



Santa Clara Valley Water District

CONFORMED COPY

File No.: 21-1153

Agenda Date: 12/14/2021

Item No.: 2.7.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Public Hearing on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin; Adopt Resolution Adopting the 2022 Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin of the Gilroy-Hollister Basin.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Open the public hearing to receive comments on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin;
- B. Close the public hearing;
- C. Accept the Water Conservation and Demand Management Committee's November 22, 2021, recommendation to support bringing the North San Benito Groundwater Sustainability Plan to the Board; and
- D. Adopt the Resolution ADOPTING THE 2022 GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR THE NORTH SAN BENITO SUBBASIN OF THE GILROY-HOLLISTER BASIN.

SUMMARY:

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires that groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) managing medium- or high-priority basins prepare and implement a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) or an authorized alternative to a GSP. As the GSAs for the medium priority North San Benito Subbasin, San Benito County Water District (SBCWD) and Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) have prepared a GSP for this basin. The North San Benito Subbasin is about 200 square miles and largely in San Benito County with small areas (about 5 square miles) in Santa Clara County. Valley Water is the GSA for the portion of the GSP area in Santa Clara County. SBCWD and Valley Water have agreed to collaborate in preparing the GSP with SBCWD taking the lead and with cooperative implementation of the GSP in the future.

This memo provides an overview of the major elements of the GSP, Valley Water's roles and responsibilities, and the process to submit the final GSP to DWR. On July 29, 2021, the draft GSP was posted to SBCWD's website at <https://www.sbcwd.com/gsp-development/> for the 90-day public comment period required by SGMA, which ended on October 27, 2021. A link to the draft GSP was also available from Valley Water's Sustainable Groundwater Management website at: <https://www.valleywater.org/your-water/where-your-water-comes/groundwater/sustainable>.

On November 17, 2021, the SBCWD Board of Directors held a public hearing to receive comments

on the GSP and adopted the GSP. As a GSA for part of the basin, Valley Water must also adopt the GSP. The GSP is due to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) by January 31, 2022.

At the Water Conservation and Demand Management Committee's November 22, 2021, meeting, the Committee recommended bringing the North San Benito Groundwater Sustainability Plan to the December 14, 2021, Board of Directors meeting for public hearing and plan adoption.

GSP Overview

Based on sustainability indicators defined by SGMA, the GSP describes that the North San Benito Subbasin has been managed sustainably, given the availability of imported Central Valley Project (CVP) water. Accounting for current conditions, climate change, and anticipated growth, future projections indicate that the basin can continue to remain sustainable, assuming reasonable availability of CVP water, with implementation of projects and management actions to avoid undesirable results. These projects and management actions do not include any long-term planned reduction in groundwater pumping.

The GSP provides detailed information on the following major elements:

- GSP development and sustainability goals
- plan area
- hydrogeologic conceptual model
- current and historical groundwater conditions
- water balances
- sustainable management criteria
- monitoring
- project and management actions, and
- implementation plan.

Several of these plan elements are highlighted here, including the following.

GSP Development and Sustainability Goals

The North San Benito GSP was prepared with the participation of the public, local water and planning agencies, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations. SBCWD organized a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to support GSP development with multiple meetings open to the public; Valley Water staff served on the TAC. Additionally, SBCWD conducted six public workshops, provided regular updates at public meetings of the SBCWD Board of Directors, and distributed outreach materials.

The goal of the GSP is to sustain groundwater resources for the current and future beneficial uses of the North San Benito Subbasin in a manner that is adaptive and responsive to the following

objectives:

- to provide a long-term, reliable, and efficient groundwater supply for agricultural, domestic, and municipal and industrial uses
- to provide reliable storage for water supply resilience during droughts and shortages
- to protect groundwater quality
- to prevent subsidence
- to support beneficial uses of interconnected surface waters, and
- to support integrated and cooperative water resource management.

