SCV GSA

MEMBER AGENCIES

SCV WATER

CITY OF SANTA CLARITA

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT of REGIONAL PLANNING

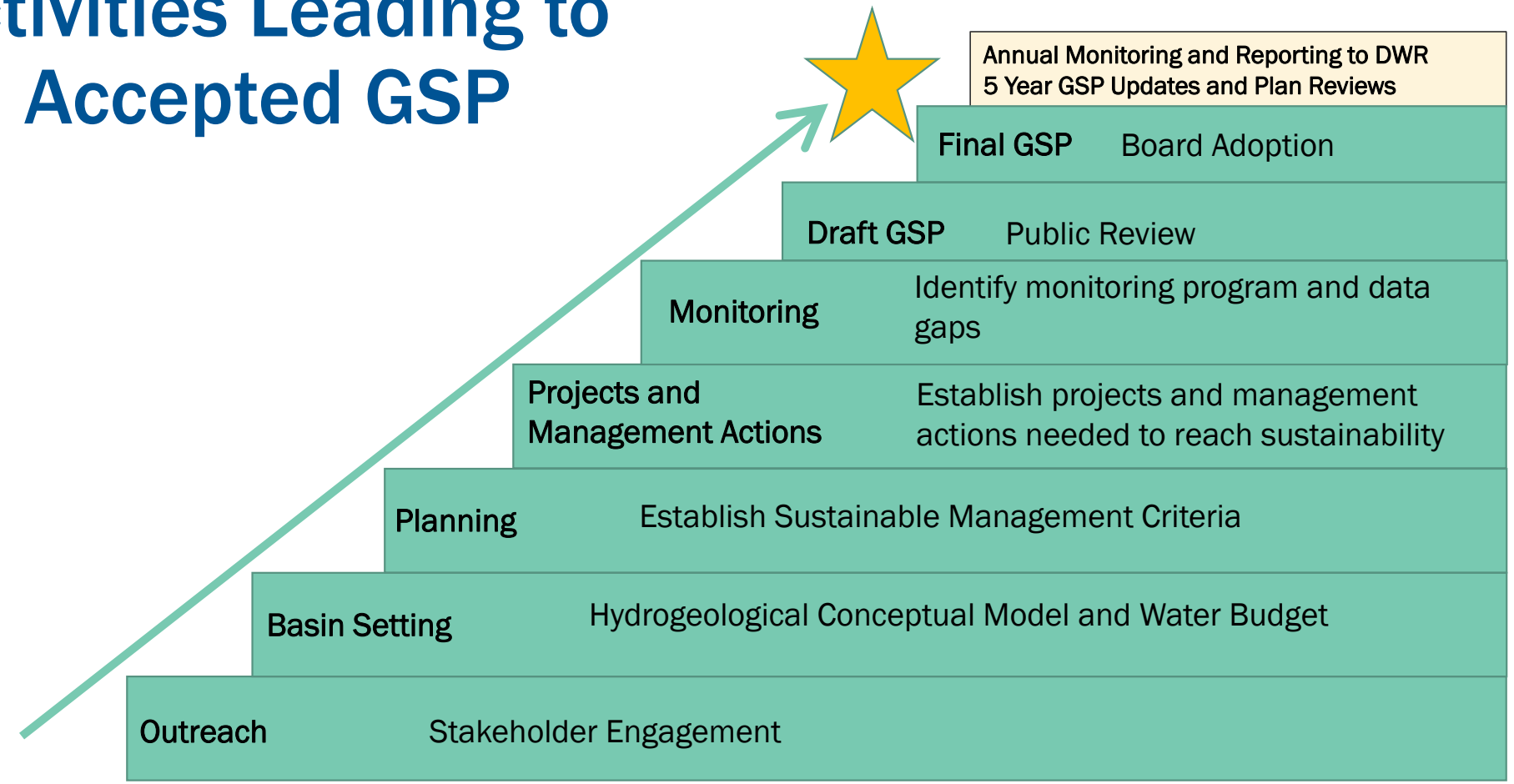
LACWD

Public Hearing for the Approval of the SCV-GSA Groundwater Sustainability Plan

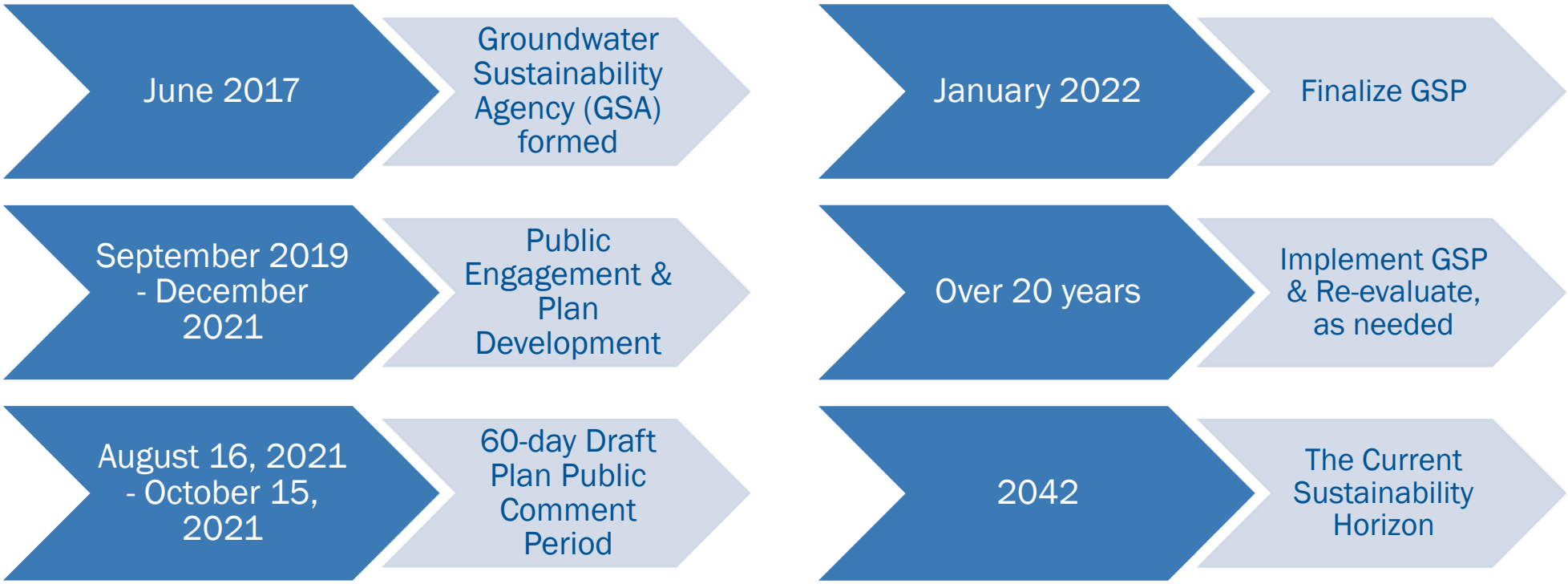
Rick Viergutz/SCV Water
Tara Bravo/CV Strategies
Jeff Barry/GSI Water Solutions

January 3, 2022

Activities Leading to an Accepted GSP



GSP Timeline



SGMA Requirements

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires that GSAs:

- Encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin, including federally recognized Indian Tribes (if tribes choose to participate)
- Consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater throughout the GSA and GSP development process
- Create and use an interested persons list
- Send public notices to key stakeholders in advance of adopting or amending a GSP
- Explain how interested parties can get involved
- Include a communications section in the GSP with specific details on engagement and implementation

Two+ Years of Public Outreach

Two+ Years of Public Outreach

- Press releases
- Digital and print ads (The Signal)
- Flyers
- E-blasts/emails
- Newsletters
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Videos
- Website content

