

SECURING SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER

in the SLO Basin



COUNTY
OF SAN LUIS
OBISPO

A QUARTERLY UPDATE OF THE SLO BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN DEVELOPMENT
VOLUME 3 | FEBRUARY 2020

Next Step: Set Sustainability Goals

Stakeholders Can Participate at April Workshop

ABOUT THE PROJECT: Two water sources—surface water and groundwater—serve all of the needs within the San Luis Obispo Valley Basin (SLO Basin). SGMA, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, signals the first time in California’s history that groundwater will be formally managed. As required by SGMA, the SLO Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) are developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) now through January 2022. The GSP will guide groundwater users on how to reach sustainable groundwater levels in the future.

PROGRESS TO DATE: The first two steps in the GSP development process are nearing completion, as illustrated below. Within these two steps no groundwater management decisions have been made. **Step 1** documents the basic administrative information and background of the GSP. **Step 2**, now underway, is to build a thorough picture of the Basin (what we call Basin Setting), including documenting the Basin’s geology, groundwater levels and quality, water accounting, and future land use plans, among other data. This data helps predict future groundwater demand and it informs how sustainable levels can be

achieved in the future.

WHAT’S NEXT: At the April 8th workshop (details on p.3), stakeholders can participate in **Step 3** in the GSP development process—setting sustainability goals for the Basin. Participants will first be given an overview of the Basin Setting. The team will then introduce what goes into creating groundwater sustainability goals, per SGMA requirements, such as maintaining groundwater levels at a specific depth. Participants will then work in small groups with groundwater experts to help land the preliminary sustainability goals for the Basin.

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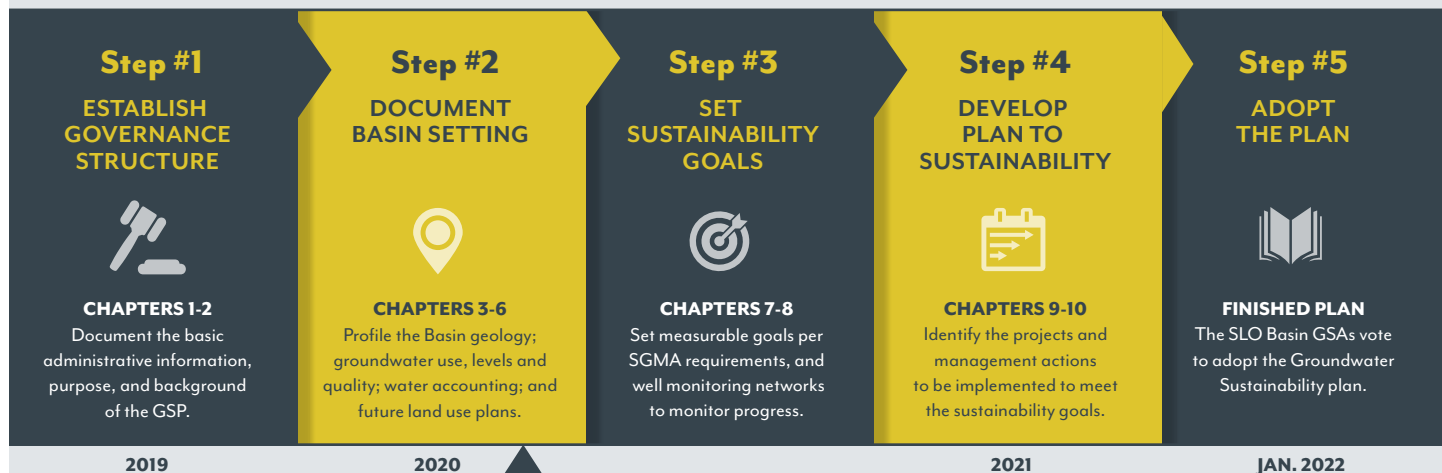
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5 Steps to Sustainable Groundwater in the SLO Basin



WE ARE HERE

December 11, 2019

GSC Meeting Summary

GSC Previews Data and Tools that Will Support Future SLO Basin Management

At its quarterly meeting on December 11, GSA staff provided an update on the GSP development status to the GSC and nearly two dozen stakeholders, including an overview of key data and analysis that will inform how groundwater will be managed in the Basin moving forward.

