

Tracy Subbasin GSP Coordination Committee Meeting

Thursday February 16, 2023

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Teleconference Meeting Only

Teleconference Link: <https://stantec.zoom.us/j/95890838080>

Phone Number: +1-669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 958 9083 8080

AGENDA

I. Opening of Meeting/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM. Roll call found the following Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SMGA) Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) representatives for the Tracy Subbasin (Tsb) present via teleconference for the Quarterly Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Coordination Committee (Committee) meeting:

- Ryan Alameda, Stewart Tract GSA
- Lea Emmons, City of Tracy GSA
- Greg Gibson, City of Lathrop GSA
- Greg Young, Byron Bethany Irrigation District (BBID)
- David Weisenberger, Banta-Carbona Irrigation District (BCID)
- Matt Zidar, San Joaquin County

Other attendees:

- Emily Finnegan, Stantec
- Khandriale Clark, Stantec
- Richard Shatz, GEI
- Bill Brewster, California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- Tim Gobler, Trinitas Farming
- Charlie Canarro, Kier and Wright

III. Scheduled Items

- A. Approval of the January 19 GSP Coordination Committee Meeting Minutes –
Action Item

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Matt Zidar

SECONDER: Lea Emmons

AYES: All

NOES: None

ABSENT: David Weisenberger

ABSTAIN: None

- B. GSA Status Updates - *Round Robin Discussion*

1. San Joaquin County – Mr. Zidar, along with several other GSAs, met with DWR and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWB) to discuss next steps for GSP incomplete determinations and answer questions. It was noted that DWR comments on GSP resubmittals were expected to be shared with GSAs by the end of March of this year. DWR and SWB staff set the expectation that some GSPs will still be found incomplete. DWR's determination of an incomplete initiates SWB involvement as the basin will be put in probationary status. Probationary status allows the SWB to declare deficiencies in the plan, quantify and report on groundwater extractions, register wells, and collect fees. Mr. Zidar noted that the SWB can do anything related to a physical solution with the fees that are collected, and the SWB is not subject to Proposition 218 requirements. The entire process from reporting on groundwater extractions to collecting fees is anticipated to take about a year. Mr. Zidar noted that the SWB can exclude certain users or a portion of a basin that is in compliance with the GSP sustainability goals, though it is unclear how exclusions would be defined. The determination of exclusions will be on a case-by-case basis. The process for putting basins on probation is also still developing.
2. City of Tracy – Nothing to report.

3. City of Lathrop – The Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) well applied for under DWR’s Urban Community Drought Grant funding was not approved in the first round of grant funding. However, DWR Round 2 grant funding is anticipated to open in spring so the City is hoping that the ASR project could still be awarded funds. The feasibility study for the ASR well by Carollo Engineers is being finalized and may be of interest to Mr. Shatz for the Annual Report. Mr. Gibson also noted that there was an issue with measurements for one of Lathrop’s monitoring wells but noted that the incorrect measurement is being addressed. Mr. Gibson mentioned that the language in the new Governor’s Executive Order concerning well permitting was augmented and may change how the GSAs approach the topic. Mr. Shatz and Mr. Zidar confirmed that the new language only provides better definitions for “de minimus” and well types. It does not change any of the GSAs’ roles or responsibilities related to well permitting. Mr. Gibson reminded the group that the City was included in a SWB list focused on drought reporting requirements for community water systems; on this list, the City is classified as an at-risk system. Entities on the list that are considered to have a high enough risk level may be required to conduct monthly and even weekly reporting. However, monthly or at least quarterly reporting is the requirement for most entities. He specified that the City was being included on that list due to water quality and affordability and is hoping that the new ASR well will help with that issue.
4. BBID – Mr. Young mentioned that BBID is working on capital improvement plans to build out conservation and water delivery projects and partnering with municipal customers on water security. Many of these projects are intended to help BBID manage its resources and customer needs, but they also support GSP implementation.
5. BCID – Mr. Weisenberger stated that BCID had a board meeting the previous day and noted that board is interested in pursuing flow gauges on local creeks to document recharge like the rain events in January 2023. He noted that if anyone else is interested in this topic they can discuss this offline. BCID’s Board is also currently looking at options regarding groundwater recharge using gravel pits. Mr. Emmons from

the City of Tracy noted that the gravel pits near Corral Hollow Creek are likely not a good option but that they could consider gravel pits farther south. Mr. Emmons noted that he would be interested in having a conversation offline about this.

6. Stewart Tract – Nothing to report.

C. GSP Implementation Updates

1. Annual Report Updates

- i. Mr. Shatz reported that BBID recently provided GEI with water supply data for surface water deliveries. GEI is processing this data to be included in the Annual Report. Mr. Shatz got in contact with Alameda County about two representative monitoring wells that were previously measured by the County. The County confirmed that those wells are no longer being measured, so Mr. Shatz is trying to find another entity to take them over. BBID, while understaffed at the moment, could try to take on monitoring those wells. Mr. Shatz will follow up with BBID's General Manager to discuss this further. Mr. Shatz also noted that it was important to maintain the same monitoring wells from year to year in order to compare groundwater contours annually and evaluate any changes in groundwater storage. Mr. Shatz noted that spring monitoring well reporting is coming up soon and he would like to see a higher success rate of capturing groundwater measurements. Mr. Zidar noted that if the Tracy Subbasin changes the representative monitoring well sites, this would initiate an amendment to the GSP, and therefore, the GSAs would need to readopt the revised GSP. Mr. Shatz noted that the GSAs should avoid changing the representative monitoring well sites if possible, to avoid readopting the GSP. Mr. Shatz also noted that the updated Department of Finance population data is anticipated to be released in May.

