

Section 2. Plan Area and Basin Setting

Santa Margarita Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Appendix 2A Communications & Engagement Plan

Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan



Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations	3
Background	4
Purpose	5
• Requirements for Stakeholder Engagement	5
• Goals and Outcomes	5
• Communication and Outreach Objectives	6
• Audiences and Stakeholders	7
Engagement and Outreach	9
• Key Messages and Talking Points	10
• Strategies for Engagement	10
• Implementation Timeline and Tactics	12
• Evaluation and Assessment	14
Appendix	15
• Media	15
• Outreach Activities	17
• Samples of Educational Materials	21
• Guiding Principles	25

List of Abbreviations

Board

Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Board of Directors

C&E Plan

Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan

County

County of Santa Cruz

DWR

California Department of Water Resources

GSA

Groundwater Sustainability Agency

GSP

Groundwater Sustainability Plan

MHA

Mount Hermon Association

PWO

Private Well Owner

SCWD

City of Santa Cruz Water Department

SGMA

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

SLVWD

San Lorenzo Valley Water District

SMGB or Basin

Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin

SMGWA

Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency

SVWD

Scotts Valley Water District

Background

Groundwater is a critical and integral component of California's overall water supply, benefitting residents, businesses, agriculture, industries and the environment. In many areas of the state, including the San Lorenzo Valley and Scotts Valley areas of the Central Coast, groundwater is a primary water source. Yet unlike surface water, groundwater historically was not regulated at the statewide level. This contributed to serious adverse impacts to water supply and quality including declines in groundwater levels and storage, irreversible land subsidence and degradation of groundwater-dependent ecosystems.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), which went into effect on January 1, 2015, establishes a path for the sustainable management of groundwater through the formation of locally organized Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), which are public agencies. As part of SGMA, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) designated groundwater basins as low, medium or high priority. The goal of SGMA is to develop and implement basin-specific Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) that outline a pathway to achieve long-term groundwater sustainability within 20-years and maintain it for 30 years beyond that.

The Santa Margarita Basin Groundwater Agency (SMGWA) is a GSA formed as a Joint Powers Authority (consistent with California Government Code 6500 – Joint Exercise of Powers Act) in June 2017. It has three member agencies: Scotts Valley Water District (SVWD), San Lorenzo Valley Water District (SLVWD), and County of Santa Cruz (County). It is governed by the Board of Directors (Board), comprised of two representatives from each member agency, one representative from the City of Scotts Valley, one from City of Santa Cruz, one from Mount Hermon Association (MHA) and two private well owner representatives. The Board holds regular meetings that, consistent with

requirements for all California public agencies through the Brown Act, are open to the public.

SMGWA is developing a GSP to ensure a sustainable groundwater supply supporting environmental and human needs, in compliance with SGMA. Under the requirements of SGMA, GSPs developed by GSAs are required to consider the interests of beneficial uses and users of groundwater, and of land uses and property interests potentially affected by using groundwater in the basin. For the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin (SMGB or Basin), beneficial users also include customers of the City of Santa Cruz Water Department (SCWD), located outside of Basin boundaries. The San Lorenzo River, which is fed, in part, by groundwater, is a significant source of the SCWD's water supply. The GSP regulations require that GSAs document the opportunities for public engagement and active involvement of diverse social, cultural, environmental and economic elements of the population within the basin in a communication section of the GSP.

Groundwater is an essential source of drinking water for most residents living in the SMGB boundaries. Groundwater is also an important source of baseflow for the San Lorenzo River and its tributaries, especially in the summer months. Rainfall is the only source of recharge to the SMGB. Municipal pumpers — SVWD, SLVWD and MHA — as well as businesses, small water systems, residents using private wells to pump water for domestic purposes, and groundwater-dependent ecosystems, share the groundwater resource. To that end and beyond the requirements of SGMA, the member agencies of SMGWA recognize that sustainable groundwater management is essential for ensuring a reliable and resilient water supply and will continue to work collectively on the implementation of SGMA.

Purpose

This Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (C&E Plan) assists SMGWA in its efforts to disseminate and receive feedback on relevant information and to engage the public, including groundwater beneficial users, regarding the development and implementation of SMGWA's GSP with a particular focus on fulfilling and exceeding the requirements of § 354.10 Notice and Communication of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) (as amended 2015). The C&E Plan is a work plan to ensure sufficient opportunities for public participation are included in the GSP process.

The C&E Plan also provides SMGWA board members and staff a guide to ensure consistent messaging about SGMA requirements and other related information. It establishes a roadmap for GSP development that identifies how and when beneficial users and other stakeholders can provide timely and meaningful input into GSA decision-making. Additionally, the C&E Plan ensures beneficial users and other stakeholders in the SMGB are informed of milestones and offered opportunities to participate in GSP development and implementation.

SGMA has specific requirements for stakeholder engagement that include:

- Consider the interests of all beneficial uses of water and users of groundwater (Section 10723.2).
- Encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin (Section 10727.8).
- Establish and maintain a list of persons interested in receiving notices regarding plan preparation, meeting announcements and availability of draft plans, maps and other relevant documents (Section 10723.4).
- Make available to the public and DWR a written statement describing the manner in which interested parties may participate in the development and implementation of the GSP (Section 10723.2).

Goals and Outcomes

The C&E Plan is an evolving document that is updated and refined as GSP planning and implementation progresses. The C&E Plan supports the following goals:

1. Provide opportunities to educate stakeholders about SGMA and its requirements, and how those requirements could affect them.
2. Articulate strategies and channels to obtain ongoing stakeholder input to inform GSP development.
3. Increase awareness and understanding among stakeholders of the challenges and opportunities that SMGWA faces to achieve and maintain groundwater sustainability and other related issues facing the SMGB.
4. Increase engagement among stakeholders in support of the GSP.

Communication and Outreach Objectives

The following are the communications and outreach objectives that the C&E Plan supports:

- **Expand Audience Reach**

- » Maintain a robust stakeholder list of interested individuals, groups and/or organizations.
- » Secure a balanced level of participants who represent the interests of beneficial uses and users of groundwater.

- **Increase Engagement**

- » Keep interested list of stakeholders informed and aware of opportunities for involvement through email communications and/or their preferred communications.
- » Publish meeting agendas, minutes, recordings and summaries on the SMGWA website (www.smgwa.org).
- » Inform and encourage comments from the general public during Board meetings.
- » Facilitate productive dialogue among participants throughout the planning process.
- » Seek the input of interest groups during the implementation of the GSP and any future planning efforts.

- **Increase GSP Awareness**

- » Provide timely and accurate public reporting of planning milestones through the distribution of outreach materials and posting of materials on the SMGWA website for the GSP.
- » Seek to secure quality media coverage that is accurate, complete and fair.
- » Utilize social media to engage with the general public.
- » Utilize direct mailers to beneficial users when additional outreach seems necessary.

- **Track Efforts**

- » Maintain an active communications tracking tool to capture stakeholder engagement and public outreach activities and to demonstrate the reporting of GSP outreach activities.

Target Audiences and Stakeholders

SMGB stakeholders are other agencies and interested parties including all beneficial users of groundwater or representatives of those users. Under the requirements of SGMA, all beneficial uses and users of groundwater must be considered in the development of GSPs, and GSAs must encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population.

There are a variety of audiences targeted within the SMGB whose SGMA knowledge varies from high to little or none. Given this variance, communication and engagement efforts are broad and all-inclusive. Target audiences include:

- **SMGWA Board of Directors**
How to contact: direct calls, email, press releases, board meetings, community events
- **SMGWA member and partner agencies, including management, staff and customers**
How to contact: email newsletters, bill inserts, social media, press releases, board meetings, community events
- **Elected officials, and local and state agencies within the SMGB**
How to contact: presentations, direct calls, email, press releases, board meetings, community events
- **Beneficial uses and users of groundwater including private pumpers and environmental uses such as fish and plant habitat**
How to contact: presentations, email newsletters, postcard mailings, social media, press releases, board meetings, community events
- **Diverse social, cultural and economic segments of the population within the SMGB including Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)**
How to contact: email newsletters, social media, press releases, board meetings, community events
- **Public**
How to contact: press releases, social media, community events

The SGMA mandates that beneficial users participate in development of the GSP. The SMGB's beneficial users rely on effective management of groundwater sustainability indicators to achieve and maintain sustainable groundwater conditions that support each of their uses.

Target Audiences and Stakeholders

Category of Interest	Examples of Stakeholder Groups	Engagement Purpose
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basin residents 	Inform to improve public awareness of sustainable groundwater management
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Planning City of Scotts Valley Planning LAFCO AMBAG 	Consult and involve to ensure land use policies are supporting GSP, and GSP reflects projected population and development
Private Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private domestic pumpers Small water systems Mount Hermon Association Quarries Irrigation users such as Home Owner Associations Amah Mutsun Tribal Band 	Inform and involve to avoid negative impact to these users, and inform about the need and basis for possible future fees
Urban and Agriculture Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Cannabis Licensing Division Municipal water ratepayers Commercial users City, County and State parks 	Collaborate to ensure sustainable management of groundwater, and to inform about the need and basis for possible future fees
Environmental and Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal and State regulatory agencies (Fish and Wildlife) Wetland managers Environmental groups 	Inform and involve to sustain vital groundwater-dependent ecosystems
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chambers of commerce Elected officials 	Inform and involve to support a stable economy
Human Right to Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged communities Environmental justice groups Human service non-profits 	Inform and involve to provide a safe and secure groundwater supply to DACs
Integrated Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Water Management Group of Santa Cruz County Water Advisory Commission of Santa Cruz County 	Inform, involve and collaborate to improve regional sustainability

Engagement and Public Outreach

Stakeholder involvement and public outreach is critical to the GSP development and implementation because it helps promote the plan development, based on input and broad support. The following activities summarize involvement opportunities and outreach methods to inform target audiences and stakeholders. It is important to note that levels of interest will evolve and shift according to the GSP's development stage.

Goals and Outcomes

An email listserve of interested persons and organizations is created and maintained. The listserve includes stakeholders that represent the region's broad interests, perspectives and geography. It is developed by leveraging existing lists and by conducting research of potential stakeholders that may be interested in one or all of the following categories: municipal users and groundwater users including private pumpers, community/neighborhood, agricultural, environmental, industrial, institutional, business, disadvantaged communities, state lands and agencies, and integrated water management. Members of the public also can sign up for the listserve via the SMGWA website.

Audience/Stakeholder Contact Strategies

Groundwater Users in the Basin

- **Scotts Valley Water District customers (all)**
How to contact: Email newsletters, bill inserts, newspaper advertising, social media, presentations to board of directors, community events
- **San Lorenzo Valley Water District customers (all)**
How to contact: Email newsletters, bill inserts, newspaper advertising, social media, presentations to board of directors, community events
- **Mount Hermon Association, private well residential users, and small water systems (all)**
How to contact: Newspaper advertising, social media, community events, postcard mailing, agency-led well owner meetings
- **Non-profit organizations and government agencies**
Email newsletters, newspaper advertising, social media, presentations, direct outreach to key staff

Key Messages and Talking Points

The C&E Plan is intended to be transparent and direct about how the GSP will impact stakeholders.

Key messages and talking points include:

- SMGWA represents the groundwater interests of all beneficial uses and users of the basin equitably and transparently to ensure that the Basin achieves and maintains sustainable groundwater conditions.
- SMGWA is working to sustainably manage local groundwater to meet all users' needs without harming the environment or jeopardizing future water supply reliability.
- SMGWA is committed to working with stakeholders using an open and transparent communication and engagement process.
- As the overall GSP will be more comprehensive with an engaged group of stakeholders providing useful information, SMGWA will create substantial opportunities to educate stakeholders on basin conditions and the GSP process to facilitate soliciting their feedback on GSP development.
- As updating and implementing the GSP will be most successful with an engaged community, outreach will be ongoing past the GSP submittal date.

These messages are being used as the basis for specific talking points/Q&A/FAQ documents to support effective engagement with audiences. The SMGWA Guiding Principles also are used to support communication with audiences (see Appendix).

Strategies for Engagement

The SMGWA utilizes a variety of tactics to achieve broad, enduring and productive involvement with stakeholders during the development of the GSP. Below are activities that SMGWA uses to engage the public:

- Develop and maintain a list of interested parties
- Public informational sessions
 - » "Understanding Our Water" three-part education series
 - » "Undesirable Results – the SGMA Road to What Should be Avoided" workshop
 - » "State of Surface Water in the Santa Margarita Basin" workshop
 - » "The Path to Groundwater Sustainability: Goals and Challenges" discussion
 - » Virtual PWO meeting hosted on Zoom and broadcast live on Facebook
- SMGB tours
- Interviews conducted by Sacramento State, Consensus and Collaboration Program (as a third-party neutral facilitator to SMGWA)

Strategies for Engagement (cont.)

- Board meetings
 - » Regular public notices and updates; Brown Act compliance
 - » Signs to notify residents of upcoming meetings
 - » Publish meeting summaries monthly (beginning March 2020)
 - » Virtual board meetings (beginning Spring 2020) hosted on GoToMeeting and Zoom platforms, including dial-in option for people without Internet access
 - » Hybrid board meetings (beginning Spring 2021) that continues virtual meetings while providing members of the public with an in-person option to participate
- Digital communications
 - » SMGWA website: maintain with current information
 - » SMGWA Facebook and Instagram pages: maintain and grow social media presence, promote content through advertising to target audiences
 - » Direct email via Mailchimp
- Mailings to private well owners and additional SMGB residents
- Media coverage
 - » Op-eds in the local newspapers
 - » Press releases
 - » Radio interviews
- Participation at outreach events hosted by other local agencies i.e. "Connecting the Drops"
- Co-promotional opportunities with member agencies including email newsletters, social media (Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor), board meetings and mailings to customers
- SMGWA intern position dedicated to youth outreach
 - » Compiled an extensive list of pre- and post-pandemic outreach activities to reach a younger audience
 - » Created the Groundwater Stewardship Program, a self-paced online educational classroom that consisted of videos, articles, interactive quizzes, discussion boards and live game-play (Margaritaville) to encourage critical thinking
 - » The Quail Hollow Homeschool (K-5) participated in a lesson plan designed to promote an understanding of groundwater and how our basin functions
 - » Created 5-question trivia quizzes to share online
- Talks and presentations to various stakeholder groups and associations
- Educational and outreach materials (see Appendix)

Implementation Timeline and Tactics

SMGWA uses a 4-phase plan to conduct outreach.

PHASE 1 Ongoing Efforts

- SMGWA website (www.smgwa.org): consistent updates
- Press releases: highlighting key milestones and opportunities for public engagement
- Social media: consistent updates
- Email newsletter: quarterly or more often
- Mailings: as needed
- Board meetings: recorded public meetings available online, written board meeting summaries provided to member agencies and the media after each meeting
- Co-promotional efforts with partner agencies: consistent updates

PHASE 2 GSP Development

- Review draft stakeholder engagement plan, make suggestions and update
- Media outreach
- Public workshops and events: Educational Series, community discussions, basin tours, Private Well Owner meetings
- Create youth outreach programs: speak to school groups, facilitate online Youth Education Program

PHASE 3 GSP Rollout

- Review draft stakeholder engagement plan, make suggestions and update
- Media outreach and advertising: engage with a broad audience of stakeholders and beneficial users
- Public informational events: host community conversation for GSP
- Website: modernize website for GSP presentation and to collect comments

Implementation Timeline and Tactics (cont.)

SMGWA uses a 4-phase plan to conduct outreach.

PHASE 4 GSP Submission-Ongoing

- Review draft stakeholder engagement plan, make suggestions and update
- Rollout of final plan
- Media outreach
- C&E Plan and GSP milestone requirements by phase:
 - » Prior to initiating plan development: Share how interested parties may contact the GSA and participate in development and implementation of the plan submitted to DWR. (Sec. 353.6)
 - » Prior to GSP development: Establish and maintain an email list of interested parties. (Sec. 10723.4)
 - » Prior to and with GSP submission:
 - Record statements of issues and interests of beneficial users of basin groundwater including types of parties representing the interests and consultation process
 - Lists of public meetings
 - Inventory of comments and summary of responses
 - Communication section in GSP (Sec. 354.10) that includes: agency decision-making process, identification of public engagement opportunities and response process, description of process for inclusion, and method for public information related to progress in implementing the plan (status, projects, actions)
- Supporting tactics to be used to communicate messages and supporting resources available:
 - » SMGWA website, updated regularly to reflect meetings and workshops
 - » Direct email via Mailchimp, sent approximately monthly to announce board meetings, special workshops and other opportunities for engagement such as the SMGB tours
 - » Outreach to local media to secure coverage of announcements and events, radio interviews, op-ed placement
 - » Workshops, information sessions and other community meetings
 - » Social media, specifically Facebook, updated regularly to share information and support other outreach efforts

Evaluation and Assessment

A phased approach to outreach allows us opportunities to assess to the program and evaluate how our plan is performing against our goals and objectives. Assessment is conducted by the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Working Group and reviewed by Board Members during quarterly communications updates to the Board. Areas for consideration:

- What worked well?
- What didn't go as planned?
- Are stakeholders educated about the GSP development process and their own role?
- Is the timeline for implementation of the GSP clear?
- Has the GSA received positive press coverage?
- Do diverse stakeholders feel included?
- Have there been behavior changes related to the program goals? Has there been improved trust/relationships among participants?
- Community and board meeting recaps and next steps
- Lessons learned

Appendix

MEDIA		
Date	Media	Topic/Headline
2/16/17	Santa Cruz Sentinel	Coast Lines: Private well owners invited to meet
2/17/17	Press Banner	Feb. 22 workshop on mountain aquifer
2/22/17	County of Santa Cruz	Groundwater Agency Formation Workshop
2/7/18	Press Release	\$1 Million Grant Recommended for Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency by CA Dept of Water Resources
2/22/18	Press Banner	SMGWA aims to maintain water flow
3/9/18	Press Banner	SMGWA first meeting of 2018
6/14/18	Press Banner	Private well owners reject any new metering fees
12/11/18	Press Release	Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Announces Three-Part 'Understanding Our Water' Educational Series
1/6/19	Santa Cruz Sentinel	Water agency will be important for years to come
2/15/19	Scotts Valley Times	Understanding Our Water
4/14/19	Santa Cruz Sentinel	Community participation is key to future of water supply
2/4/20	Press Banner	Finding a Sustainable Water Solution
6/13/20	Scotts Valley Times	Santa Margarita Board Evaluates Groundwater
6/23/20	My Scotts Valley	Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency begins high school groundwater steward program
7/1/20		Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Begins Groundwater Steward Program
7/15/20	Press Banner	Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Begins Groundwater Steward Program
8/4/20	My Scotts Valley	SMGWA Board Reviews Communications Plan
9/21/20	Press Release	Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Offers Second Session of Groundwater Steward Program

MEDIA (CONT.)

9/21/20	My Scotts Valley	Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Offers Second Session of Groundwater Steward Program
11/1/20	My Scotts Valley	SMGWA Board advances development of Groundwater Sustainability Plan
11/13/20	My Scotts Valley	SMGWA Board meets Monday, Nov. 16
11/19/20	My Scotts Valley	Well users invited to groundwater management meeting
11/21/20	Scotts Valley Times	Scotts Valley Private Well Owners Invited to Meeting
1/14/21	My Scotts Valley	"SMGWA Board Finishes 2020 with Workshop, Two Meetings"
2/22/21	My Scotts Valley	"SMGWA board reviews hydrogeological modeling"
3/8/21	My Scotts Valley	Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Seeks Well Owner to Serve on Board of Directors
3/10/21	My Scotts Valley	SMGWA Board progresses on Groundwater Sustainability
4/6/21	My Scotts Valley	SMGWA Board Aims to Complete Draft of GSP for Review in July
4/15/21	Press Release	New Monitoring Wells Planned for Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency
4/16/21	My Scotts Valley	New Monitoring Wells Planned for Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency
5/13/21	My Scotts Valley	SMGWA Board Reviews Project and Management Actions

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Date	Activity	Description/Goals	Venue/Platform	Audience
January – March 2019	“Understanding Our Water” educational series	<p>The three-part educational series beginning in January to engage and inform all people who rely on the water supply from the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 12: Land Use and Water: How Much Does Growth Matter? • February 9: Water Budgets: How Do We Balance All Needs? • March 9: Managing Groundwater: How Can We Prepare for an Uncertain Future? 	In person	General public, elected officials, media, private domestic pumpers, federal and state agencies
August 2019	“State of Surface Water in the Santa Margarita Basin” workshop	This public workshop is the next in an ongoing series of public workshops hosted by the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency. This workshop focuses on the relationship of surface water to CA’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and the complex nature of surface water management, rights and regulations.	In person	General public, elected officials, private domestic pumpers
September 2019	“The Path to Groundwater Sustainability: Goals and Challenges” discussion	SMGWA Board Meeting and an informational session about groundwater sustainability. Topics include Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) road map, hydrogeologic conceptual model, sustainability goals and sustainability indicators.	In person	General public, elected officials, private domestic pumpers

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

Date	Activity	Description/Goals	Venue/Platform	Audience
September 2019	Basin Tours	This program further educated the SMGWA Board on Basin conditions, and provided an effective public outreach tool to members of the public interested in agency activities. It also served as a vehicle to promote inter-agency understanding and cooperation among SMGWA constituent organizations.	In person	All SMGWA constituent agencies and organizations, staff and public
February 2020	Scotts Valley High School Lecture	A presentation to build awareness that the water supply is a local natural resource, local water resources support other species as well as people, the current GSP development and the Groundwater Steward Program as an opportunity to learn more.	In person	Scotts Valley High School K Street Science (1 section) and Environmental Sciences (2 sections) classes, approximately 50-60 students
Spring 2020 – Winter 2020	Groundwater Stewardship Program	A self-paced online educational classroom that consisted of videos, articles, interactive quizzes, discussion boards and live game-play (Margaritaville) that was offered to students and the general public. The goals of the program were to encourage critical thinking about balancing the needs of the agency to help inform the current GSP and also to engage a younger audience than had historically been involved and expand a general understanding of the Basin and GSP process. The program was offered as community service credit through the Scotts Valley High School and shared with San Lorenzo Valley School District, Pacific Collegiate School and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.	Online - Google Classroom	Youth, targeting high school and college students

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

Date	Activity	Description/Goals	Venue/Platform	Audience
December 2020	Private Well Owner Meeting	Hosted a virtual meeting on Zoom and broadcast on Facebook Live to provide private well owners with an update on SMGWA activities.	Online: Zoom and Facebook Live	Private domestic pumpers and small community systems
April 2021	Groundwater Experiment	Students participated in a lesson plan designed to promote an understanding of groundwater and how the Basin functions. The experiment, called Aquifer in a Cup, was led both online and in-person to promote an understanding of where our water comes from, what is groundwater, and who does it affect.	Online and in-person	Quail Hollow Homeschool K-5 students
Spring 2021	Trivia Quizzes	A series of five-question trivia quizzes promoted learning about the groundwater basin, promoted through the SMGWA email newsletter and their Facebook and Instagram pages. There was a raffle incentive for participating.	Online - promoted through Facebook, Instagram and email newsletter	All
Spring – Summer 2021	Farmers Markets	Staff and board members provided an opportunity for community members to learn more about SMGWA and the GSP process by tabling at farmers markets in Scotts Valley and Felton.	In person	General public
Ongoing	Youth Outreach Activities	Researched an extensive list of pre- and post-pandemic outreach activities to reach a younger audience, stratified by age group and life stage to consider the variety of ways people might want to participate.		Youth

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

SMGWA Basin Tour Program August-November 2019



Participants pose in front of the Scotts Valley Water District Offices before the pilot run of the program on August 23rd, 2019.



Rick Rogers, manager of SLVWD explains the unique habitat provided by the Olympia Quarry Wellfield and land management considerations for SLV.



John Ricker of County of Santa Cruz Discusses the geology of the Zayante fault line at the northern boundary of the Basin on upper Bean Creek.



Chris Berry of City of Santa Cruz Water Department demonstrates the decision matrix used to operate the inflatable dam at the Felton Diversion.

Dates:

August 23
September 18
October 16
November 20

Participants:

All SMGWA Constituent Agencies and Organizations, Staff, and Public.

Supported Lines of Effort:

- Professional Development/Education
- Stakeholder Outreach/Engagement
- Strengthening Inter-Agency Relationships

Narrative:

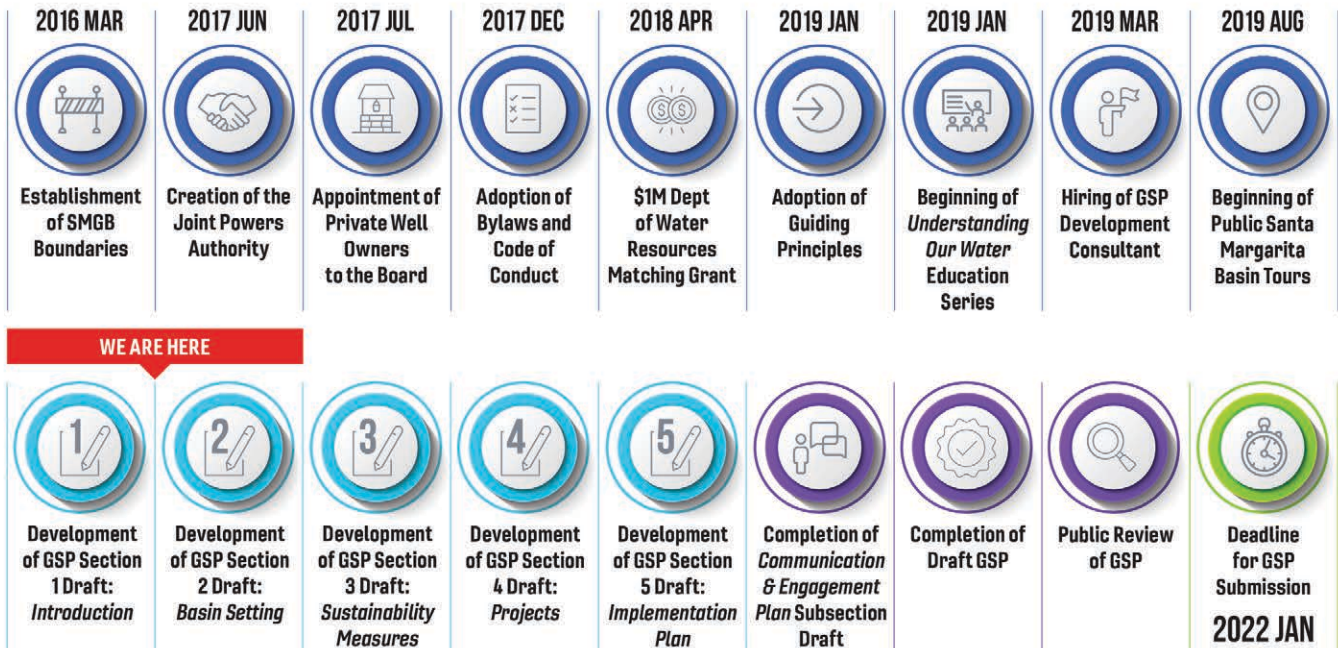
From August to November of 2019, the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency conducted a series of 4 educational tours to highlight the unique features, conditions, and challenges that face the Santa Margarita Basin.

These events were mainly aimed at the Board of Directors and their Alternates, and members of the public attended all iterations of the event on a space-available basis.

This program further educated the SMGWA Board on Basin conditions, and provided an effective public outreach tool to members of the public interested in Agency activities. It further served as a vehicle to promote inter-agency understanding and cooperation among SMGWA constituent organizations.

SAMPLE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The Path to a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)



SAMPLE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS (CONT.)

SANTA MARGARITA Groundwater Agency

The Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency is being formed to improve the regional collaboration on managing the groundwater basin and comply with State requirements.

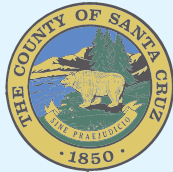
The new agency is comprised of the representatives of public agencies and private well owners who use the basin for their water supply.

To get more information and participate in the process, sign up for the newsletter at smgwa.org and attend the upcoming workshop.

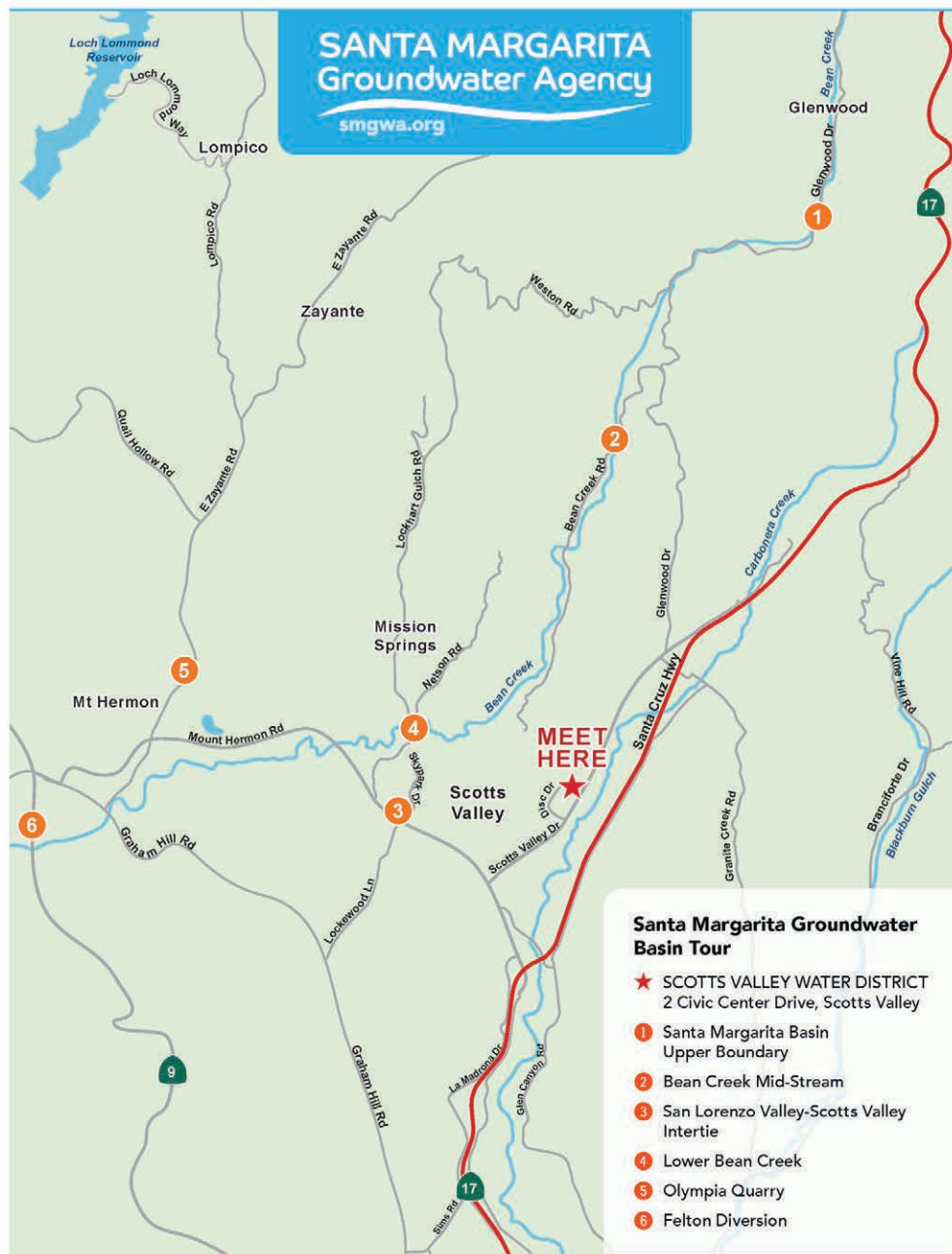
• PUBLIC MEETING • FEBRUARY 22, 2017

Scotts Valley Water District
Santa Margarita Community Room (lower level)
2 Civic Center Drive, Scotts Valley
7 to 9 pm

Information: Sierra Ryan (831) 454-3133
Sierra.Ryan@santacruzcounty.us • smgwa.org



SAMPLE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS (CONT.)



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WATER DISTRICT
svwd.org



WATER DISTRICT
svwd.org

SAMPLE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS (CONT.)



STOP 3: SAN LORENZO VALLEY-SCOTTS VALLEY INTERTIE

Intertie 2 is one of the four bidirectional interties constructed between the San Lorenzo Valley Water District (SLVWD) and Scotts Valley Water District (SVWD) that allow the adjacent water systems to share water during a water emergency.

This project for the first time connects the two water districts, so that in the event of a major fire, winter storm, or an earthquake, the two valleys can help each other out by directly providing water through this intertie connection. Additionally, the intertie system could improve water supply reliability for SLVWD customers and reduce aquifer pumping during winter months when stream flow is high. Previously, SLVWD could not move water between the North, South and Felton systems. With the interties in place, water could be transferred from one system to another within the district, depending on availability and demand.

SVWD led a grant application effort to obtain Proposition 50 Water Security funding from the California Department of Public Health in 2013. The state funds of about \$3.9 million covered 44% of the total project costs for interties.

The other three interties that were included in the project are: Intertie 3, connecting SLVWD South System to SLVWD North System, Intertie 4, connecting SLVWD South System to Mount Hermon, and Intertie 6, connecting SLVWD North System to Felton.

Intertie 2, completed in Spring 2016, connects the SVWD water system and the SLVWD water system along Lockwood Lane and Skypark Drive and includes a pump station on Skypark Drive allowing for water transfers either up or down gradient and enhancing water security across the region. It has a capacity of 600 gpm (gallons per minute).



SCOTTS VALLEY
WATER DISTRICT
@ f svwd.org



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f California

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WATER DISTRICT
@ f svwd.org



WATER DISTRICT
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SANTA MARGARITA GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Guiding Principles

① The Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin (Basin) is located entirely within Santa Cruz County (County). The Basin is a diverse area. It:

- Is characterized by different communities with various land uses, and land and water management approaches.
- Is defined by a complex set of aquifers through which groundwater passes and on which residents and ecosystems depend.
- Has extensive biodiversity hotspots that support important terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and species, many of which are protected by the California and Federal Endangered Species Acts.
- Provides essential connectivity between groundwater and surface water on which the base flows of several creeks and rivers (including the San Lorenzo River) depend.
- Is subject to climatological changes that alone, can significantly impact the availability of water.
- Is hydrogeologically disconnected from other groundwater basins. There are no current plans to receive imported water from outside of the county. The Basin's Beneficial Users (as defined in the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act [SGMA] – See Attachment A) rely on effective management of a water budget to achieve sustainable groundwater and surface water conditions.

