



Strategic Planning for Managing Groundwater: Workbook

Siskiyou County Groundwater
Sustainability Agency

Board Workshop
February 2023





Pre-Work

This Workbook includes required Pre-Work. Board members should come to the Workshop prepared to share their high-level responses to the **Discussion Questions** under with Agenda Items 2, 3, and 4. Pre-Work assignments are marked with the icon above.

AGENDA

Strategic Planning for Managing Groundwater Board Workshop

Tuesday February 7, 2023, 1:00 PM start

Board of Supervisors Chambers, 311 Fourth Street (2nd Floor), Yreka CA, 96097

1. [Call to Order, Introductions, Agenda Review, and Context Setting](#)
Matt Parker, Siskiyou County GSA
Emily Finnegan and Marisa Perez-Reyes, Stantec
2. [Stakeholder Assessment Findings](#)
Presentation by Emily Finnegan and Marisa Perez-Reyes, Stantec followed by Board discussion
3. [Strategy Document Vision Statement](#)
Discussion Item
4. [Goals and Strategies](#)
Discussion Item
5. [Public Comment](#)
6. [Next Steps, Adjourn](#)
Emily Finnegan and Marisa Perez-Reyes, Stantec

This Workbook includes informational material to accompany each Agenda Item, along with space for Board members to document their reflections on the Discussion Questions.

Also included are three Attachments which supplement the background material.

1. BACKGROUND

This Board Workshop is to provide an informational update and seek direction on the development of a Multi-Basin Management Strategy Document (Strategy Document).

Workshop participants will review and confirm the Vision Statement and provide high-level input on the draft Goals and Strategies, with the intent of reaching consensus to move forward.

Purpose of the Strategy Document

The Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) acts as Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and plan manager for the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) of the Shasta Valley, Butte Valley, and Scott Valley Basins, under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Stantec is preparing the Strategy Document through an effort funded the by California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Facilitation Support Services Program.

In January 2022, the District submitted these three GSPs to DWR for review. To meet the compliance requirements of SGMA, the GSA must maintain groundwater conditions consistent with the thresholds set for each sustainable management criteria as defined in the GSPs and complete administrative functions such as updating the GSPs every five years and submitting annual reports to DWR. Those responsibilities are collectively referred to as “GSP implementation” and will carry forward through 2042. The Strategy Document is intended to identify, catalog, and prioritize the GSA’s near- and long-term organizational, managerial, financial, and institutional goals and strategies, consistent with its SGMA responsibilities for the three basins.

Stakeholder Assessment

Stantec staff conducted interviews with interests across the basins to understand the needs, challenges, goals, and objectives to be reflected in the Strategy Document. Interview Participants and Interview Questions are included in **Attachments 1 and 2** and respectively. Findings from the Stakeholder Assessment are reported in **Attachment 3** and will be summarized at this Workshop.

Strategy Document Components

The Strategy Document is guided by a Vision Statement and organized by three Goals, with corresponding Strategies and Tactics. Definitions for each of these terms are as follows:

- Vision Statement – a description of the region’s future end state that will result from proactive, strategic activities
- Goal – the desired end state of activities; foundation of planning process, supports the overall vision. *Answers the question of “what”*
- Strategy – a general approach or method for achieving a goal. *Answers the question of “how,” in general terms*
- Tactic – a specific action that will be taken to fulfill a strategy. *Answers the question of “how,” in specific terms*

Prior to and during this Workshop, Board members will review and revise the Vision Statement, Goals, and Strategies. Tactics will be identified and detailed in a second Board Workshop.

2. ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis

A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis was completed based on information received through the interviews to help the GSA visualize how its ideas for goals and objectives might align with potential opportunities and threats, as well as strengths and weaknesses. See **Attachment 3** and the PowerPoint presentation included as part of this Workshop for supplemental information.

