on that could intersect with future GSPAC activities.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Laura Hall senior planner/natural resources planner with the Lake County Community Development Department would like to set up some time with Deligiannis to see how her department can help. She would like to see how she can work with Water Resources on cannabis issues and dry well reporting. She has several ideas to share.

Via the chat Ryan commented, i’m sorry - Laura is with county CDD or state DWR?

Via the chat Clark commented, Laura is with County CDD.

8. FUTURE GSPAC MEETING DATES

8.1. Quarterly meetings of rechartered GSPAC to begin in February 2022

8.2. Meetings held on the third Friday of each quarter, from 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m., in February, May, August, and November

9. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.