SANTA MARGARITA GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Guiding Principles

- ② SGMA affects all Beneficial Users in the Basin. It describes groundwater sustainability requirements and mandates that Beneficial Users are able to fully participate to achieve and maintain sustainable groundwater conditions in the Basin.
- ③ The Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA) represents and preserves the water interests of all Beneficial Uses / Users in the Basin equitably and transparently. The SMGWA is a governing public agency, granted with regulatory authorities as provided in SGMA, to ensure that the Basin achieves and maintains sustainable groundwater conditions.
- ④ Consistent with SGMA, groundwater users that extract two acre-feet of groundwater or less per year for domestic purposes are defined as “de minimis.” This classification limits the statutory financial and measurement responsibilities of these groundwater extractors and is a means through which some SGMA-related burdens are minimized. The SMGWA is committed to the definition of de minimis and will explore opportunities to minimize SGMA-related impacts to all groundwater extractors.

SANTA MARGARITA GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Guiding Principles

⑤ While the Member agencies and participants serving as Directors of the SMGWA Board have unique responsibilities to serve their respective organizations and interests, these individuals also have a sworn responsibility (as signatory parties to the Joint Powers Agreement that formed the SMGWA) to serve the interests and regulatory authorities of the SMGWA in its required role to identify, achieve and maintain sustainable groundwater conditions in the Basin. SMGWA Directors and staff are committed to fulfill this SGMA-specific responsibility.

⑥ In addition to its statutory responsibilities and authorities, the SMGWA is committed to provide consistent, transparent educational opportunities for all Beneficial Users about water resources, land uses and water management in the Basin.

⑦ Historic groundwater management, surface water management and land use practices in the Basin have created overdraft conditions in some of the underlying aquifers. The practices that created overdraft conditions were not sustainable and the practices that took place will not be repeated by any member of the SMGWA nor any Beneficial User in the Basin.

⑧ Future sustainable groundwater conditions will depend on Basin land uses and water demand targets being in balance with available water resources. The SMGWA is committed to work with land use agencies in the Basin to promote land use practices and water demand targets that achieve sustainable water resources.

SANTA MARGARITA GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Guiding Principles

- ⑨ The SMGWA will ensure that a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) is in place by and after January 2022. Actions to achieve sustainable conditions will be described in the GSP for the Basin. Objectives and thresholds may be set Basin-wide, or may be defined differently for unique parts of the Basin in "Management Areas" (as allowed for under SGMA).
- ⑩ Beyond minimum sustainability thresholds and objectives described in the GSP, the SMGWA will examine possibilities to recover / restore the Basin's aquifers and restore tributary base flows to the best extent possible.
- ⑪ SMGWA members and Beneficial Users may have different requirements under different water resource conditions to ensure that minimum thresholds are achieved or exceeded. These potential different requirements will be defined in the GSP and implemented by the SMGWA.
- ⑫ Actions to achieve sustainable outcomes, report outcomes to the State and maintain the daily activities of the SMGWA will require consistent funding. Financial contributions to support this work will be proportionally distributed among the SMGWA membership and many Beneficial Users, based on impacts and benefits to groundwater and surface water resources. Specific proportional contributions will be determined in the future.
- ⑬ The SMGWA also recognizes its duty to taxpayers, ratepayers and future generations to ensure that our financial resources are used effectively and responsibly as a tool to promote sustainable groundwater conditions.

SANTA MARGARITA GROUNDWATER AGENCY

Guiding Principles

14 Integrated water management is a set of methods to extract, transport, store, use and share groundwater and surface water throughout a groundwater basin to ensure a resilient water supply for all water users. To support SGMA objectives and Basin-wide water needs, the SMGWA will pursue an integrated water management approach for this Basin. An integrated water management approach will honor the social, cultural, natural and economic diversity of the Basin. It will capitalize on the diverse water resources throughout the Basin and will seek to ensure that all Beneficial Users have necessary water resources. An integrated water management approach may rely on but may not be limited to:

- Science-based decision-making.
- Projects and Methods to recover and restore the Basin aquifers.
- Collective and individual groundwater use requirements to ensure that groundwater elevations are not depleted below minimum thresholds.

15 Discussions between SMGWA Directors, Directors and staff, and SMGWA representatives and Beneficial Users to address the above responsibilities and outcomes may be challenging at times. Consistent with the SMGWA Board of Directors Code of Conduct (as presented in Appendix A of the SMGWA Bylaws), the SMGWA will conduct these discussions at all times in a collaborative manner with a commitment to respectful civil discourse between all participants.