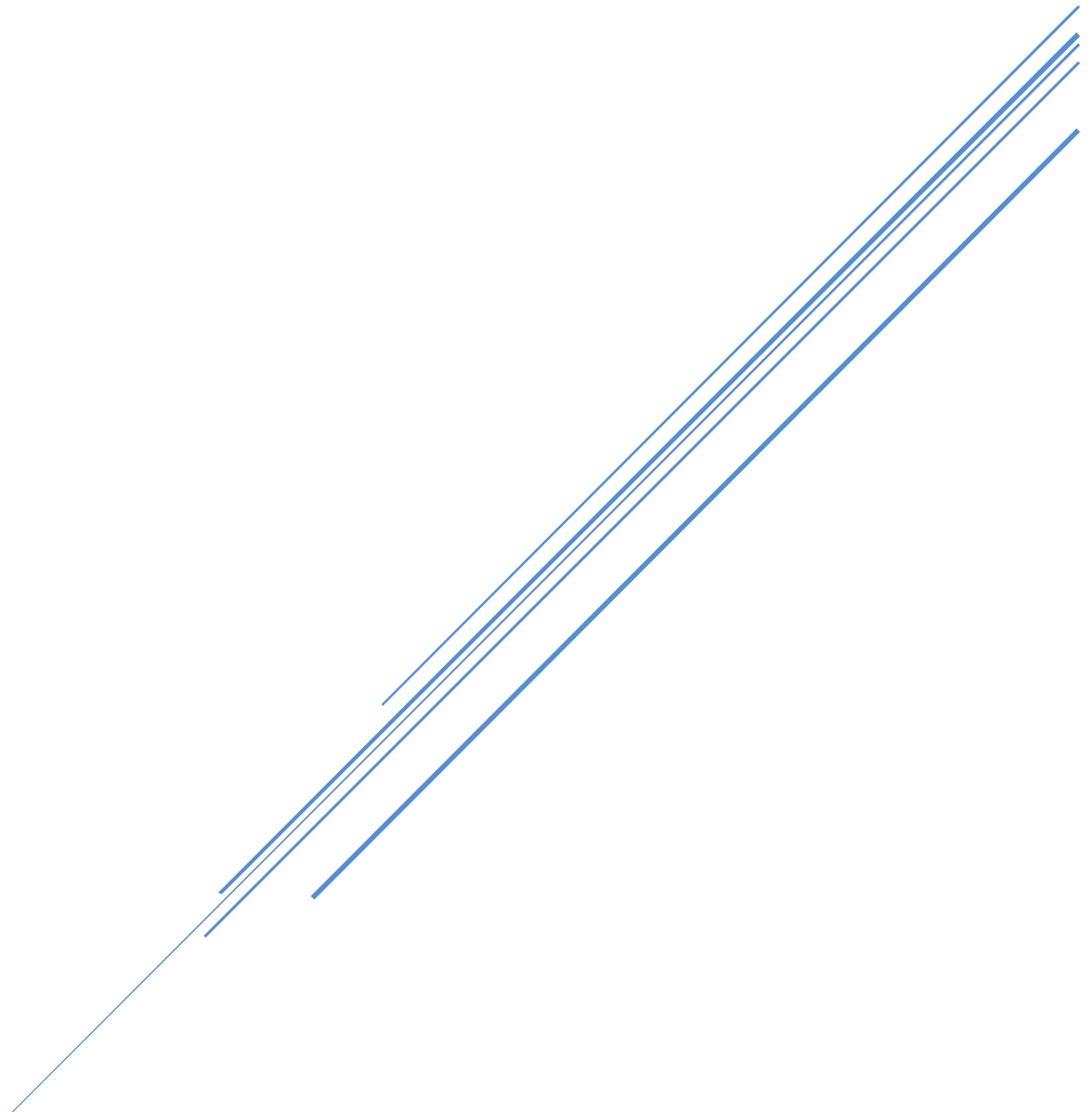


SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN

Stakeholder Communications & Engagement Plan



Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation
Draft Version: December 5, 2019

