

**Siskiyou County Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Scott Valley Advisory Committee Meeting
MEETING SUMMARY**

Meeting date/time: September 16, 2020 | 3:00 – 6:00 pm p.m.

Location: Zoom Online Platform

Key contacts:

- Matt Parker, County Natural Resources Specialist | mparker@co.siskiyou.ca.us | 530.842.8019
- Rich Wilson, Seatone Consulting Senior Facilitator | r.wilson@csus.edu | 415.515.2317
- Laura Foglia PhD, U.C. Davis Technical Team Lead | lfoglia@ucdavis.edu | 530.219.5692

MEETING RECAP

- **Approval of Past Meeting Summary.** The committee approved its May meeting summary for posting on the Siskiyou County SGMA website.
- **Public Comment.** A few of public comments, as well as comments from North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board staff, interspersed the discussion, most during the course of the presentations.
- **District Staff and Other Updates.** Matt Parker provided updates on new stakeholder outreach efforts, finalization of recent grant agreements, and upcoming SGMA public meetings.
- **Review of Draft GSP Chapter 2.** The technical team introduced and secured feedback on draft chapter 2 of the GSP. Matt Parker reminded committee members of the process for submitting comments and asked for any additional feedback within one week of the meeting.
- **Preliminary Groundwater Modeling Results.** Claire Kouba and Thomas Harter shared initial modeling results and described work the surface water ad hoc committee has been doing to help inform the location and condition of groundwater dependent ecosystems near Scott River and its tributaries. The technical team fielded a range of comments and questions from both committee members and other meeting attendees, with several parties suggesting what kind of scenarios could be considered for future model runs.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Status/Deadline</i>
Crystal Robinson connect with Claire Kouba to share available e. coli data	Crystal Robinson	ASAP
Reach out to irrigators not in attendance (e.g. Brandon, Paul, Jason) to assess interest in joining an irrigator ad hoc committee	Matt Parker	ASAP
Continue thinking about what kind of scenarios would be useful to run to better understand the system and gain insight on what kind of actions may be beneficial for management considerations.	Committee members	ASAP

Next Meeting: October 27, 2020 | 3:00 – 6:00 pm. Due to current circumstances surrounding COVID -19 the meeting will again be held online with Zoom technology.

View [Siskiyou County's groundwater website](#) for posted meeting materials.

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Agenda Review and Approval of Past Meeting Summary

The facilitator welcomed all participants and thanked attendees for their patience with ongoing use of Zoom as alternative meeting platform during the pandemic. He secured consent from committee members to post the May meeting summary on the county's SGMA webpage. No committee members put forward questions or expressed concerns about the agenda were expressed at the outset of the meeting.

Public Comment Period

At the outset, members of the public may comment on items not on the consent agenda. The public is asked to wait until the appropriate item to comment on issues directly related the current meeting agenda. A few comments were put forward by various parties:

- Craig Tucker, consultant with the Karuk Tribe, briefly described the groundwater model which the tribe built, with support from technical consultants SS Papadopoulos and Associates, a few years back. He asked that the results of this model be compared to the SGMA technical team during the GSP development process.
- Bryan McFadin, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCWB), noted the availability of funds for groundwater sampling that will help inform water quality conditions in the valley. The NCWB has funds available to process samples and help the county better understand current groundwater conditions as it relates to water quality. He suggested that the county and associated stakeholder interests may want to do sampling both before and after the irrigation season. He fielded a few questions from committee members that helped clarify the proposed work and what can be gained from the effort.

District Staff and Other Updates

Matt Parker provided a range of updates. Rich followed with an update about facilitation services.

- As local SGMA coordinator, Matt has drafted an outreach memo that will soon be circulated to invite participation in the SGMA process from the broader public. Once approved by the GSA board, the memo will be released in mid-September.
- Contracts have been finalized for both the Proposition 68 grant and the Bureau of Reclamation grant. Installation of equipment provided by the BOR grant will begin soon.
- The project team – including Matt Parker as well as the technical team and facilitation contractors – met with the GSA board in June, 2020. The board received an update on both the technical and social elements of SGMA implementation. The board, although it did not formally vote, gave approval for the Scott Valley Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (Scott Valley C&E Plan), which is now posted on the Siskiyou County SGMA website.
- A SGMA public meeting will be held for Scott Valley on Tuesday, October 13th (agenda and specific time is forthcoming). Committee members are encouraged to attend the public meeting.

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- Facilitator Rich Wilson noted that he will soon be leaving the project. He plans to coordinate with Matt Parker and Stantec to transition in Katie Duncan as the new facilitator that serves the GSA and, by extension, all the stakeholders.

Review and Discussion of Draft GSP Chapter 2 – Plan Area and Basin Setting

Matt Parker revisited and provided a summary of the GSP development process. He did this in the context of the recent distribution of draft chapter 2 – Plan Area and Basin Setting. The draft was shared two weeks prior to this meeting, and committee members were tasked to review the material and come prepared to discuss. Matt noted that, with conditional approval from the committee, the draft would next go to the GSA board, as well as county counsel, for review. Finally, barring any issues or concerns from the board, the draft would be put out for public review. This process would generally be the same for each draft chapter of the GSP that gets produced and put forward by the technical team.