Plan Area

The North San Benito Subbasin is about 200 square miles and largely in San Benito County with only about 5 square miles in Santa Clara County. The plan area of the GSP includes the valley areas characterized by productive agriculture, urban areas including the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, rural communities, and upland areas with grazing land. Groundwater is the main source of water in the plan area, supplied to municipal, agricultural, and domestic users through more than 1,000 production wells. Imported water from the CVP is the other major source of water.

Current and Historical Groundwater Conditions

The North San Benito groundwater storage has been stable for the long term, given availability of imported CVP supplies since 1987. The basin's groundwater levels have been near historical highs for the last twenty years. Inelastic (permanent) subsidence has not been a known issue in the North San Benito Subbasin. Nonetheless, the GSP recommends monitoring of land surface elevation and maintaining groundwater levels above the historical lows levels to avoid inelastic subsidence. SBCWD will continue to monitor groundwater levels and quality in the basin. The GSP also identifies interconnected surface water and groundwater, including the location of groundwater dependent ecosystems.

Project and Management Actions

The GSP notes that groundwater conditions are sustainable in the North San Benito Subbasin. However, long-term sustainability requires continuation of monitoring, reporting, and management actions that are adaptive to climate change, water supply, and water demand conditions. The GSP presents ongoing, new, and recommended projects and management actions needed to maintain sustainability.

Potential projects will either increase water supply or reduce water demand, and include the following categories:

- develop surface water storage (Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project)
- expand manage aquifer recharge
- enhance conjunctive use

- enhance water conservation.

Given the small area of the basin in Santa Clara County, these potential projects are largely focused on the San Benito County portion of the basin, within the jurisdiction of SBCWD. The notable exception is the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project, which is located in Santa Clara County but will benefit portions of the basin in both counties.

Potential management actions provide a framework for groundwater management, and include the following categories:

- improve monitoring program and data management system
- develop response plans
- enhance water quality improvement programs
- reduce potential impacts to groundwater dependent ecosystems
- provide long-term basin-wide funding mechanisms
- provide administration, monitoring, and reporting.

Again, these management actions are applicable mostly to the San Benito County portion of the basin, within the jurisdiction of SBCWD. However, Valley Water and SBCWD will continue to coordinate on actions benefiting both counties.

Implementation Plan

Since over 97% of the basin is in San Benito County, SBCWD is largely responsible for the implementation of the GSP. Implementation will begin in 2022 and continue until 2042, and includes SGMA compliance and administration, basin monitoring, expanded reporting, and five-year updates. SBCWD's expanded management will involve increased annual costs. As described in the GSP, funding methods include an acreage-based fee for parcels in the basin benefitting from groundwater management and a groundwater-extraction based fee that supports annual measurement of groundwater pumping. A groundwater management fee was established by SBCWD Board of Directors Resolution No. 2021-13. The Santa Clara County portion of the basin includes 3,354 acres; related Valley Water costs for the first five years of GSP implementation will be less than \$20,000 annually.

Throughout GSP implementation, Valley Water and SBCWD will continue to coordinate on basin data and conditions and on potential management actions affecting the portion of the basin in Santa Clara County.

Outreach and Next Steps

Throughout preparation of the GSP, periodic updates have been provided to the Board's Water Conservation and Demand Management Committee and interested stakeholders. SBCWD hosted a virtual public meeting to describe the draft GSP on August 4, 2021. As noted above, a link to the draft

GSP was posted to Valley Water's website

<https://www.valleywater.org/your-water/where-your-water-comes/groundwater/sustainable> during the 90-day public comment period from July 29 to October 27, 2021.

If the Board adopts the GSP for the North San Benito Subbasin, SBCWD will submit the GSP to DWR by January 31, 2022, as required by SGMA.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Staff anticipates expenditure of less than \$20,000 per year for the first five years of implementation of the GSP. Related funding is included in the long-term forecast for Project 60041003 (Hollister Groundwater Management) as part of the General Fund budget. Related costs will be funded by non-rate related revenue.

