Siskiyou County Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Shasta Valley Advisory Committee Meeting
Draft Meeting Summary

Wednesday May 7, 2024, 3:00 – 6:00 P.M.
In-person at the Siskiyou Transit and General Express (STAGE) Station or online via Zoom

Action Items:

- Alyse Briody will follow up with the technical consultants and Scott McReynolds to provide a copy of the Red Bluff water quality sampling report from the Red Bluff subbasin, as suggested by Michael Ward.
- An irrigation specialist will conduct site visits in Shasta Valley May 21-22. Anyone interested in meeting with them should respond to this survey: https://us11.list-manage.com/survey?u=2516c89941f49355f514cefb8&id=3435a2de67&attribution=false

Attachments/Links:

- PowerPoint Presentation Slides (attached)
- California's Groundwater Conditions: Semi-Annual Update: https://data.cnra.ca.gov/dataset/california-s-groundwater-semi-annual-conditions-updates/resource/ba12c11f-b8b8-4d37-a9e4-13c2d7831285?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery
- SGMA Data Viewer: https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/?appid=SGMADataViewer#currentconditions

Attendees: See last page

MEETING SUMMARY

1. **Call to Order, Meeting Format, Introductions, and Agenda Review**

Chair John Tannaci conducted a roll call to establish quorum after calling the Shasta Valley Advisory Committee Meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Marisa Perez-Reyes, Stantec, welcomed attendees, reviewed the Agenda, and called attention to virtual attendees. Meeting attendance is provided on the last page.

2. **Approval of Past Meeting Summary**

Chair Tannaci presented the February 2024 meeting summary for the Committee's approval. The minutes were approved without additional edits, with a motion and second from Lisa Faris and Blair Hart, respectively.

Chair Tannaci reviewed bullet points from the Advisory Committee Charter to affirm the group's shared goals and values.

3. **Public Comment Period on Non-Agenda Items, including Non-Agenda Updates from Committee Members and Other Agencies**

Chair Tannaci shared that the National Public Radio reported on the recent DWR publication that says California's groundwater levels are up for the first time in four years.

4. **DWR Updates**

Alyse Briody, California Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff, shared that DWR released its semi-annual report on groundwater conditions (current through 2023) yesterday: https://data.cnra.ca.gov/dataset/california-s-groundwater-semi-annual-conditions-updates/resource/ba12c11f-b8b8-4d37-a9e4-13c2d7831285?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Grant plugged the SGMA Data Viewer (https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/?appid=SGMADataViewer#currentconditions) as a resource, adding that data from CASGEM wells is live, and people should be able to see current groundwater conditions there. Laura Foglia, Larry Walker Associates (LWA), added that data in Shasta Valley was collected last week and will be processed and uploaded to the data viewer shortly.

5. **District Staff Updates**

Matt Parker, Siskiyou County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) staff, shared that the University of California (UC) Cooperative Extension has hired a new crop advisor to backfill Juliano's position.

6. Implementation Project Updates

Laura Foglia presented an update on the status of the implementation projects, followed by an overview of updates to the groundwater model.

Model Updates. Water Level Monitoring, and Model Results

- **Well Inventory Program**: LWA will conduct very focused public outreach around specific data gaps, starting this summer.
- The updated **geology** incorporates DWR's airborne electromagnetic (AEM) survey data, which is mostly helpful for adding data about the shallow aquifer. They are updating groundwater pumping estimations using the soil water budget model.
- DWR's **nested wells** have four screens at various depths. Laura shared about two wells (SHA_02 and SHA_18) that are located about half a mile apart, but in different soil types and correspondingly different depths to groundwater. The behavior of the well level data can tell you quite a bit about the geologic formation.
    - Grant pointed out that the behavior of well levels isn't solely based on geology. Laura added that the continuous data helps pinpoint cause and effect, in a way that the twice per year locations couldn't.
    - Dave Webb suggested gathering data from the Edson Foulke ditch. Laura replied that the technical team added three new monitoring points in that area and the ditches have been incorporated in the model now. She reflected that all the additional data have provided a much more nuanced picture of groundwater conditions.
- There was some discussion about how groundwater flows in the area northwest of Gazelle, on the west side of the Valley. As a point of clarification, the team pointed out that the "basement" layer identified in the slides is the Hornbrook formation.
- In response to some skepticism about the AEM data, Laura reiterated that the geophysics have been combined with the well logs and included in the new model.
- Blair Hart asked how the technical team will address the areas of the valley that were severely affected by wildfires. Laura reflected that this is a good and difficult question. They know the fires have had a big impact.
- Dave Webb asked about the correlation of declining groundwater levels to storage, and for the team to speak about what constitutes a significant impact.