Two+ Years of Public Outreach

- Interested parties/stakeholder email list
- Feedback forms
- Government-to-government communication
- Board meetings open to the public
- Online resource center for each Public Workshop
  - Meeting recordings
  - Topic videos
  - Handouts/technical memos
  - Feedback form

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

- Solicited applications from the public in September 2019

- 7 members with representation across interested groups:
  - Small, medium and large groundwater pumpers in the Santa Clara River Valley East Subbasin
  - Business community
  - Environmental interests
  - Community at large

- 17 meetings to provide input throughout the draft GSP development

Six Public Workshops

*Participants across all six meetings, not necessarily 292 individuals

Public Workshop Topics

- Hydrogeological Conceptual Model
- Local Ecosystems and the Groundwater/Surface Water Connection
- Water Budget Development
- Sustainable Management Criteria
- Project & Management Actions
- Draft GSP Review

Board Meeting - November 23, 2021

Informational session to review draft GSP and address public comments. Outreach in advance of the meeting included:

- Press release
- Information on SCV-GSA website
- Social media posts (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter)
- Emails to GSA contact list and greater Agency distribution list (about 20,000 names)
- Digital and print ads in The Signal
- Printed handout delivered to businesses and communities within identified Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)

Today's Public Hearing

Public notice in advance of hearing:

- Mailed to stakeholders
- Newspaper ad of notice of public hearing
- Press release
- Information on SCV-GSA website
- Social media posts (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter)
- Emails to GSA contact list and greater Agency distribution list (about 20,000 names)
- Digital and print ads in The Signal
- Printed handout delivered to businesses and communities within identified Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)

Outreach Metrics

- Public Workshop attendees: 292
- Feedback/comments: 69
- Press releases: At least one per workshop; published in min of 3 outlets each time
- Social media (organic and paid): ~100,000 impressions; ~900 engagements
- Email open rates: Workshop 1 – 25%; by Workshop 6 – 32%
- Website views: 2,149
- Digital ad impressions: 1,430,500 (click-through rate approx .08%)
- Print ad circulation numbers: 2 ads per workshop; approx. 11,000 circulation each

Next Steps

Ongoing communication and outreach during Groundwater Sustainability Plan implementation.

Technical Approach and Benefits of Plan Implementation

- Past studies
- Sustainability Goal
- New Studies
- GSP Implementation – monitoring and study
- Benefits of Plan Implementation

Sustainability Goal

"The SCV-GSA's sustainability goal is to manage the groundwater resources of the Basin for current and future beneficial uses of groundwater, including the river environment, through an adaptive management approach that builds on robust science and monitoring and considers economic, social, and other objectives of a wide variety of stakeholders."

Key Terms and Concepts

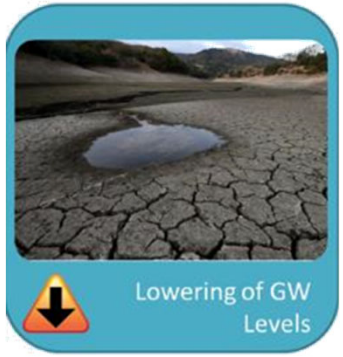
- Local GSP maintains sustainability and has specific processes to address undesirable results.
- State Approach for Measuring Sustainability
  - Six Sustainability Indicators
    1. Lowering Groundwater Levels
    2. Reduction in Groundwater Storage
    3. Seawater Intrusion*
    4. Degraded Water Quality
    5. Land Subsidence
    6. Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water

- Monitor Indicators
- Avoid Undesirable Results (aka "Significant and Unreasonable Effects") caused by Groundwater Conditions or Groundwater Pumping
- 20 years to get there (if not there yet)

Historical Water Budget

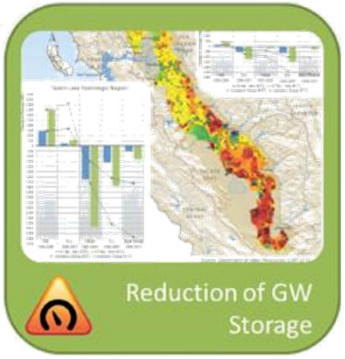
- Groundwater levels lowest in 1950's
- Agricultural groundwater use declined with urbanization
- Importation of State Water Project water 1980
- Water Reclamation Plant Discharges
- River system
- Groundwater levels

