



Montecito Groundwater Basin

Groundwater
Sustainability
Agency

www.montecitogsa.com



Update on Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)

February 21, 2023

Montecito GSA Townhall

Presentation

Purpose

- Community engagement
- Overview of draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan content
- Solicit public review

Outline

- About Montecito GSA
- Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) legislation overview
- Groundwater Sustainability Plan
 - Introduction
 - Chapters
- Next Steps

Board of Directors

Five publicly elected Directors of the Montecito Water District also serve as the Board of Directors of the Montecito GSA



Brian Goebel

President



Ken Coates

Vice President



Cori Hayman

Director



Floyd E. Wicks

Director



Tobe Plough

Director

Basin Stakeholders

- What is a Stakeholder?
 - Stakeholders have interests that can be affected by decisions made by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency;
 - Examples of Stakeholders in the Montecito Basin:
 - Property Owners
 - Private Well Owners
 - Montecito Water District
 - Private Water Companies
 - Citizen Groups
 - County of Santa Barbara
 - Domestic Users
 - Schools and Colleges
 - Urban/Agricultural Users
 - Environmental Groups



Townhall Meeting for Stakeholder Involvement, February 24, 2020

Board Focus

Understanding the Montecito Groundwater Basin:

- Tremendous progress in the past three years
- **Data collected thus far indicates that the basin is in reasonably good health based on current conditions**

Board Focus Going Forward

- Data - Filling gaps
- Ongoing monitoring, modeling, and knowledge acquisition
- **Keeping groundwater supplies sustainable for all stakeholders by proceeding incrementally and without taking any unnecessary actions**



Mission

“The Montecito Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency’s mission is to ensure a reliable and sustainable groundwater supply for the community through effective basin management pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.”



Introductions

GSA Staff, Consultants and Collaborating Agencies

- Nick Turner – General Manager
- Adam Kanold – Assistant General Manager / Engineering Manager
- Nick Kunstek – Groundwater Specialist
- Laura Camp – Public Information Officer
- Matt Naftaly – Principal Hydrologist, Dudek (Consultant)
- Trevor Jones – Senior Hydrogeologist, Dudek (Consultant)
- Others



Montecito Sanitary District



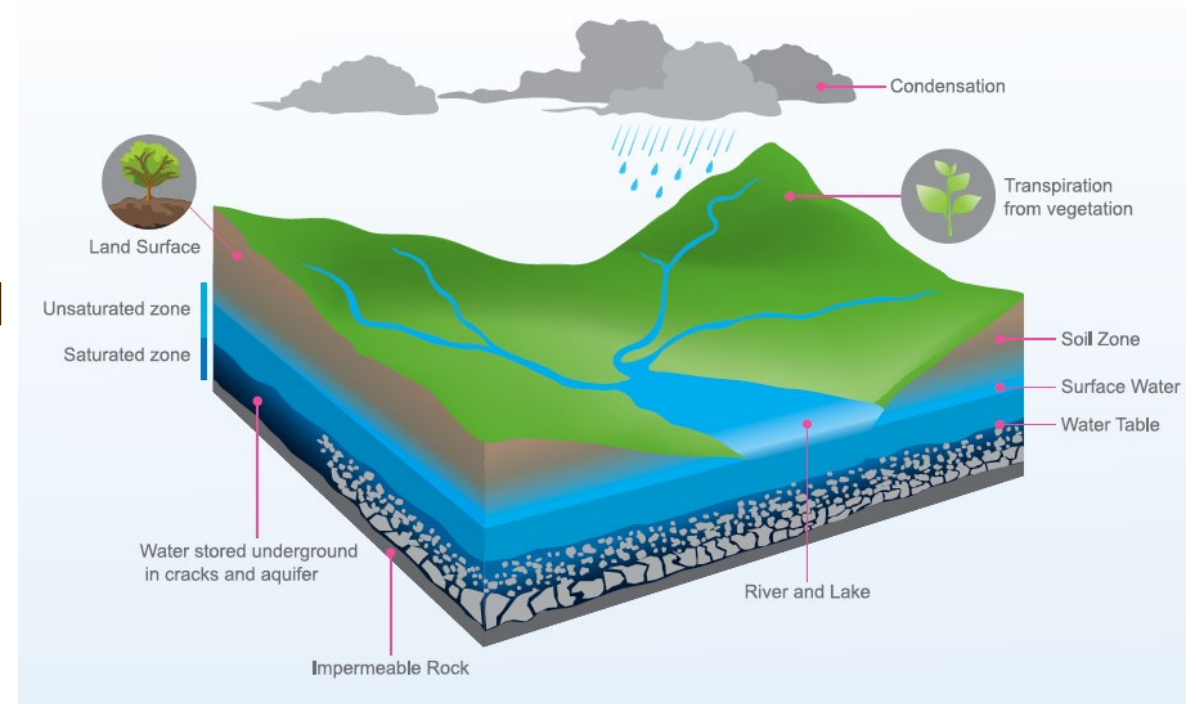
Numeric Solutions LLC
Geoinformation Management