Official review and comment was accepted for the draft of *Chapter 3: Description of the Plan Area* and *Chapter 4: Basin Setting*. Public comment on these chapters ended January 31. Chapter 3 provides a description of the SLO Basin plan area including its jurisdictional boundaries, the location and density of wells, future land use plans, and existing groundwater monitoring and management programs. Chapter 4 describes the Basin topography and boundaries, the primary users of groundwater in the Basin, regional geology, principal aquifers, surface water bodies, and an analysis of the Basin’s subsidence potential.

Next, the project team provided attendees a preview of key data that will be published in *Chapter 5: Groundwater Conditions*, scheduled

for release at the March 11, 2020 GSC meeting, and *Chapter 6: Water Budget*, which will be released at the June 10, 2020 GSC meeting.

Using a series of topographical maps, the project team demonstrated the historical changes in groundwater levels throughout the SLO Basin, namely in areas of concern such as Edna Valley from Spring 1997 to Spring 2011, a time period demarked by widespread vineyard planting just before the most recent drought. Within that period, groundwater declined more than 40 feet near the Tiffany Ranch Road area on the southern tip of the Edna Valley Basin near Arroyo Grande.

The team also previewed results of their geophysical survey and the water budget, now in development. The geophysical survey defined the depth and thickness of various subsurface layers to characterize their water supply capacity, especially near the divide of the San Luis and Edna Valley areas. Further, the project team reported that progress is still being made on the development of the Integrated Groundwater/Surface Water Model.

The team also announced its next public workshop on April 8, where participants can work with the project team to define the sustainability goals for the Basin. This is first interactive workshop in the planning process.

Listen to an audio recording of the meeting or view the agenda packet at: SLOWaterBasin.com/resources.

Know Your Representative in the SLO Basin GSP Process

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION (GSC) MEMBERS

<p>IF YOU'RE A MEMBER OF ...</p> <p>EDNA VALLEY GROWERS MUNICIPAL WATER COMPANY</p>	<p>IF YOU'RE A MEMBER OF ...</p> <p>EDNA RANCH & VARIAN RANCH MUNICIPAL WATER COMPANIES</p>	<p>IF YOU GET YOUR WATER BILL FROM ...</p>  <p>Golden State Water Company A Subsidiary of American States Water Company</p>	<p>IF THE LEFT DON'T APPLY AND YOU LIVE OUTSIDE THE CITY OF SLO ...</p> 	<p>IF YOU LIVE IN THE CITY OF SLO ...</p> 
<p>YOUR SLO GSP REPRESENTATIVE IS: BOB SCHIEBELHUT</p>	<p>YOUR SLO GSP REPRESENTATIVE IS: DENNIS FERNANDEZ</p>	<p>YOUR SLO GSP REPRESENTATIVE IS: MARK ZIMMER</p>	<p>YOUR SLO GSP REPRESENTATIVE IS: ADAM HILL</p>	<p>YOUR SLO GSP REPRESENTATIVE IS: ANDY PEASE</p>

Do You Have Groundwater or Well Data? Let's Talk!

We need your help filling current gaps in well data for the SLO Basin. If you are a land or well owner with data you're willing to share (and/or you believe data is being collected on your well by your well service contractor), please contact Michael Cruikshank at WSC at mcruikshank@wsc-inc.com or 949-528-0960 ext. 601.

Opportunities to Participate

To meet the required completion deadline of January 31, 2022, the GSP will be developed in phases through the end of 2021. During this period, there will be ample opportunity for the public to participate in the plan development process, including participation in quarterly public GSC meetings, interactive workshops, and review and comment periods for each GSP chapter/section.