SMC Summary- Chronic Lowering of Water



General Objective	Minimum Threshold	Potential Undesirable Result	Measurable Objective	Management Actions
Maintain Groundwater Levels to support groundwater use and river environment	Lowest future groundwater elevation, or lowest historical from modern era (i.e. since 1980)	GW levels fall below MT in 25% of representative wells in the Alluvial Aquifer, or 50% of representative wells in the Saugus Formation through a 3-year period	Average future modeled or historical water levels	Include, but are not limited to: redistribution of pumping, reduced pumping, releases of water from Castaic Lake; imported water, water conservation

SMC Summary- Chronic Reduction in Groundwater Storage

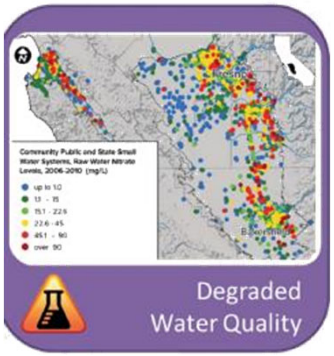


General Objective	Minimum Threshold	Potential Undesirable Result	Measurable Objective	Management Actions
Maintain Groundwater Levels to support groundwater use and river environment	Same as for Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels	Same as for Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels, but with an additional Undesirable Result of an inability to meet groundwater demands during a multi-year drought	Same as for Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels	Same as for Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels

SMC Summary- Land Subsidence

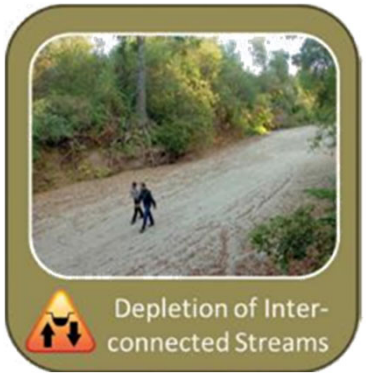
General Objective	Minimum Threshold	Undesirable Result	Measurable Objective	Management Actions
Reduce or prevent land subsidence that causes significant and unreasonable effects to groundwater supply, land uses, infrastructure, and property interests	Subsidence measured between June of one year and June of next year shall be no more than average of 0.1 foot in any single year, or 0.5 foot in any 5-year period in 10 percent or more monitoring locations	Substantial interference with land uses, impacts on the use of critical infrastructure and roads, or subsidence greater than minimum thresholds at 10 percent of monitoring locations	Maintenance of current ground surface elevation trends	Same as for Chronic Lowering of Water Levels, and Chronic Depletion of Storage

SMC Summary- Avoid Degraded Groundwater Quality



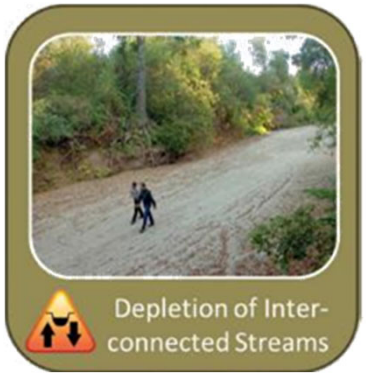
General Objective	Minimum Threshold	Undesirable Result	Measurable Objective	Management Actions
Maintain access to drinking water supplies and agricultural water supplies. Maintain quality consistent with current ecosystem uses.	Existing Water Quality Objectives for TDS, chloride, nitrate, and sulfate, or if ambient water quality exceeds the assimilative capacity of the basin	Degradation of water quality beyond water quality objectives and/or assimilative capacity established in the SNMP in 20% of representative wells	Prevent water quality degradation for salts and nutrients and for contaminants	Consider alternatives for improving groundwater quality

SMC Summary- Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water



- General Objective: Avoid significant and unreasonable effects (i.e. undesirable results) on beneficial uses in the Basin, including GDEs, caused by groundwater extraction. Maintain sufficient groundwater levels and surface water flow to sustain aquatic habitat where unarmored three-spine stickleback (UTS) and native fishes are present (e.g. at the I-5 Bridge), to the extent such decreases are caused by groundwater extraction.