Montecito Groundwater Basin

What is Groundwater?

- Water found underground in the cracks and spaces between soil, sand and rocks called aquifers
- Rain and snow melt seeping into the ground
- Moves gradually through aquifers towards rivers, lakes, or the ocean
- Groundwater depth rises and falls due to factors such as rainfall and pumping
- Can flow naturally to the surface via springs
- Brought to the surface using wells and pumps



Montecito Groundwater Basin

Why is Groundwater important?

- Local supply for public and private users
- Relied upon for residential, commercial, & agricultural uses
- Sole supply for some residential and agricultural users
- Critical supply during droughts



This public well is an important source of groundwater for the community.

Montecito Groundwater Basin

Why are we here? Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

- Signed into law in 2014
- Recognizes the importance of groundwater in California and the value of local management
- Statewide framework to help protect groundwater resources over the long-term
- Requires local agencies to form groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) for the high and medium priority basins (Montecito Basin is medium priority)
- Requires GSAs to develop and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)
 - Roadmap to long-term sustainability



GSAs have formed throughout the State



Montecito Groundwater Basin

- SGMA empowers one or more local agencies that have statutory authority over water resources within a groundwater basin to form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)
- Eligible agencies include water supply agencies, water management agencies, and land use authorities (MWD, County of SB)
- Montecito Water District was recognized by California's Department of Water Resources as the single-agency GSA in late 2018
- SGMA provides GSAs with planning, financial, regulatory, and enforcement powers



Public / Stakeholder Involvement

- SGMA requires GSAs to consider interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater (stakeholders)
- Stakeholder engagement is critical to a successful GSP and helpful in identifying and addressing community-wide concerns
- GSP development considers stakeholder groups in or around the groundwater basin with overlapping interests



Montecito Groundwater Basin
Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Communication & Engagement Plan

BOARD APPROVED: APRIL 14, 2018



 Records indicate that this property has one or more well(s). As a stakeholder, your input is essential.

Survey on Return Postcard Inside
Please respond by June 30th

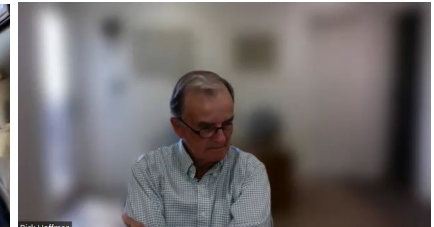
Participation of local constituents and relevant local data is needed to ensure that the Groundwater Sustainability Plan currently in development addresses the needs of ALL users of groundwater.