2. AEM Survey Data

- i. DWR released AEM data two weeks ago. The file is very large and GEI is sifting through just the portions focused on the Tracy Subbasin and is paying attention to anywhere USGS called out

the Corcoran Clay layer. With this new data, the group should be able to demonstrate that the Tracy Subbasin does not have surface water depletion occurring as a result of pumping below the Corcoran Clay layer. GEI should be able to make the data digestible for the Committee in time for the March meeting.

3. DWR Technical Support Services Update

- i. Mr. Shatz met with DWR to talk through the proposed monitoring well locations, and DWR noted that Tracy's TSS application was very detailed and that the well sites looked good. As a result, Tracy Subbasin's TSS application may get moved up line for funding. It could be as early as this summer that the new monitoring wells go in. DWR will be contacting applicable GSAs in the near future to set up agreements for the use of these lands and to drill the monitoring wells.

4. Update on DWR Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Round 2 Grant Review Period

- i. Over half of the eligible subbasins applied for funding, and a total of 82 grant applications were received by DWR. The total funding requested was about \$760 million and there is only \$250 million currently available for awards. Preliminary awards are anticipated to be announced in June.
- ii. Separate from this specific topic, Ms. Finnegan noted that DWR is looking to finalize and distribute an Annual Report template for GSAs to use for consistency and accuracy. She also mentioned that a joint public workshop between the Eastern San Joaquin and Tracy Subbasins was being explored as an option. More details will be provided to the group as available.

D. Inter-basin Coordination – *Discussion Item*

1. Adjacent Basin Updates

- i. Please see Mr. Zidar's comments on behalf of San Joaquin County under GSA Status Updates for more information.
- ii. Additionally, Mr. Zidar brought up the need and benefits of having one shared data management system for the Eastern San Joaquin and Tracy Subbasins. The group considered questions

such as who is going to manage the system, how will the technology be integrated into everyone's current capabilities, and how to evaluate system functionalities. Ms. Finnegan reminded the group that Stantec is scoped to support Interbasin Coordination meetings through the DWR Facilitation Support Services program should the group wish to set up a meeting to discuss this topic further with the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin.

- iii. Mr. Emmons and Mr. Young had nothing to report regarding Delta Mendota and East Contra Costa, respectively.

2. DWR Engagement on Model

- i. Mike Cornelius from DWR met with Mr. Shatz, Mr. Young, and Mr. Brewster to discuss the issues that the Tracy Subbasin identified with the CIIVSIM model. DWR noted that the surface water deliveries are likely a component of the model that is incorrect and DWR staff were encouraging about feedback the Tracy Subbasin group had to share. It was decided that everyone would continue to work together to figure out how to improve upon the model. DWR is anticipated to release the next update of the CIIVSIM model in spring 2024. As part of the collaborative approach moving forward, Mr. Shatz will share the spreadsheet of data used to develop the Annual Reports with DWR.

- E. DWR Status Report – *Discussion Item*

1. In his report, Mr. Brewster stated that news of Round 2 grants should be coming around May, and that he was unsure of when the Urban Drought Relief grant awards would be announced. He also noted that he would follow up with the DWR team developing the Annual Report template and see if there was any news he could share with the Tracy group. He confirmed, based on his observations, that GSP determinations are anticipated to come out on a quarterly basis.
2. In regard to concerns around changes to monitoring networks requiring an amendment to a GSP, Mr. Brewster encouraged the group to write a letter to the DWR Sustainable Groundwater Management Office about the process being problematic and starting a dialogue that might result in change. He additionally reminded the group of the importance of

monitoring wells and reporting out on a regular basis as it is a SGMA regulatory requirement, and it greatly supports DWR's understanding of each basin and its needs. DWR collects data and posts it regularly, so having regular up-to-date data only positively benefits everyone.

3. Mr. Brewster reminded the group about National Groundwater Awareness Week occurring March 5-11. He also stated that, in regard to the updated California Well Standards, he knew they were being routed internally but had no other updates at this time.

III. **Public Comments**

None.

IV. **Agency Comments**

Mr. Gibson noted that there was an article about Delta Tunnel projects and associated basin plan amendments that would require restoring 40% unimpaired flows to San Joaquin River and could potentially affect the GSP. He suggested the group track it as it could have major implications for the amount of groundwater Tracy Subbasin would use if it lost access to surface water. He also noted that he discovered a state website that tracks watershed data that this website and the DWR database seemed to be very out of date. DWR's website showed a significant number of wells that were no longer in use and he noted that it was in the group's best interests to have updated publicly available information. Mr. Shatz commented that there were likely more than 100 wells that were previously monitored in the Tracy Subbasin but that that the number is down to approximately 10-20 monitoring wells. Mr. Gibson will forward the link to the website to the group for everyone's reference. Mr. Brewster noted that he would be available to meet with GSAs if there are questions regarding DWR's datasets or if Mr. Gibson wanted to meet to discuss how to access some of DWR's datasets.

V. **Next GSP Coordination Committee Meeting Anticipated for March 23, 2023**

None.

VI. **Adjournment**

Ms. Finnegan adjourned the meeting at 2:41 PM.