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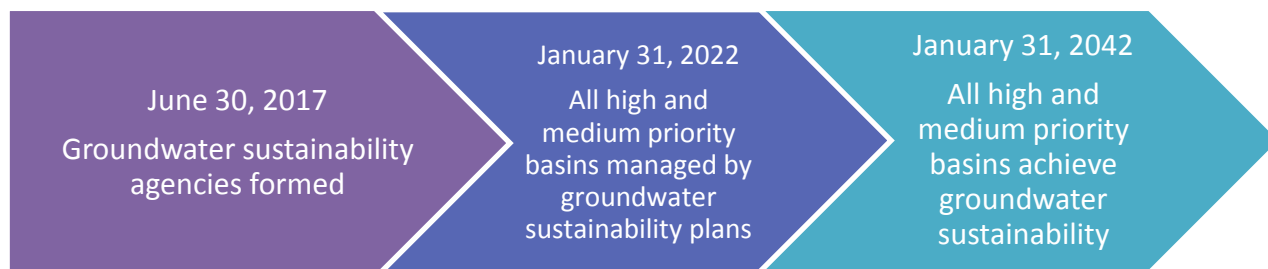
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BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), signed by Governor Brown in 2014, is to ensure local sustainable groundwater management in medium- and high-priority groundwater basins statewide. California's Department of Water Resources (DWR) has determined that the Sierra Valley Groundwater basin located in Plumas and Sierra counties is medium priority and subject to SGMA.

SGMA Milestones:



DESIRED OUTCOMES & GOALS OF THE PLAN

Plan Goals: SGMA requires Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to consider the interests of beneficial uses and users of groundwater, and encourages involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the basin during Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) preparation and implementation (Water Code Sections 10723.8(a) (4) and 10723.2).

The goals of the Stakeholder Communications & Engagement Plan (Plan) are to:

1. Enhance understanding and inform stakeholders about water and groundwater resources in the Sierra Valley basin, the purpose and need for sustainable groundwater management, the benefits of sustainable groundwater management, and the need for a GSP.
2. Engage a diverse group of stakeholders throughout the GSP preparation and implementation process and promote informed feedback from stakeholders.
3. Employ a variety of outreach methods that encourage broad participation and make participation accessible.
4. Respond to stakeholder concerns and provide accurate and up-to-date information.
5. Manage communications and engagement in a manner that provides maximum value to stakeholders and constitutes an efficient use of the GSAs' resources.

Time Period: This Stakeholder Communications & Engagement Plan is intended to cover communications and engagement through January 2022, which is when the GSP is due to be submitted to the DWR. Since this is a multi-year effort, this Plan may be amended, as needed.

Outcomes: The desired outcome of this Plan is to achieve adoption of the GSP with input from stakeholders in consideration of the economy and the environment within the basin. In practical terms, the GSP regulations require a communications section of the GSP that must include the following:

- Explanation of the GSAs’ decision-making process
- Identification of opportunities for public engagement and involvement
- Description of GSAs’ encouragement of active involvement of diverse elements of the population within basin
- Method the GSAs shall follow to inform the public about GSP progress

This Plan forms the basis for the communications section of the GSP.

The timelines below illustrate the concurrent processes of stakeholder engagement and other SGMA activities in the basin:

2018	2019	2020	2021
•Developed inter-agency agreements •Began defining Basin Setting •STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	•Continue Basin Setting work •Describe Monitoring Protocols •Begin Sustainable Management Criteria •STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	•Assessment and Improvement of Monitoring Networks •Continue Sustainable Management Criteria •Begin Projects and Management Actions •STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	•Continue Sustainable Management Criteria •Continue Projects and Management Actions •GSP document preparation and adoption •STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

GSP Planning Timeline and Stakeholder Communication at a Glance

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT FOR GSP ELEMENTS

To engage the public in development of a GSP that is science-based, complex, technical, and includes achievable outcomes, GSAs will strive to meet the following overall objectives:

- Educate the public, communicating what may often be complex concepts in a straightforward, comprehensible manner.
- Show how the input received has been incorporated into the plan or process.
- Remain focused on results and outcomes to develop a GSP that is compliant with SGMA.

It is anticipated that the GSP will be developed in six phases:

1. Preparation and submittal of initial notification of GSP preparation
2. Definition of plan area and basin setting
3. Development of sustainable management criteria, including the sustainability goal, definition of significant and unreasonable undesirable results, minimum thresholds, measurable objectives and interim milestones
4. Assessment and improvement of existing monitoring program and data management system
5. Identification and evaluation of proposed projects and management actions
6. Development of GSP implementation costs, detailed schedule, and annual reporting to DWR.