As next steps, they will review geologic units where hydrographs are incorrect, refine initial conditions, and incorporate new continuous data from near the Shast River.

Current monitoring

- Laura shared about the active monitoring sites in the basin. In particular, they found there are six additional stations with data available for purchase to access. They are working on mapping out gradients with different precipitations.
- She provided an update on the status of looking into additional groundwater quality sampling for data on specific conductivity, nitrates, major ions, and isotopes.
    - There was a recommendation from Michael Ward that Laura connect with DWR to obtain a report from the Red Bluff area. Alyse offered to follow up. Scott McReynolds (head of water quality section in Red Bluff, DWR).
- The goal of all this is to establish a baseline geochemistry monitoring network for surface and ground water. LWA is coordinating with Lawence Livermore National Labs, who have data on 24 surface water, 17 groundwater, and 3 interconnected surface water (ISW) monitoring sites. They do not have the data yet, but they do have the map with the locations. LWA will need to select a subset of these monitoring points.
- LWA are also working with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to coordinate on ISW monitoring. There would be very low piezometers with instrumentation inside. Laura identified the transects that they would like to target.
    - Michael recommended moving further north in the Willows Creek area. Kyle said they did look at the possibility of testing at the confluence of Willows Creek and the Shasta River. There may be

some sensitivities on the part of the landowner, but they are looking at it. They are thinking of using a proxy to estimate the interplay, and apply those properties across Willow Creek.
    - Steve Mains chimed in on behalf of Grenada Irrigation District (GID) to share that there are only 32 acres of flood irrigation on the east side of I-5.
- Michael Ward asked about the purpose of the agricultural workshops. If they are looking to increase efficiency, he recommends installing piezometers along the nearby reaches.

The group paused for a ten-minute break at 4:30.

7. Discussion and Possible Consensus on Exploring Recharge Opportunities in Shasta Valley

Matt Parker provided background information on this item. The Siskiyou County GSA Board has emphasized that groundwater recharge projects are a priority for implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in the Shasta Valley basin. GSA staff have been exploring possibilities about possible locations for recharge, and identifying what information is needed for the application. GID Ditch and China Ditch are the two locations they've identified. There is a host of necessary components that include an assessment of baseline conditions, a water availability analysis (from both a cubic feet-per-second and acre-feet perspective), evaluation of water rights, and other factors. The permit would not alter existing water rights. The application would be submitted this month (May) to divert from January to March 2025.

- Jess Harris, member of the public, provided public comment in support of GSA staff preparing and submitting the recharge permit application.
- Dave Webb commented that he thought this project looked similar to the GID project that was put forward in the SGM implementation grant application, which Friends of the Shasta River took issue with. GSA staff said this was different, but that they could refer to the comments/issues that were raised previously.
- John Tannaci reflected that a big upshot of this is that new infrastructure wouldn't need to be constructed.
- In response to a question from Grant Johnson, the GSA confirmed that China Ditch has historically been used to divert water.
- Grant encouraged the GSA to prepare the technical information before a permit application is submitted.
    - Laura replied that there are monitoring points in place currently that are collecting the needed information. This year's application is for a temporary permit, which is a low cost. If it works out well, they can consider submitting a longer lasting permit in the future.
    - Grant raised concern that diversions from Shasta River could impact Parks Creek. Water also needs to run to other areas, and he urged the GSA to keep in mind that the geology and hydrology of Shasta Valley is very different from Scott Valley.
- Blair raised concerns that irrigation ditches can be viewed as artificial habitat for Coho, and that the team may not be considering environmental monitoring enough. He doesn't see how this can be accomplished in such a short timeframe, relative to his experience working with CDFW and NOAA on safe harbor agreements, which deal with endangered species monitoring.
- Additional considerations were raised by Lisa Faris who noted that Shastina gets most of their water from January to March and Chair Tannaci who added that conditions for recharge aren't met every year.
- Laura responded that the permitted diversion volume accounts for the full budgets and considers downstream water rights. All water rights holders downstream need to be accounted for in a longer-term permit application.
- Grant maintained that he is not comfortable endorsing the permit application without having concrete details from the studies yet. There is not enough information available. He thinks Park Creek will be affected and that the diversion will benefit private users.
    - On this note, Steve Mains reflected that the GSA needs to pick locations that most benefit the basin as a whole.
    - Mark Klever did not feel that there would be impacts to Parks Creek because it is not downstream of the proposed points of diversion.
    - Marisa confirmed with Matt that China Ditch, which doesn't currently use their full water right, isn't seeking to change their water right that diverts from Parks Creek.
- Blair confirmed with Matt that there will be comment periods down the line.