SMC Summary- Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water



- Minimum Threshold: Surface water depletion caused by groundwater extraction as measured by groundwater levels falling beneath the lowest predicted future groundwater elevation at GDE monitoring wells.
- Also note a special GDE evaluation process begins at a higher water elevation called the GDE trigger.

Potential Undesirable Results	Measurable Objective
Permanent loss or significant degradation of existing native riparian or aquatic habitat due to lowered groundwater levels caused by groundwater pumping throughout the GDE area. In areas that currently provide essential habitat to UTS and native fishes (sensitive aquatic species in vicinity of I-5 Bride), cessation of surface flow and pools during low-flow conditions in the river channel caused by groundwater extraction is an undesirable result.	Average of future modeled groundwater elevations (using the same data set as for the minimum threshold).

Actions if GDE Triggers are Approached or Reached

- Evaluation Process Takes Place
  - Includes 6 steps
  - Results in Evaluation Report and Communication to GSA
- Management actions may be called upon
  - Consultation with Groundwater Pumpers to implement management actions, including
  - Redistribute pumping (shift and/or stop pumping)
  - Increase imported water
  - Water conservation
  - Evaluate additional projects if necessary

Future Water Budget

- Groundwater levels in long term balance
- Groundwater levels lower in some periods
- Dry weather river flow
- Wet weather (storm) river flow
- Ongoing monitoring/filling data gaps
- Future conditions consistent with Sustainability Goal

Management Actions Implementation Schedule

Management Action	Topic	Timing
Address Data Gaps	Piezometers, elevation surveys (wells and land surface), domestic water quality	Second quarter 2022-third quarter 2023
Monitoring, Reporting, Outreach	New monitoring, ongoing monitoring evaluation, outreach	Jan 2022-end 2026
Promoting Best Water Use Practices	Continued muni communication and outreach, private pumpers	Jan 2022-end 2026
GSP Reporting	Annual Reports, GSP Update	April 2022-first half 2027

Implementation Fiscal Considerations

Management Action	2021/2022 Fiscal Year	2022/2023 Fiscal Year
Address Data Gaps	$64,000	$0
Monitoring, Reporting, Outreach	$132,000	$183,000
Promoting Best Water Use Practices	$11,000	$11,000
GSP Reporting	$75,000	$50,000
Totals	**$282,000**	**$244,000**

Documentation of Public Comment and Availability of GSP

- Appendix O of the GSP includes an updated table of public comment and responses previously shared with your Board November 23, 2021.
  - Because this was previously shared November 23, 2021, a high-level summary of these comments and responses will be provided.
- Appendix O currently includes the updated public comment table discussed at the November 23, 2021 Board meeting, and the actual public comment letters will also be included in Attachment O upon upload to DWR*

Documentation of Public Comment and Availability of GSP

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Dr. Tom Dudley
- The Nature Conservancy, Audubon CA, Local Government Commission, Union of Concerned Scientists, Clean Water Action
- Friends of the Santa Clara River
- Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment
- Mr. Roger A. Haring
- Ms. Stacy Fortner

Public Comment On Draft GSP During 60 Day Public Comment Period

Common Themes	Comment Ideas
GDEs	trigger, upland, oaks, historical conditions, wrp flows
Climate Change Models	Use extreme wet and dry models
Domestic Wells	depths, extraction, water quality
Monitoring Wells	well condition
Subsidence	past and future monitoring
Arundo Removal	support
Public Trust	interconnected streams
Human Right to Water	depths, extraction, water quality
Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities	additional outreach

Public Comment Submitted in Writing Since the November 23, 2021 Board Meeting

- Mr. Duncan Mandel: “I DO NOT agree with lowering the groundwater level for future development!”

- Conclusion of Presentation