Each phase requires outreach with the goal of educating and engaging stakeholders on the technical and policy aspects of the GSP elements. The outreach and engagement for each phase will include a mix of communication tools, which are anticipated to be used in a variety of forums.

SGMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

SGMA requires GSAs to consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater as a part of GSP development and implementation. Further, as is stated in Water Code Section 10727.8, “The GSA shall encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin prior to and during the development and implementation of the GSP.” In addition, the GSP Regulations require that GSAs document in a communications section of the GSP the opportunities for public engagement and active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the basin.

The Plan also identifies a variety of communication methods (see page 12) that will be employed to address the distinct interests of each group and provides a schedule of activities (see Appendix A) that clearly outlines the timeline for Plan implementation.

RELEVANT PARTICIPANTS/POTENTIAL AUDIENCES IN THE SIERRA VALLEY BASIN

Participating GSAs and Interagency Coordination

There are two GSAs within the Sierra Valley Basin that are actively participating in GSP development:

- ✓ Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District (District)
- ✓ Plumas County

Most of the basin is within the jurisdiction of the District. However, there is a small section of the basin outside the jurisdiction of the District and within Plumas County. Consistent with Water Code Section 10727(b), the two GSAs intend to develop a single GSP covering the entire basin.

While the GSAs are not required by SGMA to enter into a formal coordination agreement, the Sierra Valley Basin GSAs have entered into a voluntary interagency agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that specifies the GSAs' intent to cooperatively implement SGMA.

The lands in the basin within Plumas County, but outside the jurisdiction of the District, are also within the management jurisdiction of the federal government, or more specifically, United States Forest Service (USFS) lands of the Plumas National Forest (PNF). This area within Plumas County and under the jurisdiction of the PNF is also significant to California Native Americans, including native people of the Washoe, Paiute, and Maidu tribes, who have deep and enduring cultural connections to this area of the basin. Through stakeholder outreach and engagement, Plumas County may enter into agreements with California Native American tribes and/or PNF, if warranted.

Interested Parties & Other Stakeholders

As required by SGMA, the GSA must establish and maintain a list of interested parties and provide an explanation of how those interests will be considered when developing and implementing the GSP. Specifically, Water Code Section 10723.2 identifies the following parties that GSAs must consider, and these interests include, but are not limited to:

- Agricultural users of groundwater
- Domestic well owners
- Municipal well operators
- Public water systems
- Land use planning agencies
- Environmental uses of groundwater
- Surface water users
- The federal government
- California Native American tribes
- Disadvantaged communities (including those served by private domestic wells or small community water systems).

Stakeholder Group Interests & Engagement Purpose

The following table identifies the categories of stakeholder interests and the corresponding groups that will be the focus of the GSAs' engagement efforts. The table also specifies the anticipated appropriate level of engagement for various stakeholder groups.

Table 1. Sierra Valley Stakeholder Group Interests & Purpose of Engagement

Category of Interest	Stakeholder Groups	Anticipated Level of Engagement
General Public • Citizens groups • Community leaders • Interested individual • Universities/Academia	• Interested Individuals on Interested Parties List maintained by GSA • Upper Feather River Watershed Group	Inform to improve public awareness of sustainable groundwater management
Land Use • Municipalities • Local land use agencies • Regional land use agencies • Community Service Districts	• City of Loyalton • Plumas County Planning Department • Sierra County Planning Department	Consult and involve to ensure land use policies are supporting GSP and there are no conflicting policies between the GSAs / GSP and local government agencies
Urban/ Commercial & Non-Commercial Agricultural Users • Water agencies • Irrigation districts • Municipal water companies • Mutual water companies • Resource conservation districts • Farmers/Farm Bureaus • Water Districts • Water-users associations • Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Coalition	• Plumas-Sierra Farm Bureau • Plumas-Sierra Cattlemen's Association • Plumas-Sierra Cattlewomen's Association • Plumas-Sierra County Agricultural Commissioner • Plumas-Sierra University of California Cooperative Extension • Sierra Valley Grange #466 • Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District (RCD)	Inform and involve to ensure sustainable management of groundwater and consider viability of agricultural economy
Other Commercial Users • Commercial and industrial self-suppliers	• American Renewable Power	Inform and involve in assessing impacts to users
Environmental and Ecosystem Uses • Federal and State agencies • Wetland managers • Environmental groups	• Plumas Audubon Society • The Nature Conservancy • Northern Sierra Partnership • Feather River Land Trust • Upper Feather River Watershed Group • California Dept of Fish & Wildlife, relative to Antelope Valley, Smithneck Creek, and Crocker Meadows Wildlife Areas	Inform and involve to consider/incorporate potential ecosystem impacts to GSP process