VIEW SUBMITTED COMMENTS

- **Communications & Engagement Plan**
- **Chapters 1-2: Administrative Information**
- **Chapter 3-4: Description of Plan Area and Basin Setting**

The commenting period for the documents above is now closed. To view all public comments submitted for these documents go to SLOWaterBasin.com/review-documents and scroll down to “Documents Closed for Public Comment.”

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS



March GSC Meeting

MAR. 11, 2020 • 3:30pm-5:30pm — The public is invited to join the next quarterly GSC meeting. An agenda for this meeting will be posted at SLOWaterBasin.com as soon as it becomes available.

WHERE: Ludwick Community Center, 864 Santa Rosa Street, San Luis Obispo, CA.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Stakeholders interested in or affected by the management of groundwater in the SLO Basin. Registration is strongly encouraged but not required at SLOWaterBasin.com, scroll down to “Meetings.”



Sustainable Goal Setting Workshop

APR. 8, 2020 • 6:00pm-8:00pm — The public is invited to join the next workshop to participate in the third step in the GSP development process—setting sustainability goals for the Basin. The project team will provide an educational grounding of the Basin setting that both predicts future groundwater demand and describes the unique makeup and challenges associated with groundwater management in the SLO Basin. The team will then introduce what goes into creating groundwater sustainability goals, per the requirements of SGMA. Participants will then work in small groups with groundwater experts to help define the preliminary sustainability goals for the SLO Basin.

WHERE: Ludwick Community Center, 864 Santa Rosa Street, San Luis Obispo, CA.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Stakeholders interested in or affected by the management of groundwater in the SLO Basin. Registration is strongly encouraged but not required at SLOWaterBasin.com, scroll down to “Workshops.”

FUTURE GSP CHAPTER/SECTION REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES



Chapter 5: Groundwater Conditions

Chapter 5 of the GSP documents the current and historical groundwater conditions of the SLO Basin. The items to be covered in Chapter 5 include groundwater elevation contours, estimates of groundwater in storage, groundwater quality distribution, subsidence and identification of interconnected groundwater-surface features, and groundwater dependent ecosystems.

GSC MEETINGS: 03/11/2020

WORKSHOP: 04/08/2020

REVIEW AND COMMENT: Released upon GSC approval at the 03/11/2020 GSC Meeting; comment period is anticipated to close 30 days or more following the GSC meeting.

Chapter 6: Water Budget

Chapter 6 of the GSP describes the historical and current groundwater budget for the SLO Basin including water coming in (inflows), water pumping and discharging (outflows), and changes in storage. It will also quantify the current overdraft in the Basin and estimate the Basin’s sustainable yield.

GSC MEETINGS: 06/10/2020

WORKSHOP: 04/08/2020

REVIEW AND COMMENT: Released upon GSC approval at the 06/10/2020 GSC Meeting; comment period is anticipated to close 30 days or more following the GSC meeting.

Chapters 7-8: Sustainable Management Criteria and Monitoring Network

Chapters 7 and 8 identify the undesirable results for each of the five sustainability indicators required by SGMA and relevant to the SLO Basin, including: further groundwater level decline; reduction in groundwater storage; depletion of interconnected surface water bodies; water quality degradation; and land subsidence.

GSC MEETINGS: 06/10/2020; 09/09/2020; 12/09/2020

WORKSHOP: 08/2020

REVIEW AND COMMENT: Released upon GSC approval at the 12/09/2020 GSC Meeting; comment period is anticipated to close 30 days or more following the GSC meeting.

Chapters 9-10: Projects, Management Actions and Implementation Plan

Chapters 9 and 10 will identify projects, management actions, and the implementation plan that will bring groundwater use into balance and meet the sustainable management criteria identified in Chapters 7 and 8.