CEQA:

This project is exempt from CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning studies.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Notice of Public Hearing

Attachment 2: Resolution

Attachment 3: PowerPoint

Attachment 4: North San Benito GSP

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

Greg Williams, 408-630-2867

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Public Hearing Notice

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR THE NORTH SAN BENITO SUBBASIN



Who: Santa Clara Valley Water District

What: Public Hearing on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin

When: Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

Where: Zoom Teleconference <https://valleywater.zoom.us/j/87570364606>

The Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) invites you to a Public Hearing on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the North San Benito Subbasin. If adopted by the Board of Directors, it will be submitted to the California Department of Water Resources by January 31, 2022 pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

The North San Benito Subbasin is about 200 square miles, largely in San Benito County with about 5 square miles in Santa Clara County. Valley Water and the San Benito County Water District (SBCWD) have agreed to collaborate in preparing the GSP, with SBCWD taking the lead and cooperative implementation of the GSP in the future. The draft GSP is available on the SBCWD website at <https://www.sbcwd.com/gsp-development/> and linked on Valley Water's website at <https://www.valleywater.org/your-water/where-your-water-comes/groundwater/sustainable>.

This meeting is being held in accordance with the Brown Act, as currently in effect. Valley Water's offices are closed to the public. The 1:00 p.m. December 14, 2021 public hearing will be held during a virtual Board Meeting accessible to the public at Zoom link <https://valleywater.zoom.us/j/87570364606>. Document(s) associated with this hearing are available for public inspection at www.valleywater.org.

For more information, contact Jason Gurdak, Senior Water Resources Specialist, at 408-630-2971.

Valley Water, in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), requests individuals who require special accommodations to access and/or participate in Valley Water Board meetings to please contact the Clerk of the Board's office at (408) 630-2711, at least 3 business days before the scheduled Board meeting to ensure that Valley Water may assist you. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate persons with disabilities.

重要通知：

本次会议遵循布朗法案举行。Valley Water 办公室不对公众开放。

公众听证会将在理事会线上会议期间举行，公众可通过以上的Zoom链接访问参与。

公众可在此获取与本次听证会相关的文件

：www.valleywater.org 按照《美国残疾人法案》（ADA）规定，Valley Water

要求出席或参与理事会会议的有特殊住宿需要的个人，在理事会会议之前至少3个工作日致电（408）630-2711，与

理事会办公室工作人员联系，以确保相关员工可以为您提供帮助。我们会做出合理的努力，帮助解决残障人士的需求。

Thông Báo Quan Trọng:

Cuộc họp này sẽ được tổ chức theo Đạo luật Brown. Các văn phòng của Valley Water hiện đang đóng cửa không tiếp dân. Phiên điều trần công khai sẽ được tổ chức trong Cuộc Họp Hội Đồng Quản Trị trực tuyến và công chúng có thể truy cập vào theo liên kết Zoom ở trên. Tài liệu liên quan đến phiên điều trần này có thể truy cập để kiểm tra công khai tại www.valleywater.org. Theo Đạo Luật Người Mỹ Khuyết tật (ADA), Valley Water yêu cầu những cá nhân cần sự hỗ trợ đặc biệt để truy cập và/hoặc tham gia vào các cuộc họp Hội Đồng Quản Trị Của Cục Nước xin hãy liên hệ với Thư ký văn phòng Hội Đồng Quản Trị theo số (408) 630-2711 ít nhất 3 ngày làm việc trước khi cuộc họp Hội Đồng Của Cục Nước diễn ra theo lịch để đảm bảo rằng nhân viên của Cục Nước có thể hỗ trợ quý vị. Chúng tôi sẽ thực hiện những nỗ lực hợp lý để hỗ trợ người khuyết tật.