Category of Interest	Stakeholder Groups	Anticipated Level of Engagement
<i>Surface Water Users</i> • Irrigation Districts • Water Districts • Water users associations • Agricultural users	• Sierra Valley Mutual Water Co • Little Last Chance Creek Water District • Middle Fork Feather River Decree 3095	Inform and involve to collaborate to ensure sustainable water supplies
<i>Economic Development</i> • Chambers of commerce • Business groups/associations • Elected officials • State Assembly members • State Senators • Economic Development Team	• Sierra Institute for Community & Environment • Sierra County Board of Supervisors • Plumas County Board of Supervisors	Inform and involve to support a stable economy
<i>Human Right to Water</i> • Disadvantaged communities • Small water systems • Environmental justice groups/community-based organizations • Domestic well owners	• City of Loyalton • Sierra Brooks Water System • Sierra Water Works District #1 • Private well owners	Inform and involve to provide safe and secure groundwater supplies to all communities reliant on groundwater
<i>Tribes</i> • Federally Recognized Tribes • Non-Federally Recognized Tribes	• Washoe, Paiute and Maidu Tribes • California Tribal Water Commission	Inform, involve and consult with tribal government
<i>Federal Lands</i> • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • U.S. Bureau of Reclamation • U.S. Army Corps of Engineers • U.S. Forest Service	• Plumas National Forest • Tahoe National Forest	Inform, involve and collaborate to ensure basin sustainability
<i>Integrated Water Management</i> • Regional water management groups (IRWM regions) • Flood agencies	• Upper Feather River Integrated Regional Water Management Group	Inform, involve and collaborate to improve regional sustainability

DEFINING ANTICIPATED LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

The following definitions intend to clarify the terms used in Table 1 and the anticipated level of engagement for various stakeholder groups.

- Inform:** To provide stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions. This will be achieved primarily through public workshops throughout GSP development.
- Consult:** To obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions. The GSAs will keep stakeholders informed, will listen to and acknowledge stakeholder concerns, and provide feedback on how stakeholder input has been addressed in the GSP. There will be opportunities for stakeholder comments at public workshops, through surveys, and at the GSA meetings.
- Involve:** To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered. This will be achieved through public workshops, surveys, GSA meetings, and targeted briefings, as warranted.
- Collaborate:** To partner and to seek advice and innovation in formulating solutions that can be incorporated into the GSP.

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT FORUMS

Public Meetings/Hearing

Public meetings or hearings are formal opportunities for people to provide official comments on programs, plans, and proposals. District board meetings occur monthly and give stakeholders regular opportunities for consistent engagement with decision-makers in the basin. Since District meetings are public meetings that comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act, these meetings offer a forum for public comment on groundwater management in the basin more broadly as well as specifically on GSP planning. SGMA requires that a public meeting be held prior to the adoption of a fee and that public hearings are held for the adoption of GSP elements and the final GSP. There are also constitutional requirements for public hearings for some fee/rate options. Public meetings and hearings are an important forum for people to share viewpoints and concerns, but often occur at the end of a process, when only one option is under consideration. The GSAs will hold required public meetings and hearings, but will also use less formal public workshops to solicit input, feedback, and information throughout the process.

Public Notices

In addition to the public notice required for fee adoption, SGMA requires that prior to initiating the development of a GSP, GSAs must provide a written statement describing the manner in which stakeholders may participate in the development and implementation of the GSP. The statement must be provided to any incorporated city in the basin and Sierra and Plumas counties.