GSC MEETINGS: 12/09/2020; 03/10/2021

WORKSHOP: 02/2021

REVIEW AND COMMENT: Released upon GSC approval at the 03/10/2021 GSC Meeting; comment period is anticipated to close 30 days or more following the GSC meeting.

Key Terms

Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) — One or more local agencies may establish a GSA. It is the GSA's responsibility to develop and implement a groundwater sustainability plan that considers all beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the basin. Two GSAs (i.e., the City and County of San Luis Obispo) have been formed for the SLO Basin to cover the whole basin area.

Groundwater Sustainability Commission (GSC) — The Groundwater Sustainability Commission is an advisory body that is established by the City and County GSAs to advise the GSAs in connection with preparation of the GSP for the SLO Basin. The GSC is currently comprised of the following individuals and related agencies: Bob Schiebelhut, Chairperson, Edna Valley Growers Mutual Water Company; Mark Zimmer, Vice Chairperson, Golden State Water Company; Dennis Fernandez, Member, Edna Ranch Mutual Water Company/Varian Ranch Mutual Water Company; Andy Pease, Member, City of San Luis Obispo; Adam Hill, Member, County of San Luis Obispo.

Groundwater Sustainability Portal (Portal) — Located at SLOWaterBasin.com, the Portal is the central online communication hub for public participation and information sharing on the GSP project. Any interested party can subscribe to receive project updates and/or to review and submit public comment on GSP chapters/sections through the Portal.

GSC Meetings — Quarterly public meetings held by the Groundwater Sustainability Commission. The general public is encouraged to attend to learn about project progress, ask questions, and/or provide and share input. For a full calendar of meetings visit the Portal at SLOWaterBasin.com and click on "calendar."

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) — A management plan developed by the GSAs to provide a framework for managing the groundwater basin sustainably to meet the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

San Luis Obispo Valley Groundwater Basin (SLO Basin) — A groundwater basin area within the San Luis Valley and Edna Valley that has been designated as a high priority basin by the State Department of Water Resources (DWR).

Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (C&E Plan) — Groundwater is best managed at the local level. GSAs are required to develop and implement a C&E Plan to ensure the timely, forthright, and consistent communication among all beneficial users of groundwater and stakeholders affected by the GSP.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) — SGMA is a package of three bills (AB 1739, SB 1168, and SB 1319) that provide local agencies with a framework for managing groundwater basins in a sustainable manner. Recognizing that groundwater is most effectively managed at the local level, the SGMA requires local agencies to achieve sustainability within 20 years.

Stakeholder Workshops — Four public workshops are anticipated to be held at specific milestones in the GSP development process to allow for inclusive and meaningful opportunities for affected stakeholders to participate and contribute in the plan design. Find details on scheduled workshops at SLOWaterBasin.com, click on "calendar."

Stakeholder Engagement Snapshot

A Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) considers all beneficial uses and users of groundwater—making meaningful stakeholder engagement an important part of the planning process. Highlights of the project team's stakeholder engagement efforts are as follows:

393

SUBSCRIBERS
TO EMAIL LIST

+30%

SUBSCRIBERS
SINCE JUN '19

9/10

STAKEHOLDER
SEGMENTS REPRESENTED
ON EMAIL LIST

30

AVERAGE
GSC MEETING
ATTENDANCE BY
STAKEHOLDERS

+50

AVERAGE
WORKSHOP
ATTENDANCE
BY STAKEHOLDERS

Questions and Accommodation Requests

If you have any questions, if you wish to receive materials about the GSP development by mail, or if you'd like to request accommodations to attend an upcoming event or workshop including translation services, contact Dick Tzou at dtzou@co.slo.ca.us or 805-781-4473.

You can also contact us by mail:

County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works
County Government Center, Room 206
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Si necesita solicitar alojamiento para asistir a un próximo evento, incluidos los servicios de traducción, comuníquese con Dick Tzou a dtzou@co.slo.ca.us o al 805-781-4473.