Aviso importante:

Esta reunión se lleva a cabo de acuerdo con la Ley Brown (Brown Act). Las oficinas del Valley Water están cerradas al público. La audiencia pública se llevará a cabo durante una reunión de la Junta virtual a la que el público puede acceder a través del link de Zoom de arriba. Los documentos asociados a esta audiencia están disponibles para la revisión del público en www.valleywater.org. Valley Water, en cumplimiento con la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA), solicita que las personas que requieran adaptaciones especiales para acceder o participar de las reuniones de la Junta de Valley Water se comuniquen con el secretario de la oficina de la Junta al (408) 630-2711, al menos 3 días hábiles antes de la reunión programada de la Junta, para asegurarse de que el personal del Distrito pueda ayudarlas. Se realizarán esfuerzos razonables para proveer adaptaciones para las personas con discapacidades.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT**

RESOLUTION NO. 2198

**ADOPTING THE 2022 GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR THE
NORTH SAN BENITO SUBBASIN OF THE GILROY-HOLLISTER BASIN**

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water), an independent special district created by the Legislature of the State of California, manages groundwater and is the primary water resource agency for Santa Clara County, supplying wholesale water, providing flood protection and serving as environmental steward for clean, safe creeks and healthy ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, San Benito County Water District (SBCWD), a water conservation and flood control district, preserves the economic and environmental health and well-being of San Benito County through the control, management and conservation of waters and the provision of water services in a practical, cost-effective and responsible manner; and

WHEREAS, the California Legislature passed a statewide framework for sustainable groundwater management, known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (California Water Code Section 10720 et seq.), pursuant to Senate Bill 1168, Senate Bill 1319, and Assembly Bill 1739, which was approved by the Governor and Chaptered by the Secretary of State on September 16, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (Act) went into effect on January 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Act defines "basin" as a basin or subbasin identified and defined in California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118; and

WHEREAS, the Act requires all medium- and high-priority groundwater basins, as designated by DWR Bulletin 118, to be managed by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) or multiple GSAs; and

WHEREAS, on May 24, 2017, SBCWD became the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency of the three Subbasins of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin within San Benito County (Hollister, Bolsa, and San Juan Bautista); and

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2017, Valley Water became the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the portions of the Hollister and San Juan Bautista Subbasins of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin within Santa Clara County; and

WHEREAS, on April 25, 2018, SBCWD became the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency of Tres Pinos Valley Basin; and

WHEREAS, on April 25, 2018, SBCWD authorized a basin boundary modification request to DWR for consolidation of the Hollister, Bolsa, and San Juan Bautista Subbasins of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin and Tres Pinos Groundwater Basin; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water presented to DWR a June 18, 2018, letter of Support for Basin Boundary Modification Proposed by SBCWD; and

WHEREAS, in February 2019 DWR approved the SBCWD application to consolidate the Bolsa Area (3-003.02), Hollister Area (3-003.03), and San Juan Bautista Area (3-003.04) Subbasins of the Gilroy-Hollister Basin and the Tres Pinos Valley Basin (3-025) into a single new basin named the North San Benito Groundwater Basin (3-003.05); and

WHEREAS, SBCWD is the exclusive GSA for the portion of the North San Benito Groundwater Basin in San Benito County; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water is the exclusive GSA for the portion of the North San Benito Groundwater Basin in Santa Clara County; and

WHEREAS, the North San Benito Subbasin of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin has been designated by DWR as a medium-priority basin (DWR Bulletin 118 No. 3-003.05); and

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 5, 2017, was made by and between Valley Water and SBCWD, each a "Party" and collectively the "Parties," to establish an understanding between the Parties with regard to preparing a GSP; and

WHEREAS, the Parties have jointly developed a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin and on July 29, 2021, released the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for public comment; and

WHEREAS, SBCWD GSA held a hearing on November 17, 2021, for the purpose of receiving public comment and considering adoption of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water held a public hearing on December 14, 2021, for the purpose of receiving public comment and considering adoption of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin; and

WHEREAS, Water Code Section 10733.4 requires that the Groundwater Sustainability Plan be submitted to DWR for review.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District does hereby adopt the 2022 Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North San Benito Subbasin of the Gilroy-Hollister Basin.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District by
the following vote on December 14, 2021:

AYES: Directors Santos, Kremen, Hsueh, Keegan, LeZotte, Varela, Estremera

NOES: Directors None

ABSENT: Directors None

ABSTAIN: Directors None

SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT



TONY ESTREMER
Chair, Board of Directors

ATTEST: MICHELE L. KING, CMC



Clerk, Board of Directors

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San Benito County
Water District GSA