Public Workshops

The GSAs will convene public workshops. These workshops provide opportunities for people to learn about groundwater, SGMA, and GSP elements. Workshops can be organized in a variety of ways, including open houses, “stations” where people can ask questions one-on-one, and traditional presentations with facilitated question-and-answer sessions. In order to solicit feedback from people who may not be comfortable speaking in public, workshops can include small group breakout discussions, comment cards and other techniques. Whatever format is used, workshops will be designed to maximize opportunities for public input.

Public workshops will serve as the primary means for stakeholders to learn about SGMA implementation in the basin and to participate in GSP planning. Workshops will occur at key points in the planning process to ensure that stakeholders have opportunities to provide input and give feedback on the GSP. Workshops also serve as a venue to reply to stakeholder comments on the GSP. The following table outlines the approximate number of workshops, the estimated timing of the workshops, and the expected purpose/topics that will be addressed at each workshop which is aligned with the scope and sequence in the development of required GSP elements.

Table 2. Anticipated Workshop Schedule

Workshop Number	Estimated Timing of Workshop	Primary Topics/Purpose
1	October 2018	SGMA overview and milestones, SGMA implementation activities to date, GSP planning process timeline/work plan overview, identification of opportunities for stakeholders to participate in GSP planning (including, for example, siting of monitoring wells on property, registration of inactive wells, etc.)
2	Fall 2019	• update the community on the planning grant, work plan, and schedule • receive presentation summarizing basin conditions other relevant information which forms the basis for preliminary basin setting • Solicit community input on preliminary basin setting results
3	Fall 2020	• Input on sustainable management criteria, including the sustainability goals, undesirable results, minimum thresholds, measurable objectives, and interim milestones. • Begin projects and management actions discussion
4	Spring 2021	• Continue projects and management actions discussion • Solicit comments on draft GSP sections
5	Fall 2021	Response to stakeholder comments on draft GSP and provide comments/feedback on refined draft GSP

METHODS FOR STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Outreach and communication efforts will take many forms, depending on the need (e.g., provide general background information, provide notice of upcoming public meetings). Communication methods will include, but are not be limited to the following:

- Traditional media: When required or appropriate, press releases will be distributed to the media list in time to meet deadlines for local newspapers inform the general public (see Table 3).
- Website: Background information, notice of public meetings, and information on GSP process and content will be posted on the District website (<http://www.sierravalleygmd.org/sustainable-groundwater-management-act>).
- Interested Party List Updates: The District will collect the names and contact information of interested parties at monthly District board meetings and public workshops, at a minimum. Through targeted outreach, GSAs will build and refine the Interested Parties List. Information will be sent via email, via post or phone, as appropriate, to those who have provided their contact information.
- Personal communication: Local GSA representatives, consultants and GSA officials will communicate directly with stakeholders (via email, telephone, U.S. mail, in person), as appropriate and necessary.
- Meetings and workshops: Meetings and workshops will be conducted at various locations within the basin, and for various purposes (e.g., work groups, public meetings), as needed and appropriate.
- On-line Surveys: To provide the greatest access possible to the greatest number of people, on-line surveys may be a useful stakeholder engagement tool to get a sense of stakeholder values as they relate to the development of sustainable management criteria and may be employed throughout the GSP development process.
- Printed materials: Printed materials will be used throughout the GSP development process for increasing awareness and understanding. Materials may take many forms, including flyers to be posted and otherwise made available in public places at key milestones, educational materials provided at meetings, a limited number of hard copies of GSP documents as they become available, and meeting handouts to facilitate public understanding and participation.

Table 3. Print & Online Media Sources & Contact Information

Media Source	Contact
Mountain Messenger	(Don Russell) mtnmess@cwo.com ; (Jill) yesdearyousuck@yahoo.com
Plumas/Sierra Sustainable Farmers Guild	Facebook Page
Portola Reporter	(Eva Small) esmall@plumasnews.com ; (Debra Moore) Managing Editor, Feather Publishing dmoore@plumasnews.com
Sierra Booster	(Jan Buck) jbuck@psln.com
Sierraville.org	http://www.sierraville.org

REFERENCE MATERIALS

DWR has developed various reference materials about SGMA and GSP development. While not comprehensive, the below table lists some essential SGMA reference materials to aid with successful GSP development.