Strengths:

- Shared interest in collaborating on SGMA implementation
- High degree of consensus among stakeholders around groundwater recharge and getting projects started sooner rather than later
- Robust collective knowledge of local issues and priorities among Advisory Committee members and other local stakeholders

Weaknesses:

- GSA lacks staffing capacity to effectively support GSP implementation and a particular need for technical staff and additional staff support for the pursuit and management of grants to offset the costs of GSP implementation
- Need for more clearly defined process for making recommendations and decisions in GSP implementation among Advisory Committee members, GSA staff, and GSA Board members, primarily related to monitoring of sustainable management criteria and minimum thresholds

Opportunities:

- Proactively manage groundwater resources and define how the GSA can be better supported by other agencies and institutions. These things could be accomplished through more regular communication and clearly defined relationships (e.g., coordination agreements) with other public agencies at the local, state, and federal scale, and among District departments
- Increased engagement with Advisory Committee members to: leverage their combined wealth of knowledge to identify project opportunities and potential funding sources, receive support with funding applications, implement projects, and support groundwater monitoring
- Increased public engagement and education throughout GSP implementation

Threats:

- Unknown impacts of SGMA on agriculture, economic revenue, and property values
- Unknown long-term cost of GSP implementation and the as-yet-to-be-developed financing plan
- Unknown effects of future changes to state regulations and curtailment orders



Pre-Work: Board members should come prepared to share their high-level responses to these **Discussion Questions** during the Workshop.

Discussion Questions

Do any of the Stakeholder Assessment findings surprise you?

Is there anything you would like to be clarified or augmented?

3. STRATEGY DOCUMENT VISION STATEMENT

A draft vision statement was developed in advance of the interviews, and each participant had the opportunity to voice agreement or offer modifications. The vision statement has been refined to reflect feedback received during the interviews. Two versions are available for the Board's consideration:

Option 1:

"The District will collaboratively work towards effective groundwater management to achieve and maintain the sustainability of the Shasta Valley, Butte Valley, and Scott Valley Basins, consistent with SGMA and the near- and long-term goals defined in the GSPs, with consideration given to all beneficial groundwater users."

Option 2:

"The District will collaboratively work towards effective groundwater management to achieve and maintain the sustainability of the Shasta Valley, Butte Valley, and Scott Valley Basins, consistent with SGMA and the near- and long-term goals defined in the GSPs, with **equitable** consideration given to all beneficial groundwater users."



Pre-Work:

Board members should come prepared to share their high-level responses to these Discussion Questions during the Workshop.

Discussion Questions

What would keeping or getting rid of the word "equitable" mean?

How does the GSA want to move forward?

4. GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Based on the stakeholder assessment, three Goals and two corresponding Strategies each have been developed (see table below and supplemental PowerPoint slides). **Board members should review the Goals and Strategies in advance of the Workshop** and come prepared to offer high-level input during this discussion.

Due to time constraints, Board members are asked to limit their comments to the bigger picture.

The goal of Workshop 1 is to reach Board consensus on the Goals and Strategies, pending any corrections or additions offered during the workshop.

Goals	Strategies	
Communications and Engagement (CE): Demonstrate the value of SGMA, the GSA, and GSP implementation to the public through regular engagement, education, and communication activities related to GSP implementation.	CE.1 Increase transparency and the accessibility of data and information to the public (e.g., on the GSA website) so that groundwater users in the basin can clearly understand the status of the basin and monitoring efforts.	CE.2 Increase education and engagement of stakeholders and other interested parties on GSP implementation activities, with a focus on communicating information related to projects and management actions and GSP funding and fees.
Decision-Making (DM): Clarify GSA decision-making roles and responsibilities and the decision-making support processes that inform GSP implementation.	DM.1 Better define the decision-making roles and responsibilities of GSA Board members, GSA staff, and Advisory Committee members and identify where additional staffing resources may be needed.	DM.2 Establish regular communications and strengthen partnerships and projects with public agencies and key basin stakeholders.
Funds and Resources (FR): Develop and implement a sustainable funding and resourcing strategy for GSP implementation and GSA administration that minimizes impacts to residents and ensures adequate GSA staff resourcing to effectively implement the GSPs.	FR.1 Catalog GSP implementation and administration costs, determine what additional funding and staff resources may be needed, and identify how those remaining costs will be covered, with a priority on minimizing impacts to residents and identifying sustainable funding sources.	FR.2 Secure grant and other external funding sources to support groundwater sustainability efforts within and across the basins.