Montecito Groundwater Basin
Groundwater Sustainability Agency



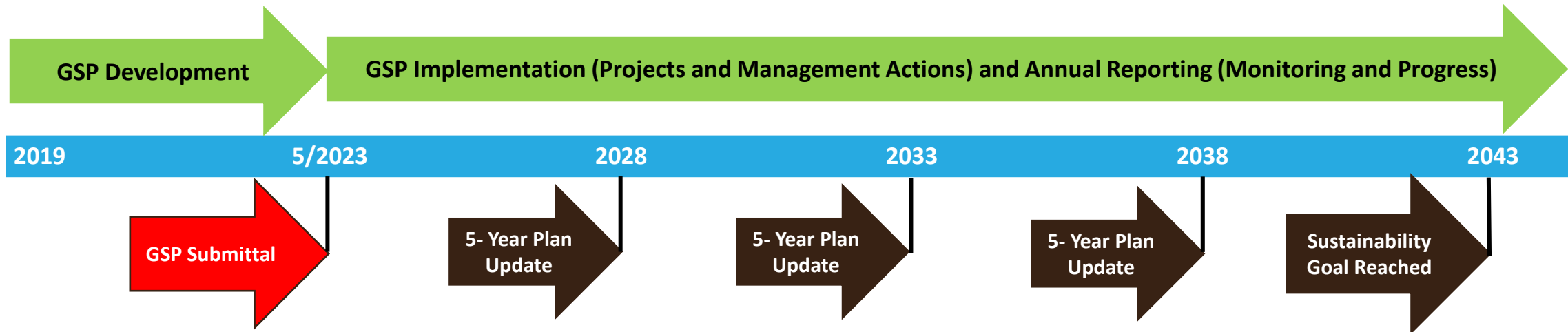
Advisory Committees

- Formed in 2020 to advise Board of Directors with development of the GSP:
 - **Stakeholder Advisory Committee** – provide community perspective and local knowledge, insight, and advice on non-technical aspects of the development and implementation of a GSP
 - **Technical Advisory Committee** – provide local knowledge, insight, and advice on technical aspects of the development and implementation of a GSP
- Committees met regularly to provide input, reviewed GSP development through numerous public meetings, and shared progress with local constituents



Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)

- Detailed roadmap to ensure sustainable use of groundwater resources by 2043 and beyond
- Provides understanding of the basin (existing conditions, water budget, etc.)
- Defines metrics for gauging sustainability
- Identifies projects that support sustainability
- Living document - updated regularly



Sustainability Goal

“The Montecito GSA’s sustainability goal is to prevent undesirable results and optimize long-term use of the groundwater basin for the benefit of all stakeholders.

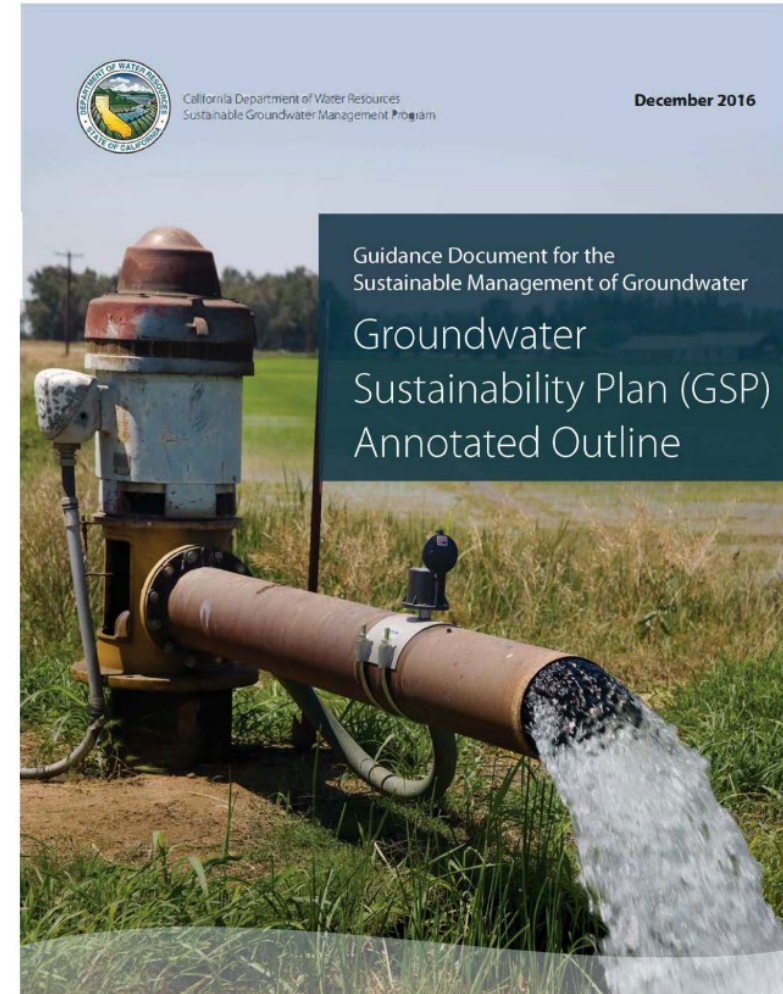
This will be achieved through a collaborative, knowledge-based process informed by locally-defined quantitative criteria, ongoing monitoring and modeling, and incremental, data-supported management actions as needed to prevent seawater intrusion and ensure sustainable groundwater levels, storage, and quality.”