Table 4. Reference Documents for SGMA Implementation

Reference Document Titles	Publishing Entity	Date/ Year of Publication
Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Emergency Regulations Guide https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California/CaliforniaCodeofRegulations?guid=I74F39D13C76F497DB40E93C75FC716AA&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default)&bhcp=1	DWR	July 2016
Best Management Practices Documents: 1. Monitoring Protocols Standards and Sites 2. Monitoring Networks and Identification of Data Gaps 3. Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model 4. Water Budget 5. Modeling 6. Sustainable Management Criteria https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management/Best-Management-Practices-and-Guidance-Documents	DWR	2016-2018

Reference Document Titles	Publishing Entity	Date/ Year of Publication
Guidance Documents: 1. Resource Guide for Climate Change Data and Guidance 2. Guidance for Climate Change Data Use During Sustainability Plan Development 3. Stakeholder Communications and Engagement 4. Engagement with Tribal Governments 5. GSP Annotated Outline 6. Preparation Checklist for GSP Submittal https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management/Best-Management-Practices-and-Guidance-Documents	DWR	2016-2018

EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT

Any communication strategy should include opportunities to check in at various points during implementation to ensure that it is meeting the communication and engagement goals and complying with SGMA. This plan is expected to change over time to accurately reflect communications and engagement through the GSP planning process.

These periodic check-ins can include:

- What worked well?
- What didn't work as planned?
- Lessons learned.
- Making changes and developing mid-course corrections.

APPENDIX A: SGMA IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Sierra Valley Groundwater Basin Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation 2019-2022 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Acronyms:

- PT= GSP Project Team
- GSA= Groundwater Sustainability Agency(ies)—Referring to SVGMD and Plumas County
- Sub= SVGMD Board Subcommittee
- C= Consultant(s)
- DWR= California Department of Water Resources
- TSS= Technical Support Services Program (DWR)
- PW= Public Workshop

Month/Year	Meetings/Milestones	Key Topics & Actions
January 2019	GSP Project Team (monthly)	- PT: Clarify GSP Work Plan priorities and next steps - PT: Refine work plan to incorporate draft GSP development progress
February 2019	- GSP Project Team (monthly) - SVGMD Board Meeting (monthly) - Tribal-FS Meeting	- GSA: Approve coordination agreement between SVGMD and Plumas County - PT: Review GSP draft sections (Chapter 1 and Land Subsidence) to help identify data, technical, and resource gaps to inform development of GSP grant application work plan.
March-April 2019	- GSP Project Team (monthly) - SVGMD Board Meeting (monthly) - SVGMD Board Planning Subcommittee - Initiating Planning Grant	- C: Bachand & Associates recharge study report findings presentation to SVGMD Board of Directors at March board meeting. - PT/GSA: GSP Project team present preliminary subsidence presentation to the SVGMD Board of Directors at April Board meeting.
May-August 2019	- GSP Project Team (monthly) - SVGMD Board Meeting (monthly) - SVGMD Board Planning Subcommittee - Defining Programs and Priorities for funding	- PT with Burkhard Bohm: Compile existing basin setting information (technical information associated with basin conditions) to compare to GSP requirements and identify data, technical, and resource gaps to inform development of GSP grant proposal. - C/PT/Sub: Establish schedule for subcommittee meetings (to begin meeting in June). - PT/Sub/GSA: Present PSP requirements and activities and timeline for completion of proposal to SVGMD Board of Directors at June-July Board meetings. - PT: Prepare draft comments to DWR on draft PSP - PT/GSA: Present draft PSP comments to SVGMD at June board meeting and receive input. - PT/GSA: Incorporate SVGMD and Plumas County comments and finalize comments on draft PSP and submit to DWR. - DWR: Release Phase 2 final Basin Prioritization results.

