

**2024 EASTERN SAN JOAQUIN SUBBASIN  
COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT  
PLAN UPDATE**

FINAL

December 2024

Prepared for:

The Groundwater Authority and Groundwater  
Sustainability Agencies of the Eastern San  
Joaquin Groundwater Subbasin

Prepared by:

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

**Acronyms and Abbreviations**

CWC	California Water Code
C&E Plan	Communications and Engagement
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
ESJ	Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin
ESJGWA	Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority
FSS	Facilitation Support Services
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
IPD	Interested Parties Database
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
PMA	Projects and Management Actions
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) and its member agencies would like to acknowledge the direct time, information, and collaboration of those that influenced and supported development of this 2024 Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (ESJ) Communications and Engagement Plan (C&E Plan) and its recommendations. Particularly, the ESJGWA and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) comprising it would like to thank:

- the respondents that participated in the GSA Managers Survey discussed in **Appendix B – GSA Manager Survey Results and Analysis** and interviewees that participated in the solo or small group interviews discussed in Section 3.1.1 of this document (both noted below in **Table 1-1**);
- the 120 respondents that participated in the 2023 Interested Parties Survey and 56 respondents that participated in the 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey discussed in **Appendix C – Interested Parties and Stakeholder Engagement Surveys: Results and Analysis**;
- the attendees of the 2024 Stakeholder Workshops #1 & #2;
- the facilitation consultant team that supported development of this document, Stantec Consulting Services Inc; and
- the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for their continued support of the region’s groundwater management efforts through the Facilitation Support Services (FSS) Program.

**Table 1-1. Additional Acknowledgements**

Name	Affiliation	Participant Role
David Breitenbucher	City of Manteca GSA	GSA Manager Survey and Interview
John S Villierme	Linden County Water District GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Joe Salzman	Lockeford CSD GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Jason Colombini	North San Joaquin WCD GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Scot Moody	Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Christy McKinnon	Stanislaus County GSA	GSA Manager Survey
John Herrick	South Delta Water Agency GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Brandon Nakagawa	South San Joaquin Irrigation District GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Justin Hopkins	Stockton East Water District GSA	GSA Manager Survey
Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla	Restore the Delta	Interview

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Participant Role</b>
Jeff Wagner	Small Farm	Interview
Richard Rodriguez	Small Farm	Interview
Mary Elizabeth	Sierra Club Delta-Sierra Group	Interview
David Breitenbucher	City of Manteca GSA	Interview
Mike Henry	Lockeford CSD GSA	Interview
Myron Blanton, Douglas Smith, and Barbara Kascht	Linden County Water District GSA	Interview

## INTRODUCTION

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) was formed in 2017 to coordinate the response to SGMA within the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (California Bulletin 118; 5-022.01). A Joint Powers Authority (JPA) establishes the ESJGWA, which is composed of 16 Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs): The ESJGWA is governed by a 16-member Board of Directors (ESJGWA Board) with one representative from each GSA.

The 16 GSA Members initially formed the ESJGWA to develop a single GSP for the entire Subbasin. On March 2, 2023, ESJGWA and its Member GSAs were notified by DWR that its 2022 ESJ Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)<sup>1</sup> was conditionally approved having been found for consistent with the statutory and regulatory requirements of SGMA. Currently, the ESJGWA serves to coordinate the implementation of the 2022 GSP and the 2024 GSP Amendments which is expected to be adopted by all 16 GSA Members by January 31, 2025.

This 2024 ESJ C&E Plan Update serves as a multi-year implementation strategy for the ESJGWA and its member agencies to engage with beneficial users and uses of groundwater in the region during implementation and management of an approved GSP. This document builds upon a June 2018 Stakeholder Engagement and Public Outreach Plan (2018 PO Plan) that was prepared to assist subbasin GSAs in the preparation and adoption of the GSP. It also functions as a continuation of the work previously conducted under DWR's FSS Program to develop a C&E Framework. It serves as a menu of C&E options from which the GWA and its member agencies can choose from as they to strive to build capacity under SGMA for greater and more intentional engagement with the public when it comes to groundwater management.

### 2.1 Background

Passage of SGMA served to establish a framework to help protect groundwater resources over the long-term and ended California's designation as the last western U.S. state to regulate groundwater. It is comprised from a three-bill legislative package, including AB 1739 (Dickinson), SB 1168 (Pavley), and SB 1319 (Pavley), and subsequent statewide regulations prepared by DWR. In signing SGMA, then-Governor Jerry Brown emphasized that "groundwater management in California is best accomplished locally."

To accomplish the governor's emphasis, the State Legislature and Regulators provided GSAs specific direction on matters such as agency formation and milestones for GSP adoption and annual reports. They did not, however, prescribe specific methodologies for how communication and engagement with beneficial users and users of groundwater within a basin, stating "that expertise of stakeholders may

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<sup>1</sup> The current GSP Update was drafted concurrently with this C&E Plan and reflects insights collected during that period of time.

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increase the chance that the GSAs are using best available information and best available science for GSP development.”<sup>2</sup>

## 2.2 About ESJGWA

The ESJGWA is a collaborative forum and coordination aid for the 16 signatory member agencies (i.e., ESJ Subbasin GSAs) it is comprised of.<sup>3</sup> Those member agencies, operate under a JPA executed in February 2017 that establishes a governance and coordination agreement for GSP development and implementation. This JPA denotes that all SGMA-specific powers are remanded to the GSAs but allows for coordination support to be provided by the ESJGWA.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, the ESJGWA’s membership includes two multi-agency GSAs. The Counties of Stanislaus and Calaveras, Rock Creek Water District, and the Calaveras Water District comprise the Eastside San Joaquin GSA; meaning, each agency within the Eastside San Joaquin GSA functions not as an individual GSA but as a member agency of that entity operating as one. The South San Joaquin Irrigation District along with the Cities of Ripon and Escalon form the South San Joaquin GSA and operate under a similar agreement.

In the drafting of the ESJGWA JPA, GSAs were adamant that their autonomy would be preserved and all assets (i.e., water rights and facilities) would be respected. The notion of autonomy also extends to communications and engagement which should be clearly denoted when the ESJGWA is communicating on behalf of the entire Subbasin and when a GSA is communicating on behalf of its own interests. This means, that while coordination, communication, and facilitation support may be offered by the ESJGWA, it is up to the each of the individual GSAs to either implement C&E actions for all requirements of SGMA or provide consent, guidance, and/or funding to the ESJGWA to collectively do so on their behalf. For the purposes of this document, this Communications and Engagement Plan is drafted with the intent that the ESJGWA would fund and implement collectively the options presented unless otherwise noted in the document. This C&E plan does not supersede or alleviate any individual laws, regulations, or GSA requirements that are the responsibility of a Member GSA.

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<sup>2</sup> DWR Guidance Document for Groundwater Sustainability Plan Stakeholder Communication and Engagement, 2018

<sup>3</sup> The ESJGWA’s member agencies include Central Delta Water Agency GSA, Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA, City of Lodi GSA, City of Manteca GSA, City of Stockton GSA, Eastside San Joaquin GSA (composed of Calaveras County Water District, Stanislaus County, and Rock Creek Water District), Linden County Water District GSA, Lockeford Community Services District GSA, North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA, Oakdale Irrigation District GSA, San Joaquin County GSA, South Delta Water Agency GSA, South San Joaquin GSA, Stockton East Water District GSA, and Woodbridge Irrigation District GSA.

<sup>4</sup> For more background information regarding SGMA, the ESJ Subbasin, the GSAs’ decision-making process, and coordination, please see the “Introduction and Background” section of the 2018 PO Plan or the introductory chapter of the Subbasin’s GSP.

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### 2.3 Purpose and Process

In 2023, the ESJGWA secured facilitation support through DWR's FSS Program. Development of a C&E Framework was included within the scope of work provided. To better coordinate the C&E Plan development process with the Development of the ESJGWA GSP Amendments, the ESJGWA received another round of facilitation support through the FSS Program in 2024, and work continued—shifting the C&E Framework document to this C&E Plan.