Pre-Work: Board members should come prepared to share their high-level responses to these **Discussion Questions** during the Workshop.

Goal or Strategy	Discussion Question(s):
CE Demonstrate the value of SGMA, the GSA, and GSP implementation to the public through regular engagement, education, and communication activities related to GSP implementation.	Do you agree or disagree with this goal? What should be changed?

<p>CE.1 Increase transparency and the accessibility of data and information to the public (e.g., on the GSA website) so that groundwater users in the basin can clearly understand the status of the basin and monitoring efforts.</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this strategy? What should be changed?</p>
<p>CE.2 Increase education and engagement of stakeholders and other interested parties on GSP implementation activities, with a focus on communicating information related to projects and management actions and GSP funding and fees.</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this strategy? What should be changed?</p>
<p>What other strategies related to communication and engagement might we be missing?</p>	



Pre-Work: Board members should come prepared to share their high-level responses to these **Discussion Questions** during the Workshop.

Goal or Strategy	Discussion Question(s):
<p>DM Clarify GSA decision-making roles and responsibilities and the decision-making support processes that inform GSP implementation.</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this goal? What should be changed?</p>
<p>DM.1 Better define the decision-making roles and responsibilities of GSA Board members, GSA staff, and Advisory Committee members and identify where additional staffing resources may be needed.</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this strategy? What should be changed?</p> <p>How can staffing gaps be determined?</p>

<p>DM.2 Establish regular communications and strengthen partnerships and projects with public agencies and key basin stakeholders.</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this strategy? What should be changed?</p> <p>What partnerships should the GSA focus on? And what topics should each partnership focus on? (i.e., topic for coordination agreement)?</p>
<p>What other strategies related to decision-making might we be missing?</p>	



Pre-Work: Board members should come prepared to share their high-level responses to these *Discussion Questions* during the Workshop.

Goal or Strategy	Discussion Question(s):
<p>FR Develop and implement a sustainable funding and resourcing strategy for GSP implementation and GSA administration that minimizes impacts to residents and ensures adequate GSA staff resourcing to effectively implement the GSPs</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this goal? What should be changed?</p>
<p>FR.1 Catalog GSP implementation and administration costs, determine what additional funding and staff resources may be needed, and identify how those remaining costs will be covered, with a priority on minimizing impacts to residents and identifying sustainable funding sources</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this strategy? What should be changed?</p>

<p>FR.2 Secure grant and other external funding sources to support groundwater sustainability efforts within and across the basins.</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with this strategy? What should be changed?</p> <p>Are there ways the GSA can be more effective in identifying and applying for funding? When will others lead on developing applications?</p>
<p>What other strategies related to funding and resources might we be missing?</p>	

5. NEXT STEPS

After the Workshop

A Workshop Summary will be posted on the GSA website.

The Vision Statement, Goals, and Strategies will be finalized based on input received during the Workshop. The final versions will be distributed to Workshop attendees and Board concurrence will be collected by the GSA Plan Manager.

Information about Workshop 2 will be distributed to the SGMA interested parties list.

Pre-Work for Workshop 2

Example Tactics (specific actions the GSA may take to fulfill the given Strategies) will be drafted and distributed to GSA Board members in advance of the next Workshop. Board members should consider the examples and prepare their own to put forward for consideration.

Workshop 2

The second Board Workshop about the Strategy Document will be held in Spring of this year. During the Workshop, members of the GSA Board, Advisory Committee, and public will identify Tactics the GSA will employ to meet the Goals and Strategies. Additionally, Workshop participants will sort Tactics by whether they will be implemented in the near (1-5 years) or long (5-20 years) term.

Final Strategy Document

A Summary of the second Workshop will be posted on the GSA website. The Tactics will be finalized and distributed to Workshop attendees.

Stantec will prepare the Final Strategy Document by June of this year. The Strategy Document will be presented to the Board for approval and posted online.

The Final Strategy Document may serve as a tool for the GSA to use to take action toward implementing their GSPs in compliance with SGMA.

Attachment 1: Interview Participants

	Role/Responsibility of Interviewee	Date of Interview
1.	Butte Valley Advisory Committee Chair	September 23
2.	GSA Board Member	September 27
3.	Scott Valley Advisory Committee Chair	September 27
4.	GSA Board Member	September 28
5.	GSA Board Member	September 28
6.	Shasta Valley Advisory Committee Chair	September 29
7.	GSA Board Member	September 29
8.	Scott Valley Resident – Residential Interest	October 11
9.	GSA Plan Manager	October 13
10.	GSA Board Member	October 14
11.	Additional GSA Staff	November 2
12.	Scott-Shasta Watermaster District	November 2
13.	California Trout – Environmental Interest	November 18
14.	Siskiyou County Farm Bureau – Agricultural Interest	November 21

Note: A Tribal representative was contacted for interview but declined to participate in the initial assessment.

Attachment 2: Questionnaire

1. Do you agree or disagree with the working draft of the Strategy Document Vision Statement (below)? What should be changed?

Vision Statement Working Draft: The District will work towards effective groundwater management to improve the sustainability of the Shasta Valley, Butte Valley, and Scott Valley Basins, consistent with SGMA and the near- and long-term goals within those subbasins.

2. Describe your perspective on what the GSA's near- (3-5 years) and long-term (20+ years) organizational and managerial goals should be. Organizational goals relate to GSA staffing and organizational structures, whereas managerial goals relate to GSA operation and management.
 - a. What would success look like for each?
 - b. For the basins to achieve sustainability in these areas, what changes need to be made?
3. Describe your perspective on what the GSA's near- and long-term financial goals should be. Financial goals relate to the desired end state for GSA funding and financial planning processes.
 - a. Describe how to measure success.
 - b. What changes would need to be made for the GSA to achieve these goals?
4. Describe your perspective on what the GSA's near- and long-term institutional goals should be. This is regarding the GSA's relationship to other institutions and authorities.
 - a. Describe how to measure success.
 - b. For the basins to achieve sustainability, what changes would need to be made?
5. For the goals you have identified today, which ones should be prioritized in the Strategy Document and why?
 - a. Do any stand out as "low-hanging fruit" – i.e., easier or more feasible to implement?
6. We'd like to understand the history of collaboration on groundwater management in Siskiyou County.
 - a. Where has collaboration been successful and why? What hasn't worked in previous collaborative processes and why?
 - b. What would collaboration on groundwater management look like for these subbasins?
7. What challenges do you foresee when trying to develop the Strategy Document? What challenges do you foresee when trying to implement it? Challenges may be of a political, financial, legal, organizational, or technical nature, for example.
8. Given your relationship to the GSA, what are your expectations for the Strategy Document? How would you measure success in development and implementation of the Strategy Document?
9. Later this fall, there will be two Board Workshops to work as a group and further refine the goals and objectives of the Strategy Document. We would very much like for you to continue contributing to this effort. Are you available for either of the following dates and times? (Note that the second Workshop will be held in early 2023, but we are not polling for that date right now.)
 - a. Option 1 (preferred)
 - b. Option 2 (alternative)
10. Is there anything else you would like to discuss related to the Strategy Document? Any other thoughts, ideas, questions, feedback?

Attachment 3: Assessment Memo

To:	Matt Parker Siskiyou County Flood Control District GSA	From:	Marisa Perez-Reyes, Emily Finnegan Sacramento, CA (C Street)
File:	184032016	Date:	December 2, 2022

Reference: Assessment Memo – Multi-Basin Management Strategy Document

This Assessment Memo documents the interviews conducted to support development of the Siskiyou County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Multi-Basin Management Strategy Document (Strategy Document).

The Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) acts as GSA and plan manager for the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) of the Shasta Valley, Butte Valley, and Scott Valley Basins, under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Stantec is preparing the Strategy Document through an effort funded the by California Department of Water Resources Facilitation Support Services Program.

Purpose

The Strategy Document is intended to identify, catalog, and prioritize the District's near- and long-term organizational, managerial, financial, and institutional goals and strategies, consistent with its SGMA responsibilities for the three basins.

This Assessment Memo provides the foundation for the Strategy Document development by summarizing the insights of key basin stakeholders and identifying potential goals for the Strategy Document to be elaborated and refined during Board workshops scheduled for early 2023.