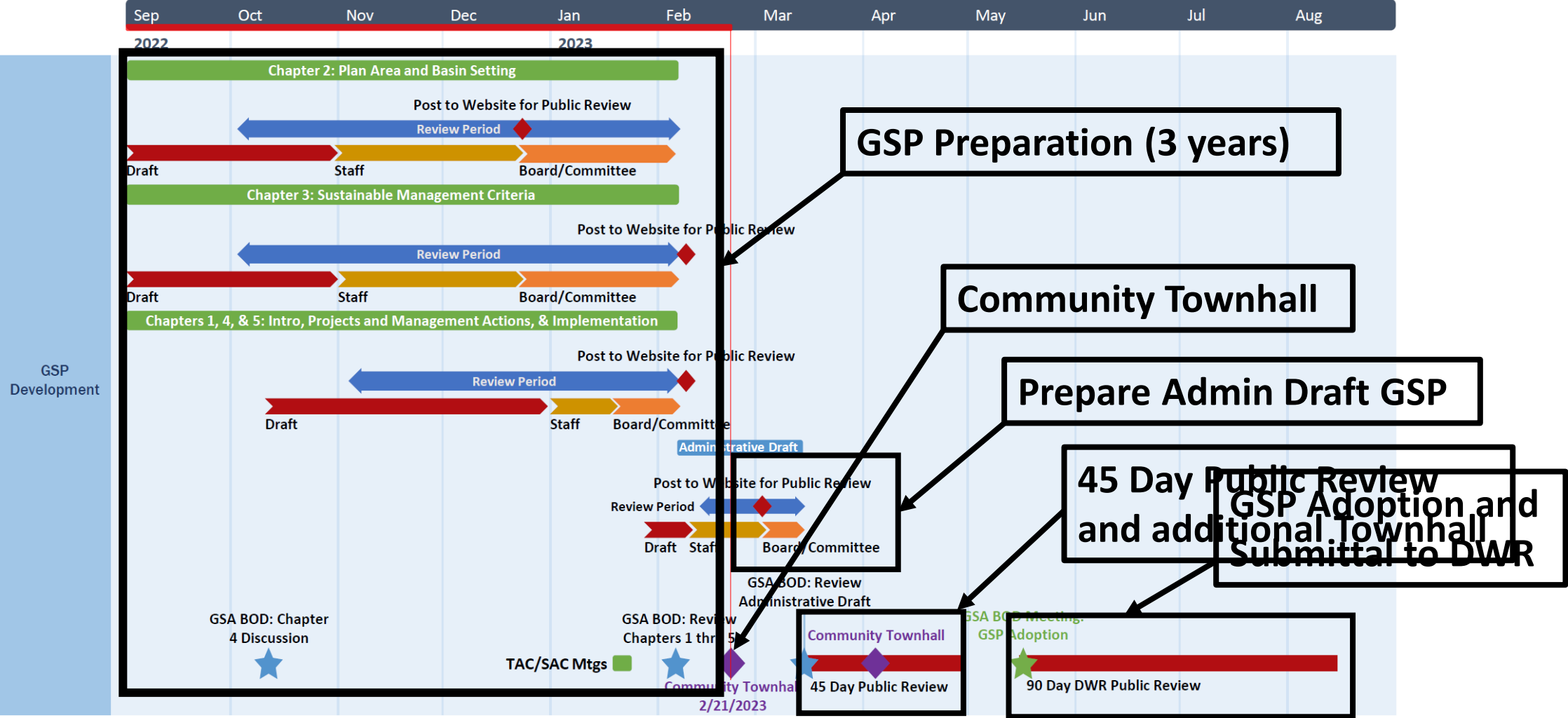
GSP Outline

What is in the Plan?

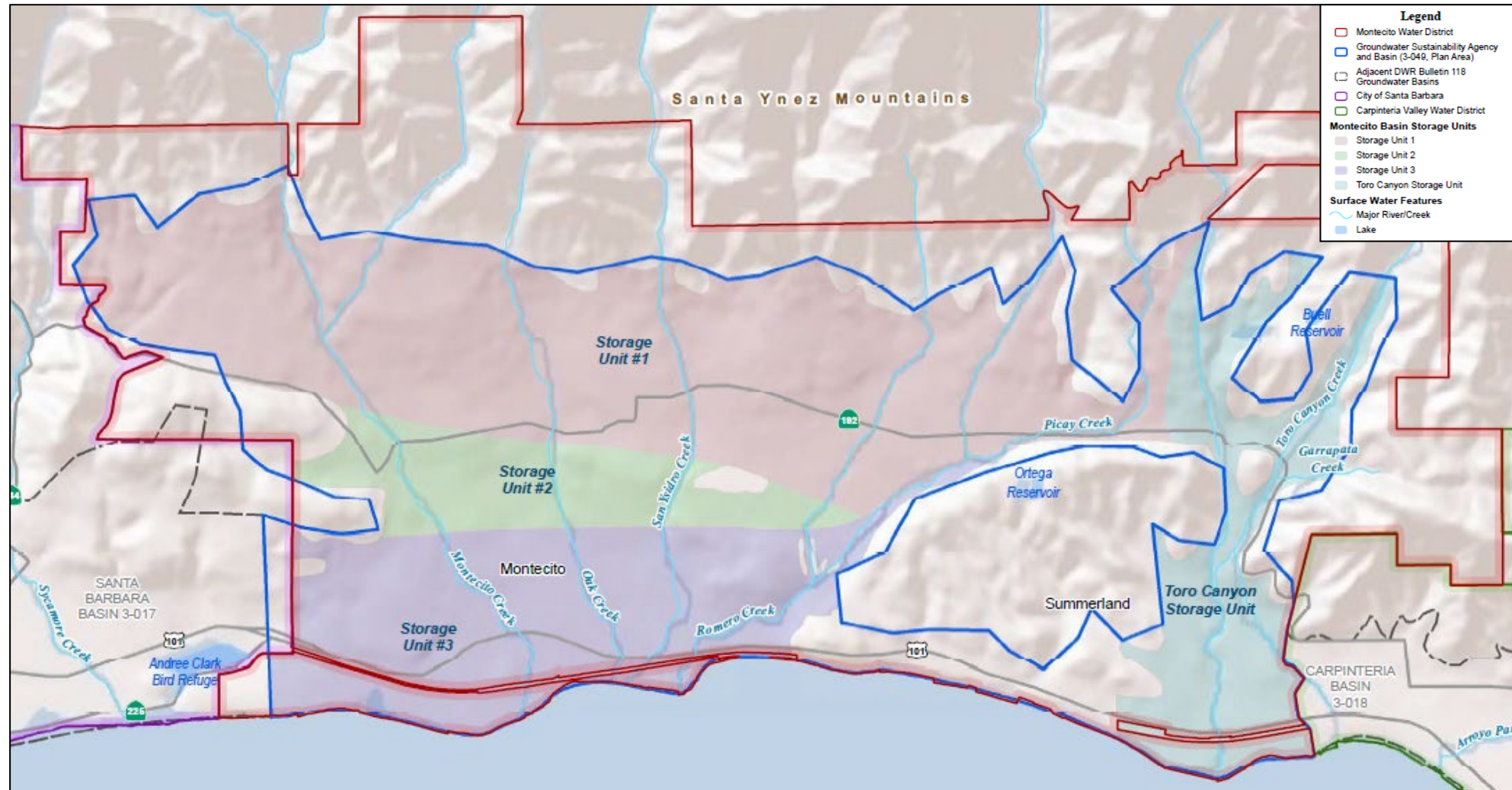
- **Executive Summary** – Under Draft
- **Chapter 1: Introduction**
- **Chapter 2: Plan Area and Basin Settings**
- **Chapter 3: Sustainable Management Criteria**
- **Chapter 4: Projects and Management Actions**
- **Chapter 5: Plan Implementation**



