



MEETING NOTES – Merced GSP

SUBJECT: Merced GSP Coordinating Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: September 24, 2018 at 1:30 PM

LOCATION: Castle Conference Center at Castle Airport, 1900 Airdrome Entry, Atwater, CA 95301

Coordinating Committee Members In Attendance:

	Representative	GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Dietz	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Justin Vinson	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Chavez	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ken Elwin (alternate)	Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bob Kelley	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nic Marchini	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rodrigo Espinoza	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input type="checkbox"/>	George Park (alternate)	Merced Subbasin GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Larry Harris	Turner Island Water District GSA #1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scott Skinner (alternate)	Turner Island Water District GSA #1

Meeting Notes

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes for August 27, 2018 meeting.
 - a) Minutes were unanimously approved
3. Stakeholder Committee (SC) update
 - b) Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided an update on the fifth SC meeting held earlier in the day. SC members had questions, discussion, and clarifications on updated methodology for groundwater elevation minimum elevations, plus projected water budget and sustainable yield.
4. Presentation by Woodard & Curran on GSP development
 - a) Minimum Thresholds Update
 - i. Groundwater Elevations
 1. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided an update to the methodology of setting minimum thresholds for groundwater elevations (primarily the addition of CASGEM voluntary monitoring well locations and use of Merced County domestic well database related to undesirable results).
 2. Public question: What are the ranges of domestic well depths beyond the shallowest? Are there outliers for other domestic wells if the minimum threshold is the same as the shallowest domestic well? Answer: This is something we'll be



looking at more closely when we get farther into the process of selecting a smaller number of monitoring locations.

3. Question: How did you choose a 3-mile radius for domestic wells? Answer: This is a balance between being locally representative and capturing enough domestic wells per monitoring location to be statistically representative.

ii. Water Quality

1. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided an overview of data analysis in progress for TDS and contaminated sites, demonstrating that there are large data gaps for TDS with depth.
2. Public comment: Try interviewing drillers in the area – they tend to have a good sense of at what depth high salinity is found.

b) Projected Water Budget and Sustainable Yield

- i. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided a reminder on the assumptions and results of the projected conditions baseline groundwater budget and update to the results of sustainable yield groundwater budget.
- ii. Public question: Why was a 25 year implementation period used? Answer: The model's historical period is from 1995-2015 and SGMA compliance is required in 2040, so the implementation period ends up being 2015-2040 (25 years).
- iii. Public question: What happens if there's a long-term drought immediately and something like 30% of domestic wells go dry (out of ordinary)? Answer: The Minimum Thresholds are generally set at levels where we do not expect this to occur. The regulations for violations are meant to be based on long-term average and we expect there to be an allowance for unusually dry year periods.
- iv. Dominick Amador (Woodard & Curran) walked through GSA-specific water budget summary tables based on sustainable yield conditions.
- v. Question: How was urban demand estimated outside of municipal service providers (e.g. domestic wells)? Answer: Urban demand was calculated based on population and per-person usage; outside of the cities, the population was based on census data.
- vi. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided a description of what water levels would look like under sustainable yield conditions in the subsidence area in the southern end of the Subbasin.
- vii. Question: Have you considered using subsidence rates as an indicator? Answer: Yes, but this is more difficult to predict with high accuracy compared to groundwater levels. It is difficult to control subsidence rates directly, and we need to be ready to coordinate with neighboring subbasins on a similar methodology.
- viii. Question: How can you go back to 2015 levels (per SGMA regulation) for subsidence if we decided to choose to use groundwater levels as a proxy for subsidence levels/rates? Answer: Probably only through an injection program or similar program designed to increase water levels.

c) Projects and Management Actions

- i. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided a description of projects and management actions and provided example categories that projects might fall into.



- ii. Question: How do projects get credited to a particular GSA/landowner/etc.? Answer: It will largely depend who funds the project.
- iii. The project team solicited initial project ideas from CC members and the following were brought up:
 - 1. Reach out to the private growers for additional input.
 - 2. Meter private irrigation wells.
- 5. CASGEM Update
 - a. No updates provided – was tabled for next month.
- 6. Public Outreach Update
 - a. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) expressed the intention to hold a public workshop in first 1-2 weeks of December.
- 7. Coordination with neighboring basins
 - a. Preliminary discussion was held with Delta-Mendota Subbasin: found that Delta-Mendota is slightly behind the Merced Subbasin in terms of data efforts and the project team will likely continue coordination efforts in early 2019.
- 8. Public comment
 - a. Question: Do municipalities have overlying water rights? Answer: Individual landowners have overlying rights; rights of municipalities would be prescriptive.
 - b. A request was made to post the PowerPoint slides before the next meeting in case printed copies run out.
- 9. Next steps and adjourn

**Next Regular Meeting
October 22, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.**

Merced, CA – Castle Conference Center at Castle Airport (subject to change)
Information also available online at mercedsgma.org

Action may be taken on any item

Note: If you need disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting, please contact Merced County, Community and Economic Development staff at 209-385-7654 at least 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting.