



**EAST KAWEAH**  
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

**STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT**

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## PUBLIC EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

### SUBBASIN-WIDE GROWER EVENT

The East Kaweah, Mid-Kaweah, and Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agencies held a grower event on July 13, 2023 to equip growers with tools and expert advice on water management for their farms. It was held at the International Agri-Center in Tulare, and topics covered Central Valley Project and Kaweah River surface water supply updates, smart irrigation practices, groundwater management, and on-farm funding opportunities. The event fulfilled its goal to unite the Kaweah Subbasin GSAs and educate their landowners on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and sustainable irrigation practices, equipping individuals to collectively participate in meeting groundwater sustainability goals.

The event drew  
**12 SPONSORS  
& 20 VENDORS**  
across the Central Valley  
who helped make the event possible.



The East Kaweah GSA website has a webpage dedicated to the event's resources. You can access presentation slides and video recordings from each presenter at [ekgsa.org/grower-event](https://ekgsa.org/grower-event).

### Nearly 350 attendees heard presentations from:

**JASON PHILLIPS** Friant Water Authority CEO

**MICHAEL HAGMAN, AARON FUKUDA, & MARK LARSEN** the Kaweah Subbasin GSA managers

**KAIT PALYS** INTERA Water Resources Scientist and Hydrogeologist

**JOEL KIMMELSHUE** Land IQ Owner/Principal Soil & Agricultural Scientist

**CRAIG HORNING** Technical Services at AC-Foods and Owner of Horning Brothers Farming

**AMBER BUTLAND** Community Education Specialist at UC Cooperative Extension Fresno

**LURANA STRONG** District Conservationist with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

### LINDSAY RECHARGE BASIN RIBBON CUTTING

East Kaweah GSA and its member agencies are making strides toward groundwater sustainability with each new sustainability project. Its member agencies, Lindmore Irrigation District and the City of Lindsay, celebrated improvements made to the Lindsay Recharge

Basin. The project uses an existing **8-acre basin to increase recharge capacity to an estimated 150-acre feet annually**. The project included constructing conveyance facilities to improve groundwater recharge at the basin site when Central Valley Project surface water is available from the Friant-Kern Canal. It is located in Lindsay on Mariposa Street off of Highway 65.

The East Kaweah GSA hosted the ribbon cutting celebration on August 9, 2023, drawing press, community members, and both state and local government agency members, including representatives from the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

Paul Gosselin, Deputy Director of Sustainable Groundwater Management at DWR, was present to give remarks about the project, alongside City of Lindsay Mayor Hipolito Cerros and Lindmore Irrigation District's General Manager Michael Hagman.



From left to right: Neyba Amezcua, Director of City Services and Planning, City of Lindsay; Supervisor Larry Micari, County of Tulare; Hipolito Cerros, City of Lindsay Mayor; Christopher Cervantes, Assistant Engineer, Provost & Pritchard; Michael Hagman, General Manager, Lindmore Irrigation District; John Arnold, Board President of Lindsay Irrigation District; Paul Gosselin, Deputy Director of Sustainable Groundwater Management, DWR



The local agencies recognized the **\$330,000 grant from DWR** that played a pivotal role in successful completion of this groundwater sustainability projects. Grants like this decrease cost burden on local agencies and their stakeholders.

DWR produced a video celebrating the Lindsay Recharge Basin's improvements, which benefits the City of Lindsay's residents and nearby growers. You can watch it [here](#).

## VIDEO

East Kaweah GSA released **19 video resources** during 2023!

In the past year, East Kaweah GSA has filled its video library with Water Dashboard tutorials to assist landowners with the billing period for Allocation Year 2022. East Kaweah GSA has prioritized showing landowners how to get the most out of new Dashboard features as they’ve become available. East Kaweah GSA has also used video to educate the public about the mitigation plan.

The most watched video was ***What You Need to Know About the Draft Mitigation Plan from the Experts Who Developed It.*** The video features East Kaweah GSA General Manager Michael Hagman and the GSA’s technical consultants, who each talk about what is in the Mitigation Plan and who it impacts.

**East Kaweah GSA’s YouTube channel offers three video playlists:**

- **Water Dashboard Demos**
- **Groundwater Allocation Updates**
- **Grower Event**

On the Grower Event playlist, landowners can find each speaker’s presentation and a recap of the event.



Stay engaged with our **YouTube** channel [here!](#)

### 2023 PERFORMANCE METRICS TOTALS

**163 new followers**

**125 total posts**

**Nearly 15,000 impressions across all platforms**

**Over 700 engagements across all platforms**

**TOP POST:** Overview for the “My Job Depends on Water: Farming in the SGMA Era”

- Over 1,000 impressions across all platforms
- 230 engagements across all platforms

## SOCIAL MEDIA

East Kaweah GSA remained active on social media and continues to grow their following, gaining **163 new followers** and sharing over **125 posts** across all platforms in 2023! Throughout the year, the East Kaweah GSA shared board meeting updates, new Water Dashboard features, “My Job Depends on Water: Farming in the SGMA Era” grower event updates, draft Mitigation plan information, project updates, and more. **The top post in 2023 was one sharing an overview of the “My Job Depends on Water: Farming in the SGMA Era” event**, garnering **over 1,000 impressions** and **230 engagements** across all platforms.

**Stay engaged and informed with the agency by following us on social media! Follow, like, and share East Kaweah GSA’s social media posts on:**



@EastKaweahGSA



East Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency



East Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency



@EastKaweahGSA





## MITIGATION PLAN OUTREACH

In 2023, East Kaweah GSA prioritized connecting with disadvantaged communities to share a new mitigation plan outlining a program to provide **financial assistance to domestic well owners impacted by declining groundwater levels.**



In preparation for the draft mitigation plan’s public comment period, East Kaweah GSA sent direct mail to its landowners. In this direct mail piece, the East Kaweah GSA encouraged landowners to come to the special Board Meeting on June 23, 2023, where the draft mitigation plan was considered for approval by the Board.



East Kaweah GSA partnered with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including **Community Water Center** and **Self-Help Enterprises** to develop a list of key locations in smaller communities **to help expand reach to rural and Spanish-speaking households.** The GSA hand-delivered flyers throughout small communities within its boundaries to notify residents of the draft mitigation plan.





## EKGSA Mailing List Stay Informed

Stay Informed

EKGSA Newsletter

165

SUBSCRIBERS  
End of 2022

263

SUBSCRIBERS  
End of 2023

INTERESTED PERSONS EMAIL LIST GROWTH  
**+ 98 SUBSCRIBERS!**

### EMAIL NEWSLETTER AND BLOG

The East Kaweah GSA provides timely updates, details on upcoming outreach events, and information on Board decisions affecting landowners via its email newsletter. In 2023, the East Kaweah GSA sent out **50 emails** and now has a total of **263 subscribers** to their interested persons email list. In addition, **31 new blog posts** were published to **ekgsa.org**, contributing to **over 13,000 views** to the site.

Throughout the year, stakeholders who are signed up for the email list were first to know about Allocation updates, Water Dashboard, the My Job Depends on Water: Farming in the SGMA Era grower event, billing information, important announcements, and more. Stakeholders can sign up to stay informed at [ekgsa.org/keep-informed](https://ekgsa.org/keep-informed).

### WATER DASHBOARD AND ALLOCATION UPDATES

Allocation Year 2022 bills were sent out in 2023, and the East Kaweah GSA communicated to landowners through direct mail, email, website posting, and YouTube videos.



In preparation for billing, **East Kaweah GSA sent two letters to landowners** — one in early 2023 to update on the billing timeline, and one giving them a snapshot of their water use in an End of Year Summary. Weeks prior to the billing period, the GSA worked with landowners to reconcile their water accounts and transfer credits. The Water Dashboard also added **new features to help landowners navigate the Allocation Year 2022 billing period**. This included the Credit Manager, which allowed landowners to shift their order of use inside the Dashboard and potentially lower their bills.



**East Kaweah GSA produced 9 videos this year, creating an entire playlist dedicated to Water Dashboard Demos.**

In October, East Kaweah GSA sent direct mail to announce its Mitigation Tier allocation as part of its Allocation Year 2024 allocations. The postcard explained that landowners can purchase **up to 0.05 acre-feet per irrigated acre at \$500 per acre-foot** to help fund its mitigation plan efforts.



Dear Landowner,

In previous outreach and communications, the East Kaweah GSA projected your Allocation Year 2022 summary report would be mailed to you in mid-January. It was anticipated you would have the opportunity to reconcile your groundwater account, transfer groundwater credits, and/or challenge the evapotranspiration (ET) readings on the summary report during the month of February. Following reconciliation, a final billing statement was projected to be sent at the end of March.

We are sending this letter to follow up on this projected timeline and provide an update on our progress. As a reminder, the Allocation Year 2022 refers to the period beginning October 1, 2021 and ending September 30, 2022, during which groundwater pumping was limited to an emergency allocation (measured by consumptive use, or ET) of 0.5 acre-feet per acre, plus a precipitation credit.

The East Kaweah GSA Board and staff have been important to us in making sure the billing process is done right. This involves a high level of coordination and cooperation among all twelve surface water delivery entities within the GSA, modernized and accurate water accounting, and landowner outreach and education. Each of these areas includes their own complex set of challenges, many of which we continue to work through diligently.

Because of this, our timeline for the summary report, reconciliation, and billing has been delayed.

Our goals over the coming weeks are to:

1. Ensure accurate groundwater use measurement after obtaining surface water delivery data.
2. Ensure a pathway for you to communicate with us about your groundwater use measurements with the ability to reconcile, transfer credits, and/or challenge ET readings.
3. Keep you up to date on our progress and the latest information regarding groundwater use report summaries and subsequent billing. Sign up for our email news at [www.ekgsa.org/newsletters](https://www.ekgsa.org/newsletters) to stay informed on timely updates.

In the meantime, we encourage you to view your historic water use for the Allocation Year 2022 by setting up a Water Dashboard account today at [www.ekgsa.org](https://www.ekgsa.org). The Water Dashboard delivers monthly water use by field and parcel, with data available from 2020 through the current reporting period. Over 700 growers in the Kaweah Subbasin are currently using the Water Dashboard to view their water use information.

Groundwater allocations were adapted to our area can stay on track to achieve a sustainable groundwater supply under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). We are your local agency implementing SGMA and want to work alongside you to maintain local control over groundwater management.

Sincerely,

Chris Hunter  
Chris Hunter  
Program Manager

Scott Maskell  
Scott Maskell  
Management Analyst

\*For more information on the Allocation Year 2022 groundwater allocation amounts, how, and how consumptive use (CU) is used to measure groundwater use, visit our website [www.ekgsa.org](https://www.ekgsa.org). We will find great success and meet measures where these reports were covered in depth.

All the latest information can be found at [ekgsa.org/allocation](https://ekgsa.org/allocation).

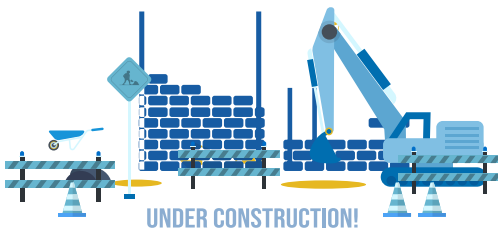


## PROJECT OUTREACH

The East Kaweah GSA is proud to share that as of 2023, nearly all groundwater projects outlined in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) are either completed or under construction! To highlight these projects, the East Kaweah GSA created a **project pamphlet**, designed to **inform stakeholders on the groundwater sustainability projects underway**.



One major project completed in 2023 was the **Lindsay Recharge Basin!** This project captures available surface water to recharge the aquifer for groundwater sustainability, using an existing **8-acre basin** to increase recharge capacity to an estimated **150 acre-feet annually**.



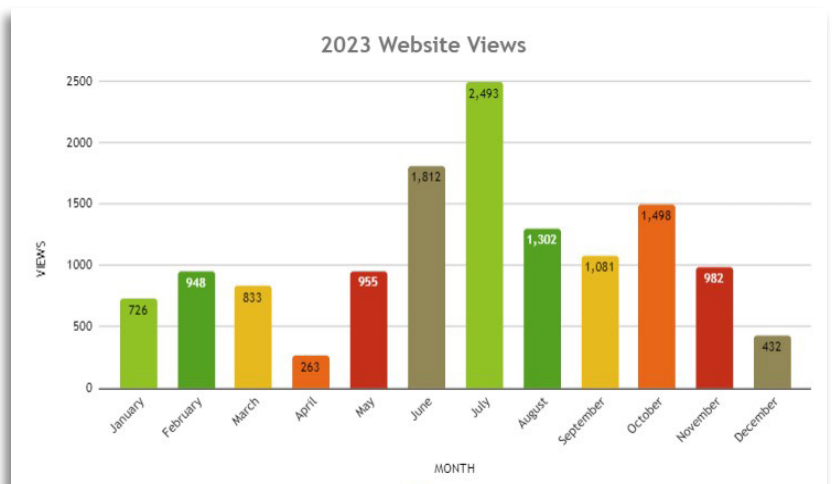
## PROJECT STORYMAP UNDERWAY!

The East Kaweah GSA is developing a StoryMap to showcase the benefits and highlights of each groundwater project for our stakeholders. Stay tuned, as the StoryMap will be revealed soon on our project webpage!

Learn about the East Kaweah GSA’s groundwater sustainability projects at [ekgsa.org/projects](http://ekgsa.org/projects).

## WEBSITE ANALYTICS

The website received **over 13,000 views!** The website experienced the highest number of views in **July**, followed by June, coinciding with the “My Job Depends on Water: Farming in the SGMA Era” grower event. October saw another spike in views as the East Kaweah GSA participated in California Water Professionals Appreciation Week. Additionally, October marked the end of the Allocation Year 2022 billing period, when the East Kaweah GSA urged growers to create their Water Dashboard accounts, furthering website traffic. The site is full of information on allocations, rules and regulations, past outreach event presentation slides, and video resources.



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**PROVOST & PRITCHARD**  
**CONSULTING GROUP**