Valley Water

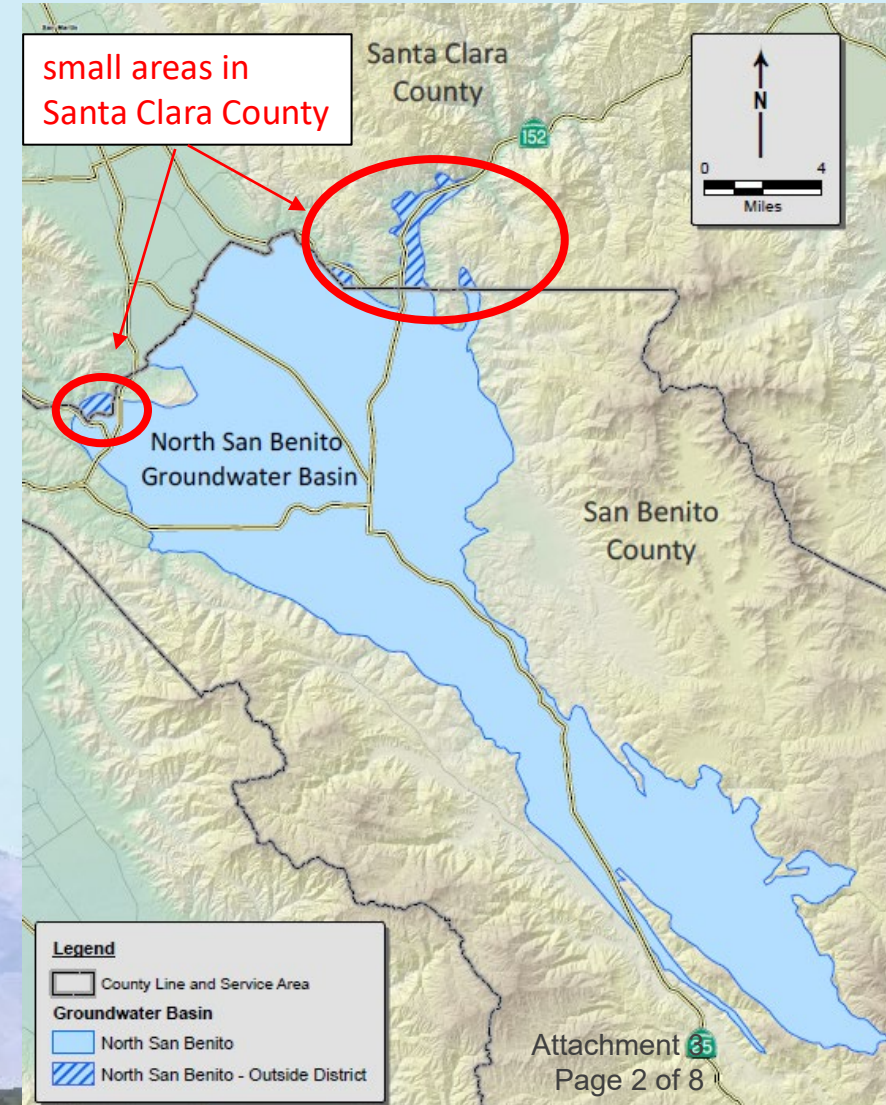
Groundwater Sustainability Plan North San Benito Groundwater Basin Final Draft

Presentation to
Valley Water Board of Directors
December 14, 2021



North San Benito Groundwater Sustainability Plan

- North San Benito Subbasin of Gilroy Hollister Basin
- Collaborative effort of Valley Water and San Benito County Water District
 - Both agencies are GSAs
 - 2017 MOU defined responsibilities for GSP development
- San Benito County Water District
 - Lead on GSP development, outreach, implementation
- Valley Water
 - Support GSP development and serve on Technical Advisory Committee
 - Inform local stakeholders