Month/Year	Meetings/Milestones	Key Topics & Actions
		8. TSS (GSA/DWR): Complete agreement with landowners for entry permit on land for TSS multi-completion well installation. 9. TSS (GSA/DWR): Complete environmental documentation for TSS multi-completion well application.
September-October 2019	• GSP Project Team (monthly) • SVGMD Board Planning Subcommittee • SVGMD Board Meeting (monthly)	1. TSS (DWR): Prepare agreements with landowner, drilling contractor, SVGMD. 2. TSS: Begin construction on multi-completion well. 3. DWR: Release of final PSP for GSP planning grant program (release date 9/9/19). 4. C/PT/GSA/Sub: Attend DWR informational webinar (9/18/19), draft GSP grant proposal, present progress updates and receive input and comments at SVGMD monthly board meetings and subcommittee meetings, incorporate GSA input. 5. Pass SVGMD board resolution for GSP planning grant submission (October SVGMD board meeting).
November-December 2019	• GSP Project Team • SVGMD Board Meeting • Finalizing Planning Grant • Public Workshop	1. Submit GSP planning grant to DWR (November 15, 2019). 2. GSA/PT: Plan for fall public workshop. 3. PW: Public workshop (early December).
January-March 2020	• GSP Project Team (note-committee structure may be redefined at this point) • SVGMD Board Meeting	1. C: Release of groundwater study report. 2. DWR: Announce draft & final GSP grant awards, work with DWR on pre-contracting. 3. GSA/PT: Draft and review RFP(s) for any needed GSP consulting services as per the GSP grant application and determine process for consultant selection. 4. DWR: Release Project Solicitation Package for GSP Implementation Grants.
April-June 2020	• GSP Project Team • SVGMD Board Meeting	1. GSA/PT: Finalize RFP(s) for consulting services and release. 2. GSA/PT: Respond to consulting team questions before proposal submission. 3. GSA: Receive consultant proposals, conduct interviews and select consultant(s). 4. GSA: Contract with selected consultant(s) 5. C/PT/GSA: Monitoring protocols 6. C/PT/GSA: Maps 7. C/PT/GSA: Water Resource Monitoring and Management Programs 8. C/PT/GSA: Description of Plan Area 9. C/PT/GSA: Draft Basin Setting results 10. C/PT/GSA: Monitoring networks 11. PW: Stakeholder feedback on basin conditions/undesirable results
July-September 2020	• GSP Project Team • SVGMD Board Meeting	1. C/PT/GSA: Land use elements and plans 2. C/PT/GSA: Additional GSP Elements including, but not limited to, impacts on Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Month/Year	Meetings/Milestones	Key Topics & Actions
October-December 2020	- GSP Project Team - SVGMD Board Meeting - SGMA Public Workshop	- C/PT/GSA: Representative monitoring - C/PT/GSA/PW: Sustainability goal - C/PT/GSA/PW: Measurable objectives - C/PT/GSA/PW: Minimum Thresholds
January-March 2021	- GSP Project Team - SVGMD Board Meeting - SGMA Public Workshop	- C/PT/GSA: Assessment and improvement of monitoring network - C/PT/GSA: Sustainability goal - C/PT/GSA: Measurable objectives (what conditions are desirable) - C/PT/GSA: Minimum Thresholds (what conditions are unacceptable) - C/PT/GSA/PW: Projects and Management Actions
April-June 2021	- GSP Project Team - SVGMD Board Meeting - SGMA Public Workshop	- C/PT/GSA: Projects and Management Actions - C/PT/GSA/PW: Draft GSP for public Comment
July-September 2021	- GSP Project Team - SVGMD Board Meeting	C/PT/GSA: Response to public comments
October-December 2021	- GSP Project Team - SVGMD Board Meeting - SGMA Public Workshop	- C: Incorporate public comments and prepare final review draft GSP - PT/GSA: Final review of GSP - C: Prepare final draft of GSP - GSA: GSAs adopt resolutions in support of GSP
January 2022	- GSP Project Team - SVGMD Board Meeting	GSA: Submit GSP to DWR via SGMA Portal

APPENDIX B: TRIBAL OUTREACH GUIDANCE

Consistent with Water Code Section 10720.3, the federal government or any federally recognized Indian Tribe, may voluntarily agree to participate in the preparation or administration of a GSP through a joint powers authority or other agreement with local agencies in the basin. A participating tribe shall be eligible to participate fully in planning, financing, and management. Additionally, SGMA identifies California tribes (including those that are not federally recognized) as possible beneficial users whose interests shall be considered in GSP development and implementation.