Matt fielded a few questions and comments after describing the GSP development process.

- Comment: Some members of the public feel they have comments that could provide value at this point. It doesn't feel useful if this feedback is put off until down the road.
 - Response: Members of the public have a few options:
 - Make verbal contributions at the meeting today, and that will be shared with the technical team and they can incorporate it.
 - Share comments with committee members. It is incumbent on those committee members to then ensure those comments get brought into the discussion and chapter review process.
 - Wait to submit comments until the public comment period is open.
- Question: Can committee members share draft material with the public and solicit input?
 - Response: Yes. The committee charter speaks to the role committee members can play in coordinating with the public.

Dr. Laura Foglia, SGMA technical team lead, briefly introduced draft GSP chapter 2 and invited her colleagues Kelsey McNeil and Claire Kouba to provide a more comprehensive overview of the document. Kelsey and Claire jointly described the various sections of the document, noted that certain items would go in appendices (e.g. stakeholder communication and engagement plan), and opened discussion for input from the committee on the draft material.

- Comment: Overall it looked good. Had one thing to emphasize: drawing of interconnected zone. Perhaps provide more background information on how this was determined as that's very important.
- Comment: On the graphs with groundwater elevation, consider Quartz valley. It's a big black hole right now and it's not appropriate to leave tribal data out. We can connect offline with the technical team to share data, including monitoring data on *E. coli*. Maybe we should highlight the need for a study. Bacteria is an example of a constituent of concern. EPA funds a community water system to minimize impacts associated with *E. coli*.

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- Response: We can include more information. It is helpful if you assist us in incorporating water quality data from your effort. We want to make sure and include this.
- Comment: The document seems readable and has improved. Still, there remain a number of factually errors which, with guidance in how to continue providing comments, I can help fix.
 - Response: The reviewer form remains the best way to provide to comments. Be sure to note the line number of the error you are commenting on.
- Comment: Thought the document was easy to read, just long.
- Comment: Overall, impressed with readability and accuracy. Still reviewing for critical information. One thing that pops out—maps to track monitoring systems (visual depiction of current monitoring systems); provide a big picture overview of monitoring structure.
 - Response: We have maps that show snow monitoring and stream gauges. We can perhaps improve this if you have specific recommendations on data you would like to see.
- Comment: Looks good, some key elements still under development. It would be helpful to provide more detail on the upper watershed, the upslope forested areas. Perhaps provide some history as well current condition, and how this relates to available groundwater supplies.
- Comment: Considering providing a breakdown of the different types of irrigation equipment that is being used across the valley.
 - Response: We can add this information as it's available from the land use survey we did in chapter 2.

The facilitator sought and received conditional approval from the committee to forward this draft chapter on to the GSA board for review. Matt and facilitator Rich Wilson concluded the conversation by offering committee members one additional week to provide comments on draft chapter 2. The formal public review period will open up after the board and reviewed and given its own conditional approval of the document.

Presentation and Discussion of Preliminary Scott Valley Model Results

Claire followed the chapter 2 discussion by leading a presentation on preliminary model results. She and Laura clearly noted to the group that none of the potential management actions linked to any of the preliminary model runs are yet being recommended by the technical team nor approved by the stakeholders as official GSP actions. Rather, the initial scenarios provide bookends with numbers that help everyone consider how the system could be managed to achieve desired goals or results. Claire presented the bookends on various topics (e.g. managed aquifer recharge, flow limits, irrigation demand), and both she and Laura emphasized how this work would help the group define sustainable management criteria for the valley. A range of comments and questions interspersed the conversation.

- Comment: It's critical to get water in the river late in the fall.
- Comment/question: If considering fish, it will be important to think about targeted life

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history. I'm concerned about no flow during periods when there are salmon runs. Are we trying to avoid the worst impacts of bad years or optimize good years?

- Response: This is worth thinking about. It's difficult to improve conditions in dry years but we may want to think about how to optimize good years. It's also difficult to quantify benefits for fish in this particular model. If the model shows that management doesn't help during dry years, may want to shift focus.
- Question: Has the accuracy of the model relative to groundwater elevation improved in the last two or three years or stayed the same?
 - Response: Calibration has improved accuracy and confidence over prior simulations. Results give us some confidence. The model does very well in predicting stretched of streams that are dry or wet.
- Comment: I'm curious as to what kind of scenarios could show us how to positively impact the system in a dry year like 2014.
 - Response: The technical team needs to think about this.
- Question: On surface flows, are you just looking at tributaries or also the main stem of the river system?
 - Response: We are looking at all tributaries, especially where inflow is known.
 - Additional question: Can we consider a scenario that looks at irrigation reduction related to mainstream diversions.
 - Response: The scenarios we are looking at today include diversions off the main tributaries.
- Question: Surface flow limitations. Main stems, tributaries?
 - Response: just the tributaries, including the South Fork and the East Fork of the Scott.
 - Question: could you include the main stem as well?
 - Response: included already to a degree. All diversion accounted for, assume diversion come off before they are on the main stem. In terms of flow through the system, scenario includes diversions off the main stem.