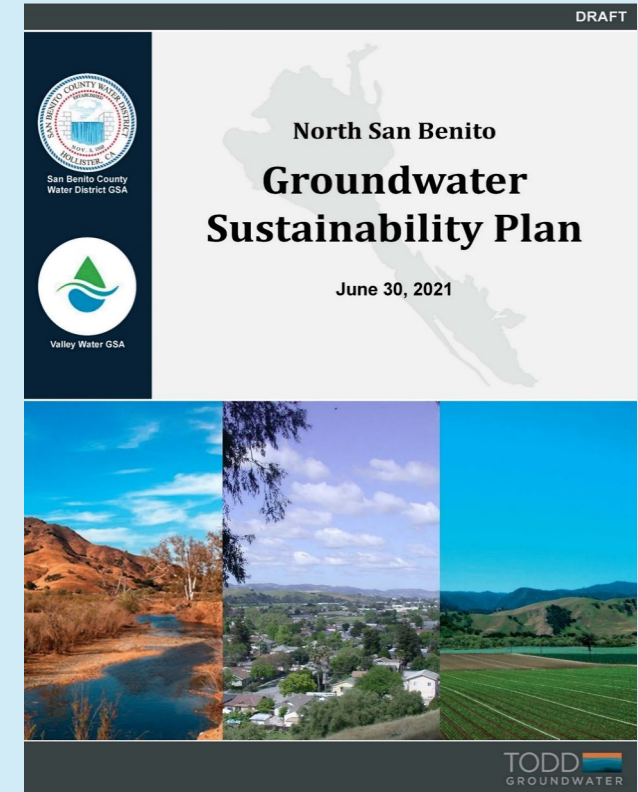
North San Benito Sustainability Goal

To sustain groundwater resources for the current and future beneficial uses of the North San Benito Basin in a manner that is adaptive and responsive to the following objectives:

- Provide a long-term, reliable, and efficient groundwater supply for agricultural, domestic, and municipal and industrial uses
- Provide reliable storage for water supply resilience during droughts and shortages
- Protect groundwater quality
- Prevent subsidence
- Support beneficial uses of interconnected surface waters, and
- Support integrated and cooperative water resource management.

GSP contents

- GSP development and sustainability goals
- plan area
- hydrogeologic conceptual model
- current and historical groundwater conditions
- water balances
- sustainable management criteria
- monitoring
- project and management actions, and
- implementation plan.



Key findings of GSP

- Groundwater conditions are sustainable in North San Benito Basin with continued CVP import
- Long-term sustainability requires continued monitoring, reporting, and management that is adaptive to changing conditions
- Ongoing, new, and recommended projects and management actions are presented to maintain sustainability
- These projects and management actions do not include any long-term planned reduction in groundwater pumping.

Summary of public review

- Conducted virtual Public Workshop, August 4, 2021
- Provided Draft GSP document on SBCWD website (Valley Water link)
- Provided public notice of public adoption hearing
- Provided 90-day public review period, July 29 through October 27, 2021
- Received comments and developed responses



Two public comment letters were received

GSI Water Solutions, Inc. for Sustainable Water for Agriculture

- County planning and water supply
- Water quality and minimum thresholds
- Interconnected surface water and GDEs
- Subsidence and groundwater pumping

The Nature Conservancy, Audubon, Local Government Commission, Union of Concerned Scientists, and Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund

- Beneficial uses/users
- Engaging stakeholders
- Sustainable management criteria
- Climate change
- Data gaps
- Projects and management actions

Steps to complete GSP and submit to DWR

- Compile Final GSP and appendices and upload to website
- Convene adoption hearings
 - SBCWD, November 17, 2021
 - Valley Water, December 14, 2021
- Upload to DWR Portal by January 31, 2022
 - DWR sets 60-day comment period and receives/posts comments
 - DWR evaluation within two years: Approved/Incomplete/Inadequate

➤ GSAs to continue implementation



San Benito County
Water District GSA



Valley Water

The complete plan is posted at <https://www.sbcwd.com/gsp-development/> with a link available at <https://www.valleywater.org/your-water/where-your-water-comes/groundwater/sustainable>.

North San Benito Groundwater Sustainability Plan

November 2021



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