Groundwater Sustainability Plan Schedule



Montecito Groundwater Basin

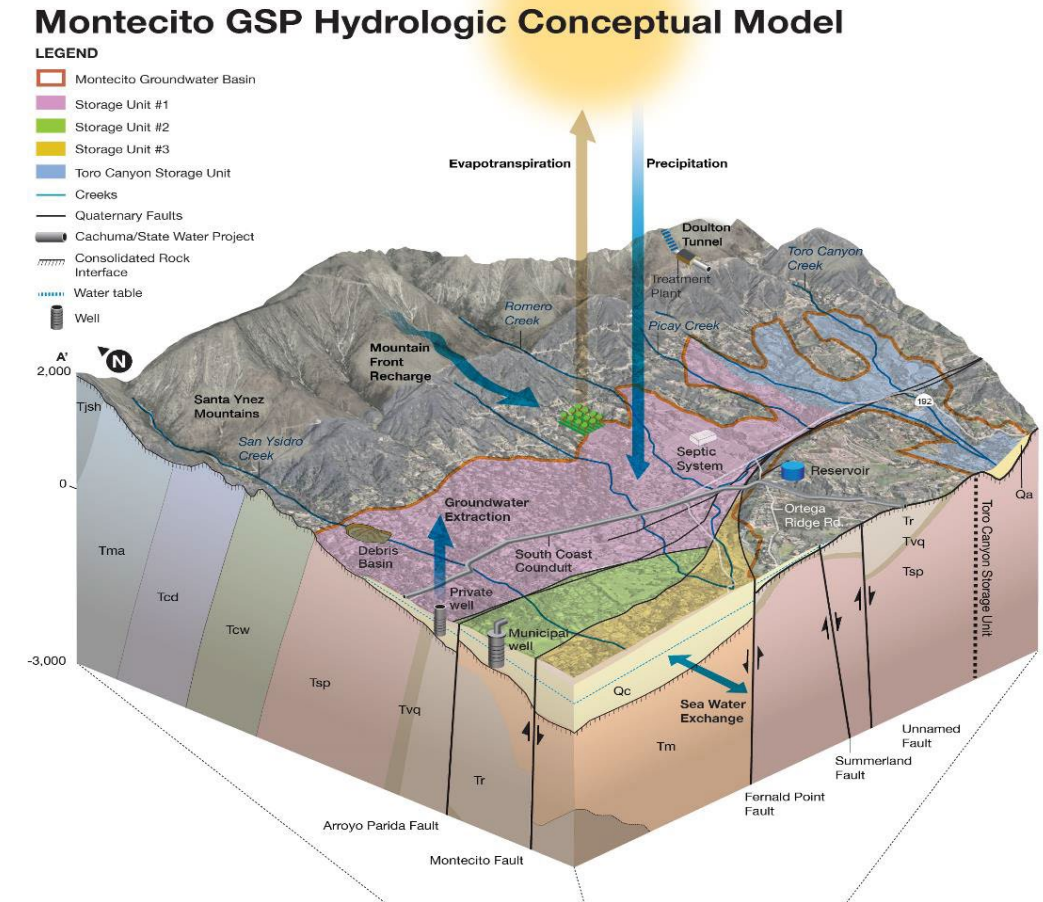


Basin Characterization

SGMA requires use of the best available information and science.