The Committee passed a motion made by Mark Klever and seconded by Justin Sandahl for GSA staff to prepare and submit an umbrella permit application for recharge in Shasta Valley, with six votes in support and one opposed.

6. Implementation Project Updates (continued)

Uplands Management

Laura solicited volunteers from the Advisory Committee to participate in an ad hoc meeting over the summer to draft what the grant-funded uplands management project could include. She noted that the funds cannot be used for actual forest management, only data collection or updates to the model.

- Grant reflected that uplands management work is expensive, so with the funds that are available, the technical team could do a reasonably good job of ground-truthing the model to estimate the potential benefit to the basin from implementing uplands management.
- Members of the Advisory Committee shared information about similar work they are aware of:
    - Grant Johnson shared about a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation study that is related. Laura confirmed they are aware of this study.
    - Grant noted that the Karuk Tribe is looking at a few things with the University of Washington.
    - Laura shared that in Butte Valley, the US Forest Service is doing a few small uplands management projects.
    - Blair shared that the Ore-Cal Resource Conservation District recently used government money to do some of this work.
    - Lawrence-Berkeley lab is doing a lot of post-fire research, but it's primarily based in Mendocino County.
    - A few years ago, CALFIRE clear-cut some of the wildlands interface. The Committee reflected that a better balance is needed so that landscapes aren't left totally barren.

Blair Hart and Justin Sandahl volunteered to participate in the ad hoc committee. Matt Parker said he would follow up with Tristan Allen to see if he can participate.

Irrigation Efficiency Workshop Recap: Laura provided a brief overview of the irrigation workshop efficiency workshop that was conducted on March 13 and shared that an irrigation specialist will be coming up to Shasta Valley to conduct site visits on May 21 and 22. There is a link to a survey to sign up, here: https://us11.list-manage.com/survey?u=2516c89941f49355f514cefb8&id=3435a2de67&attribution=false

8. Updates on Groundwater Related Projects not led by the GSA

Grant shared that there aren't updates to share from Toz Soto about implementation of the fisheries-related projects.

Matt shared that on May 21, the GSA Board will hear an update about the Butte Valley GSP revision. There will also be an item about the revised well permitting process by the County Department of Environmental Health. It is not clear at this moment whether an updated process will be adopted.

9. Committee Member Discussion

John Tannaci expressed excitement about the data management system (DMS) that is under development. He reflected that the level of detail shown in the Owens Valley example, however, is too much and the technical team should not make so much private information made public. Grant added considerations about how DWR's SGMA Data Viewer is up to date and currently public, but not inclusive of all the information the GSA collects. Laura anticipates they will have an update on the DMS at the August meeting.

10. Closing, Action Items, Future Agenda Items, Adjournment

The next Shasta Valley Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for August 29, 2024 and will be held in person at the STAGE Station. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS:
* online participant

Advisory Committee Members Present:
John Tannaci, Chair
Grant Johnson, Vice-Chair
Blair Hart
Justin Sandahl
Lisa Faris
Mark Klever
Steve Mains

Advisory Committee Members Absent: None
Gregg Werner
Justin Holmes
Rick Thompson
Tristan Allen

Agency Staff and Members of the Public:
Alyse Briody, California Department of Water Resources
Bill Sliker
Bisrat A., student/research
*Brynne
Colleen Alvarez
Cristina Corradin, student/research
David Webb, Friends of Shasta River
Don Meamber
*Eli Scott, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jess Harris
Lea Augustin, student/research
Michael Ward, retired DWR
S. Tiwari, student/research
Sheila Meamber

Project Team:
Matt Parker, GSA Staff
Marisa Perez-Reyes, Stantec
Laura Foglia, Larry Walker Associates
*Olin Applegate, Larry Walker Associates
*Kyle Mattingly, Larry Walker Associates
*Ben Melechin, Larry Walker Associates