Public comments:

- Comment: I want to offer some caution based on comments I've heard. We should manage for all life stages and every water year type, including dry years. We could have multiple dry years in a row so want to be sure we are doing everything we can. Would also like to remind everyone that this is a 20-year plan, who knows what crops will be in demand? Maybe there is room for "what if" type scenarios.
- Comment: The infrastructure is not there for some crops. So while we want to be creative with modeling, it may be difficult to just look at any crop.
 - Response from committee member: Don't throw out the possibility of considering other crops. Tribes would step up and provide support to help farmers get the infrastructure they need if it allowed them to grow crops that use less water.
- Question: With managed aquifer recharge, do stream flow benefits last over time?
 - Response: It takes time for the full benefits of managed aquifer recharge to be

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realized, but they can be seen in a year. Typically residual effects are not seen beyond year 2. don't see residual effects beyond year 2.

At this stage Claire Kouba briefly summarized the recent work of the Scott Valley surface water ad hoc committee in helping the team refine information they have on the location, extent and condition of groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) along the mainstem of the Scott River and its tributaries. A detailed analysis of groundwater dependent ecosystems will not be completed as yet, but currently available information will be included in the GSP. Moreover, a recommendation will be included to further explore and gather more information on GDEs in the first five years of GSP implementation.

Thomas Harter reminded the committee that the technical team, with input from the committee, will at upcoming meetings need to look at the relationship between groundwater pumping and stream flows, as well as how to meet both economic and environmental goals. The technical team will continue working on scenarios and loop their work back in with setting sustainable management criteria around the issues of surface water depletion and the interaction of groundwater and surface water—setting objectives with metrics, thresholds and triggers.

A range of questions and comments interspersed the presentation of information by Claire and Thomas:

- Comment: The maps prepared by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) did not really capture the amount of riparian vegetation in many areas.
- Comment: It's good the technical team is groundtruthing the existence and condition of GDEs in Scott Valley.
- Comment: We really need to consider scenarios that could help us in dry years.
- Comment: It may not even be feasible to look at what Ag can do in a dry year. If we're not careful in the requirements we place on Ag, the industry may not be around anymore by the time a wet year comes around.
- Comment: It would be helpful to consider scenarios that show changes in flows but also absolute flows.
- Comment: During dry years like this, the Water Board is curtailing some water rights in the adjudicated zone. We should investigate if this is having any kind of impact on the system. Perhaps we can consider scenarios to do this.
 - Response: This might require building a database of diversions. The current model doesn't simulate according to water rights. We could also consider in lieu recharge. In this case we would need to solicit information on crop types with less evapotranspiration from the irrigator ad hoc which will be formed today.
- Question: Do we have a scenario on the table that looks at groundwater storage?
 - Response from committee member: The high mountain lake reservoirs have always been talked about but it's very costly and the water quality is poor. It doesn't seem viable.
 - Additional comment: The quality of water from the reservoirs may not be an

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issue if the water is used for crops and not put back into the river.

- Comment: It will be useful to consider specific equipment that different crops use and thereby gain a better understanding of the potential for water use reduction.
- Comment: It seems we need a scenario that looks at reduced surface water irrigation, but I understand this may fall outside the SGMA framework.

Formation of Irrigation Ad Hoc Committee

At the conclusion of this presentation and follow-on discussion, Matt Parker introduced and secured support for an irrigator ad hoc committee to help focus on priority topics ahead and thus advance the GSP development work. This ad hoc could look at issues such as current and future irrigation practices, trends in water use, crop patterns, and what types of equipment are used for different crops among other things. This could all be useful information for the model. Tom Menne volunteered. With others not in attendance, Matt noted that we would reach out to Brandon, Paul and Jason to gauge their interest in this committee.

MEETING ATTENDEES

Advisory Committee Members

Jason Finley, Private Pumper
Tom Jopson, Private Pumper
Tom Menne, Scott Valley Irrigation District
Crystal Robinson, Quartz Valley Tribe
Michael Stapleton, Residential
Drew Braugh, CalTrout, Environmental/Conservation

Absent Committee Members

Bill Beckwith, Fort Jones, Municipal/City
Paul Sweezey, Member-at-Large
Brandon Fawaz, Private pumper

District Staff

Matt Parker, County of Siskiyou Natural Resources Specialist

Technical Team

Dr. Laura Foglia, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates
Dr. Thomas Harter, UC Davis
Claire Kouba, UC Davis
Cab Esposito, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates
Brad Gooch, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates
Kelsey McNeill, UC Davis/Larry Walker Associates

Agency Staff

Eli Scott, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Bryan McFadin, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Chris Watt, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Janae Scruggs, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Pat Vellines, Department of Water Resources
Don Flickinger, National Marine Fisheries Service

Facilitator

Rich Wilson, Seatone Consulting
Megan Murray, Stantec

Agency Staff

Janae Scruggs, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Bryan McFadden, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Eli Scott, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Members of the public

Betsy Stapleton
Leah Easley
Susan Fricke
Ayn Perry
Bonny Nichols
Jack Rice
Charna Gilmore
Amanda Cooper