

South American Subbasin (SASb)
Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)
Executive Committee
Draft Meeting Summary
February 25, 2025, 3:00-4:30 pm
Via Zoom

This is a joint, working meeting of representatives for each Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) of the South American Subbasin (SASb). The Committee considers shared GSA management issues related to implementation of the SASb Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and as described in their January 26, 2023, Memorandum of Understanding.

Attendees: See page 4

Decisions/Action Items:

Item	Owner
Attend SRCD Board meeting to discuss budget on March 18 at 12:30p.	John Woodling
At next Domestic Well Advisory Meeting, add agenda item to continue conversation regarding Suzanne Pecci's concerns about Voluntary Well Monitoring.	Lisa Beutler
Follow up with GSA Managers regarding Suzanne Pecci's comments and concerns about the purpose of VMP.	Lisa Beutler, GSA Managers
Continue to finalize budget for GSA Boards' approval.	All GSA Managers
Notify Water Harvest of potential to store well monitoring data on CASGEM website.	Chris Hunley

1. Welcome and Greetings

Lisa Beutler (Stantec Facilitation Team) welcomed participants and provided a review of the agenda for today's meeting.

2. Communications update

Lisa Beutler reminded the GSAs to add and document Manager Reports about the SASb progress with implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plans at their regularly scheduled meetings. Stressed the importance of documenting engagement and outreach by the GSAs. Also mentioned this is something that can be added to the annual reports. For example, in 2024, there were 2 Executive Committee Meetings and 1 Domestic Well Advisory Committee meeting. She also noted a Subbasin Newsletter will be distributed.

3. Project Update – Harvest Water

Heidi Oriel from Harvest Water (Water Program Coordinator and Lead Engineer at SacSewer Legislative and Regulatory Affairs) shared a brief overview of SacSewer, the background and benefits of Harvest Water program, constructions and outreach updates and contracts for the administration of public benefits and WSIP support. Highlights from this presentation include:

- The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) and the Sacramento Area Sewer District (SASD) merged back in 2024 and are now known as SacSewer.
- The goal of the Harvest Water Program is to deliver up to 50,000 AFY¹ of recycled water to over 16,000 acres of agricultural and habitat lands.
- Due to the many public benefits provided by the project, Harvest Water received \$291.8 Million in Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) funding.
- Harvest Water contracts with the State of California to deliver an average of 32,500 AFY for irrigation demand and an average of 8,750 for winter-time Sandhill Crane habitat.

¹ Acre-feet per year [AFY] - describes bulk water amounts. One thousand acre-feet per year (1000 AFY) is the equivalent of 0.8921 million gallons per day.

- The Harvest Water Program is estimated to cost \$597.2 million. Current funding to date is estimated to cover \$331.3 million. Los Vaqueros Expansion Project has released their previously allotted WSIP funding and some of that funding may become available for redistribution to the Harvest Water project.
- Pipeline construction is nearly at 50% completion.
- WSIP funding requires contracts with agencies for the administration of public benefits. Harvest Water is partnered with the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the SWRCB to achieve this requirement.

4. Annual Report Update

John Woodling updated the group that a final draft was presented to some of the GSA boards already. He noted that although there is no requirement for public comments or GSA Board Adoptions, opportunities for public comments were provided at these meetings. Annual reports need to be submitted by April 1st.

Highlights from the report included:

- Current water level monitoring reports compared to minimum thresholds (MT) and measurable objectives (MO)
 - There are 3 wells below the MT. More work will be needed to determine how pumping from Aerojet Facility is impacting these water levels.
- Groundwater extractions have been below the Sustainable Yield.
- Water Storage has been increased by 33,00AF in the past year.
- Water quality monitoring networks show almost all meet MO. There is one well that will need to be investigated to understand the high specific conductance.
- Projects and Management Actions updates and accomplishments.

Barabara Evoy shared that it may be possible to fill in some of the Interconnected Surface Water data gaps with data from Harvest Water monitoring wells. Additionally, Barbara mentioned that many wells that are for assessing interconnected surface waters (ISW) are not close to the ISW. She would like to prioritize using funds to investigate these monitoring conditions.

5. Updated Schedule and Budget Approach for 5-Year Evaluation

John Woodling reviewed the tentative scope and budget provided in the meeting packet and shared the need for agreement with the Executive Committee about the Draft Scope and Budget for the 5- year review of the GSP. John shared there are three main components to the new budget, the first being a response to DWR's identified deficiencies of the GSP. This included complying with the guidance for interconnected surface water and evaluation. Second was reporting and analysis functions. The third was identifying the data gaps and actions the SASb needs to take. Task 5 of the budget will depend on the level of modeling needed. Task 6.5 of the budget has the most uncertainty due to grant funding availability. John W. also shared the estimated cost sharing for each GSA.