Montecito GSA:

- Gathered data from all publicly available sources
- Analyzed basin geology and processes that effect groundwater such as rainfall, irrigation, evaporation, well pumping, creek flows, etc.
- Conducted rigorous modeling
- Received expert review by Technical Advisory Committee



Summary of Basin Characterization

1. Groundwater is strongly influenced by climatic conditions (dry versus wet periods)
2. Historically, groundwater rebounds relatively quickly after several wet years
3. Current and projected conditions based on the best available data indicate the Basin is in relatively good health
4. Data gaps identified and being addressed



Projects Underway

- Filling data gaps will continue during GSP implementation



Monitoring Wells



**Stream Flow
Monitoring**



**Voluntary
Well Metering Program**

Development of Sustainable Management Criteria

- Quantifiable metrics for management of the Basin supported by the best available information gathered in Chapter 2
- Quantifiable metrics include:
 - Minimum Threshold (lower limit)
 - Measurable Objective (goal)
 - Undesirable Results

Based on the best available data and sustainable management criteria, no known Undesirable Results are occurring in the Basin

Sustainability Indicators

-  Lowering of groundwater levels
-  Reduction of groundwater storage
-  Seawater intrusion
-  Degradation of water quality
-  Land subsidence
-  Surface water depletion



Sustainability Indicators -> The effects caused by groundwater conditions occurring throughout the basin that, when significant and unreasonable, become **Undesirable Results**.



Sustainable Management Criteria

Sustainability Indicator		Monitoring Metric	Minimum Threshold	Measurable Objective
Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels		Groundwater Elevations	Elevations 10' below historical low (SU 1 and 2) Historical Low (Inland SU 3 and Toro) Mean Sea Level (Coastal)	Average Groundwater Elevations (all storage units)
Reduction in Groundwater Storage		Groundwater Elevations	Same as Chronic Lowering	Same as Chronic Lowering
Seawater Intrusion		Chloride Concentrations	Chloride = 200 mg/L (coastal only)	Chloride = 100 mg/L (coastal only)
Degraded Water Quality		TDS Nitrate Iron Manganese Chloride	California State Drinking Water Standards/State Basin Plan Objectives (all storage units)	California State Drinking Water Standards/State Basin Plan Objectives (all storage units)
Land Subsidence		None at this time	None at this time	None at this time
Interconnected Surface-water/ Groundwater		None at this time	None at this time	None at this time

* Land subsidence is not likely to occur but will be monitored

** No criteria established at this time due to lack of existing data



Projects and Management Actions

- Purpose: filling data gaps
- Majority of projects build on those started during GSP development
- Supportive of ongoing monitoring and model refinement
- Grant funds will continue to be pursued to the extent possible

Expand Groundwater Monitoring

Model Updates

Evaluate Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction

Enhancement of Groundwater Well Database

Stakeholder Incentive Programs



Implementation

- Includes Projects and GSA Administration (scheduled over the next 5 years)
- Estimated annual costs range from \$800,000 to \$1.8M
- Funding sources expected to include:
 - State/Federal Grants
 - Stakeholders
 - Montecito Water District



GSP Completion: What's Next?

- ✓ 1st Townhall - Stakeholder Engagement
 - Draft GSP Chapters overview and public posting
- Administrative Draft Release – March (Date TBD)
 - Begins 45-day Public Comment Period
- 2nd Townhall Meeting – April (Date TBD)
- GSP Adoption and Submission to State - May
 - Begins 90-day Public Comment Period
- State approval of GSP – within 2 years





Thank You!

**We all benefit
from
groundwater.**

For more information:
www.montecitogsa.com

email: staff@montecitogsa.com
call: 805-324-4207

- Stay Engaged
- Participate in upcoming Meetings
- Signup for GSA Email Updates
- www.montecitoGSA.com
 - Current draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan Chapters

[How to Comment on GSP draft ?](#)
[Comment Tracking Form Online](#)

Questions