

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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October 8, 2021

Transmitted via email

South Tahoe Public Utilities District
ATTN: Ivo Bergsohn
1275 Meadow Crest Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

RE: Response to Letter Request for Guidance due to Impact of Emergencies; Alternative Plan for the Tahoe Valley South Subbasin (6-005.01)

Dear Mr. Bergsohn,

On behalf of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Office at the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), thank you for your recent letter regarding your intent to update the Alternative Plan for the Tahoe Valley South Subbasin amidst the challenges your community has endured from the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the catastrophic Caldor Wildfire, which was declared a [state of emergency in El Dorado County](#) by Governor Newsom on August 17, 2021. We recognize your leadership to continue working diligently to prepare your updated Alternative Plan given these extreme challenges and we commend your steadfast commitment to manage groundwater sustainably.

DWR supports the central tenet of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) which is local control. In your letter you highlight concerns over the ability to submit the Alternative Plan update to DWR by the statutory deadline of January 1, 2022. Despite the challenges of both COVID-19 and the Caldor Wildfire, public agencies, such as yours, are continuing to provide their best efforts to ensure public engagement and oversight of activities in the public's interest. We appreciate that you have outlined the next steps of what a feasible schedule looks like for your agency to complete and submit the Alternative Plan update, including robust engagement with your Stakeholder Advisory Group.

The Alternative submittal process and deadline is specifically identified in SGMA. If a local agency does not submit an Alternative by the statutory deadline, DWR will consult with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) on the status of the subbasin. DWR cannot suspend or change the submittal deadline, and we encourage you to continue working towards submitting your Alternative by the statutory deadline. Should your agency not be able to submit its Alternative Plan by the deadline, as currently anticipated, we would request that you submit an updated schedule at the end of December 2021 based on the emergency-related challenges you have faced and the updated realistic timeline to complete your Alternative update. This will provide DWR the appropriate level of information to consult with the State Water Board on the next steps related to your subbasin. DWR values the working partnership with water managers in your subbasin, which have been established through continued dialogue and dedication to the long-term, sustainable management of groundwater.

Please feel free to contact myself or our GSP Manager Craig Altare (Craig.Altare@water.ca.gov) if you have any questions or if you need additional assistance in navigating moving forward.

Sincerely,

Paul Gosselin
Paul Gosselin
Deputy Director, Sustainable Groundwater Management

cc:

M. Katy Janes, California Department of Water Resources

K. Payne, El Dorado County Water Agency

G. Kvistad, Brown, Hyatt, Faber and Schreck

J. Thiel, General Manger

James Nachbaur, State Water Resources Control Board