Highlights from this discussion included:

- Herb Garms, SRCD, expressed concern that the budget amount was a large number for their GSA and he was not confident the GSA Board will accept it. Herb asked John to attend a SRCD board Meeting to discuss the numbers in more detail.
- Eric Ringelberg, NDGSA shared they have very similar concerns to SRCD but do not want to re-open the MOU. Eric will bring this up with their Board and follow up at the next meeting.
- Suzanne Peci raised concerns about Task 8.0 of the budget and is of the opinion that public funds allocated for this have not publicly benefited all subbasin members but instead, just specific areas.
 - John explained that the funds in the budget are not going to the domestic well owners or people on the advisory boards but instead going to be used for an updated evaluation conducted by consultants for the subbasin. He also explained that not all well data is publicly available because not all landowners are comfortable with sharing it.
- The goal is to carry out the scope of work for the GSP evaluation during the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year. That will give 6 months to adopt changes in the GSP to submit evaluation by January 2027.

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Action Items:

- John Woodling to attend SRCD Board to discuss budget on March 18.
- Lisa Beutler indicated that the next Domestic Well Advisory Meeting is tentatively scheduled for May, and she will add an agenda item to continue conversation regarding Suzanne's concerns.

6. Other Updates, Announcements

Suzanne Pecci shared there is a misunderstanding regarding the purpose of the Voluntary Monitoring Program. Lisa will add this topic to the next Domestic Well Advisory Group Meeting.

Action Items:

- Lisa will follow up with GSA Managers regarding Suzanne's comments and concerns about the Voluntary Monitoring Program.
- Lisa will add agenda item to next DAG meeting to bring up Suzanne's comment.

7. Closing Thoughts and Comments

- The current proposed budget does not have a decision, but the EC agrees that more work will need to be done by GSA managers (particularly from Sloughhouse and North Delta) to get their Board's approval.
- Dominic Blum-Gutierrez, from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) shared that there is a new Projects and Management Actions (PMA) Module on the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) SGMA Portal. This module allows users to view and search for groundwater sustainability projects and management actions submitted by Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) as part of their GSPs and it displays details such as location, costs, and progress updates. While it is not mandatory this year, GSAs are responsible for submitting the implementation updates and details for their PMAs through the portal. He also shared that there is potential for CASGEM² to host the data from Harvest Water monitoring wells if SacSewer does not have a good public facing portal.

The next Executive Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 2025 but may be held sooner if GSA managers decide a sooner discussion is needed.

Action Items:

- GSA managers will need to continue to discuss the proposed budget for their GSAs Board approval.
- Notify Water Harvest of potential to store well monitoring data on CASGEM website.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.

Attendees

Executive Committee Members

Herb Garms, Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District (SRCD)
Barbara Evoy, Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority (SCGA)
Bruce Kamilos, SCGA

Dalia Fadl, SCGA
Erik Ringelberg, North Delta GSA (NDGSA)
Mark Streetcars, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District (OHWD), DWAG
Shoaib Ahray, SCGA

Manager Group

Brittany Friedman, (SRCD)

Chris Hunley, Sac County DWR

² The California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) Program tracks seasonal and long-term groundwater elevation trends in groundwater basins and non-basin areas statewide.

John Woodling, SCGA
Kerry Schmitz, Sac County DWR

Michael Wackman, OHWD

Other Agency Representatives

Heidi Oriol, SacSewer
Trevor Joseph, Sacramento Regional Water
Authority

Chealsea Spier, California Department of Water
Resources (CA DWR)
Dominic Blum-Gutierrez, CA DWR

Domestic Well Advisory Group

Todd Eising, SCGA
Tom Nelson, SCGA (alt.)
Suzanne Pecci, Drought Resilience Interagency
Partners Collaborative

Austin Miller, Sacramento County (DWAG
Coordinator)

Other General Public and Consultants

Lan Ngo, Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Gail Whitney King
Gay Jones
Brian Van Lienden, Woodard & Curran

Ali Taghavi, Woodward & Curran
Bryan Thoreson, GEI
Lauren Gordon, GEI

Facilitators

Lisa Beutler, Stantec
Nicole Hinostroza, Stantec