Methodology

In order to understand the needs, challenges, goals, and objectives to be reflected in the Strategy Document, the five District Board of Supervisors (Board); three Advisory Committee chairs; GSA staff; and additional agricultural, environmental, and residential interests in the basins were interviewed between September and November 2022, either in person or via teleconference, for a total of 14 interviews. Marisa Perez-Reyes (Stantec) and Emily Finnegan (Stantec) worked with the GSA Manager (Matt Parker) to formulate the interview questionnaire and schedule interviews. Participants received the questionnaire in advance of the interview and were provided a brief background on the goals of the Strategy Document. Each interview was approximately one hour in duration using the same 10 questions.

In the interviews, participants were asked to describe their perspectives on what the GSA's goals should be, how the GSA would measure success in those areas, and what changes would be required for the GSA to achieve those goals. Participants were also asked to define success and provide any expectations for the Strategy Document, as well as best methods for collaboration. The list of interview participants and interview questionnaire are included in Attachments 1 and 2, respectively.

A draft vision statement was developed in advance of the interviews, and each participant had the opportunity to voice agreement or offer modifications. The vision statement was refined to reflect feedback received during the interviews, and it now reads:

"The District will collaboratively work towards effective groundwater management to achieve and maintain the sustainability of the Shasta Valley, Butte Valley, and Scott Valley Basins, consistent with SGMA and the near- and long-term goals defined in the GSPs, with (equitable) consideration given to all beneficial groundwater users."

Interviewees expressed diverging opinions on whether “equitable” should be included in the vision statement. The Board should discuss this at the Workshop.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis

A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis was completed based on information received through the interviews to help the GSA visualize how its ideas for goals and objectives might align with potential opportunities and threats, as well as strengths and weaknesses.

The three main **strengths** that were identified include: (1) shared interest in collaborating on SGMA implementation, (2) high degree of consensus around groundwater recharge and getting projects started sooner rather than later, and (3) a robust collective knowledge of local issues and priorities among Advisory Committee members.

Several **weaknesses** were recognized. Interview participants generally agreed that the District lacks staffing capacity to effectively support GSP implementation. In particular, a need was identified for technical staff with backgrounds in biology and fisheries science and additional staff support for the pursuit and management of grants to offset the costs of GSP implementation. Interview participants noted that the GSA would benefit from a more clearly defined process for making recommendations and decisions in GSP implementation among Advisory Committee members, GSA staff, and GSA Board members, primarily related to monitoring of sustainable management criteria and minimum thresholds.

Opportunities were discovered in the SWOT analysis. The District has the opportunity to proactively manage groundwater resources and define how they can be better supported by other agencies and institutions. These things could be accomplished through more regular communication and clearly defined relationships (e.g., coordination agreements) with other public agencies at the local, state, and federal scale, and among District departments. Advisory Committee members expressed great interest in helping the GSA get projects in the ground, and their combined wealth of knowledge could be better utilized in GSP implementation to identify project opportunities and potential funding sources, support with funding applications, implement projects, and support groundwater monitoring. There is also an opportunity for increased public engagement and education throughout GSP implementation.

Some **threats** were noticed, which mostly translate to future unknowns. Interview participants expressed concerns about SGMA’s unknown impacts on agriculture, economic revenue, and property values. Another unknown factor is the long-term cost of GSP implementation and the as-yet-to-be-developed financing plan. Participants also expressed concern about the effects of future changes to state regulations and curtailment orders.

Initial Identification of Primary Goals

Based on the interviews, three primary goals were identified:

1. **Communications and Engagement (CE):** Demonstrate the value of SGMA, the GSA, and GSP implementation to the public through regular engagement, education, and communication activities related to GSP implementation.
2. **Decision-Making (DM):** Clarify GSA decision-making roles and responsibilities and the decision-making support processes that inform GSP implementation.
3. **Funds and Resources (FR):** Develop and implement a sustainable funding and resourcing strategy for GSP implementation and GSA administration that minimizes impacts to residents and ensures adequate GSA staff resourcing to effectively implement the GSPs.

These goals will be further explored in two Board workshops scheduled for early 2023.

Attachment 1: Interview Participants; Attachment 2: Questionnaire