The Plumas National Forest lands within Plumas County but outside of the District's boundary are considered important to area tribes. During the stakeholder assessment, Plumas County clarified that it would take the lead on tribal outreach and engagement. Those activities may include the following:

Outreach Steps—Phase I

1. Plumas County will conduct an initial, informal communication with tribal primary points of contact to clarify interest in communicating formally regarding SGMA and tribal interests; request advice about appropriate avenues for outreach; and identify next steps. In the event a tribal representative cannot be contacted within a responsible timeframe, Plumas County will consult with DWR's Office of Tribal Policy Advisor for guidance (Anecita Agustinez, DWR Tribal Policy Advisor - Anecita.Agustinez@water.ca.gov).
2. Following successful initial communication with the Native American tribes, Plumas County will facilitate the implementation of the next steps identified in #3. Actions may include preparation of a formal letter from the Plumas County Board of Supervisors to each of the tribes, involvement of the District with the tribes, development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and/or establishing a consultation framework.

Outreach Steps – Phase II

Contingent on Phase I outcomes.

Relevant DWR Information

SGMA Section 10720.3. ...any federally recognized Indian Tribe, appreciating the shared interest in assuring the sustainability of groundwater resources, may voluntarily agree to participate in the preparation or administration of a groundwater sustainability plan or groundwater management plan under this part through a joint powers authority or other agreement with local agencies in the basin. A participating Tribe shall be eligible to participate fully in planning, financing, and management under this part, including eligibility for grants and technical assistance, if any exercise of regulatory authority, enforcement, or imposition and collection of fees is pursuant to the Tribe's independent authority and not pursuant to authority granted to a groundwater sustainability agency under this part.

Draft Discussion Paper Tribal Participation with Groundwater Sustainability

Agencies http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/SGMA_Tribal_GSAs.pdf

Must a local agency exclude federal and tribal lands from its service area when forming a GSA?

No, federal lands and tribal lands need not be excluded from a local agency's GSA area if a local agency has jurisdiction in those areas; however, those areas are not subject to SGMA. But, a local agency in its GSA formation notice shall explain how it will consider the interests of the federal government and California Native American tribes when forming a GSA and developing a GSP. DWR strongly recommends that local agencies communicate with federal and tribal representatives prior to deciding to become a GSA. As stated in Water Code §10720.3, the federal government or any federally recognized Indian tribe, appreciating the shared interest in assuring the sustainability of groundwater resources, may voluntarily agree to participate in the preparation or administration of a GSP or groundwater management plan through a JPA or other agreement with local agencies in the basin. Water Code References: §10720.3, §10723.2, §10723.8

Tribal Outreach Resources

The following are links to agency tribal outreach resources and considerations, each of which captures important principles and resources for tribal outreach. A short summary of key outreach principles can be found below.

- ◆ [Draft Discussion Paper Tribal Participation with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies](#)
- ◆ [CalEPA Tribal Consultation Policy Memo \(August 2015\)](#)
- ◆ [DWR Tribal Engagement Policy \(May 2016\)](#)
- ◆ [CA Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy \(November 2012\)](#)
- ◆ [SWRCB Proposed Tribal Beneficial Uses](#)
- ◆ [CA Court Tribal Outreach and Engagement Strategies](#)
- ◆ [Traditional Ecological Knowledge resources](#)
- ◆ [Water Education Foundation Tribal Water Issues](#)

Key Outreach Principles

- ◆ *Engage early and often*
- ◆ *Consider tribal beneficial uses in decision-making (identified by region [here](#)); identify and seek to protect tribal cultural resources*
- ◆ *Share relevant documentation with tribal officials*
- ◆ *Conduct meetings at times convenient for tribal participation with ample notifications*
- ◆ *Request relevant process input/data/information from tribes*

- ♦ *Empower tribes to act as tribal cultural resources caretakers*
- ♦ *Designate a tribal liaison(s) where appropriate*
- ♦ *Share resources for tribal involvement as is feasible*
- ♦ *Develop MOUs where relevant*
- ♦ *Be mindful of the traditions and cultural norms of tribes in the area*

Key Outreach Partners/Liaisons

The following are potential partners for Sierra Valley tribal SGMA outreach:

- ♦ [California Indian Water Commission, Inc.](#)
- ♦ [DWR Office of Tribal Advisor](#)
- ♦ [DWR Regional Office](#)