This document completes the work started through the 2023 C&E Framework. It serves as an addendum and includes updated information regarding outreach and engagement based on input received through a data collection process (inclusive of direct input from interested parties) conducted as part of this document's development. The C&E Plan does not replace any existing information or commitments outlined in the 2018 PO Plan. Rather, it adds to, updates, expands upon, and/or clarifies the existing content to act as a menu of potential GSA outreach and engagement options that align with GSP implementation activities and the evolving needs of interested parties in the region.

The C&E Plan provides a roadmap for potential activities that supports the ESJGWA as it fulfills its coordination and collaboration objectives under SGMA; assists various ESJGWA committees fulfill their decision-making support functions for ESJGWA and subbasin GSAs; and assists each individual GSA as they work achieve their operational, jurisdictional, and statutory obligations under SGMA. As such, it is anticipated that outreach, communications, and engagement during the implementation phase will build off the roadmap established within this C&E Plan and will take into consideration feedback received from various interested parties.

The ESJGWA envisions that annually, in preparation of the ESJGWA's Annual Work Plan and Budget (July 1 – June 30), the options presented in this C&E Plan would be evaluated, selected, and incorporated for adoption by the ESJGWA Board. The ESJGWA's Annual Work Plan and Budget processes are based on the collaborative and consensus building themes enumerated in its JPA. Once adopted by the Board, ESJGWA staff will have clear direction and funding to implement the approved C&E options for that Fiscal Year.

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## 3.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

### 3.1 Data Collection: Document Review and Input From Interested Parties

This C&E Plan identifies a variety of tactics, frequencies, and methods for engaging with and soliciting input from interested parties (i.e., beneficial uses and users of groundwater) during the GSP development process. **Appendix A** contains the results of a full communications and engagement inventory that delineates what those activities and commitments were during the GSP development phase as well as areas for improvement noted by interested parties. The outreach, communication, and engagement tools and tactics identified in this C&E Plan were inspired by the needs and ideas presented by interested parties in either the digital surveys discussed in **Appendices B and C**, during the interview process discussed below, and provided live by attendees of the 2024 Stakeholder Workshops.

#### 3.1.1 One-on-One and Small Group Interviews

In addition to the digital surveys, seven individual or small group interviews were conducted between March and July of 2023 with key interested parties in the ESJ Subbasin to gather feedback on communication and engagement strategies utilized during GSP development, what was viewed as successful, and what areas for improvement were of note to those interested parties and should be focused on during GSP implementation. These interviewees were chosen so as to cover as many beneficial uses and users of groundwater possible. Similar to the survey respondents, Interviewees were asked to reflect on:

- Their (or their community's) level of familiarity with groundwater and SGMA,
- Their (or their community's) use of or access to groundwater and other water supplies,
- Their level of involvement in the GSP development process,
- Any barriers to participation they or others in their community encountered,
- Implementation activities of interest to the community,
- Preferred communication methods and frequencies, and
- Existing communication platforms, public information campaigns, or local events the GSAs could use to share information about GSP implementation.

In all, contact with 17 individuals from various beneficial use/user groups was attempted multiple times via phone and email to invite interview candidates to participate; however, only seven were able to be reached and were available to take part in the process. Despite this complication, interviewees still represented diverse interests, including the following groups: groundwater dependent ecosystems, disadvantaged communities, municipal and industrial, agricultural, domestic well, and environmental water users.

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#### 3.1.2 Stakeholder Workshops #1 & #2

In 2024, the ESJGWA supported two Stakeholder Workshops to gather input on the GSP Amendment. The first meeting was an in-person public workshop held from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on June 26, 2024. This was the first in the duo of workshops aimed at educating and soliciting input from members of the public about the framework of SGMA, key topics related to the development of the Subbasin's C&E Plan Update, and specific projects or management actions from the GSP for the ESJ Subbasin.

Both Workshop were held in the Mokelumne Classroom at the Robert J Cabral Agricultural Center (2101 E Earhart Ave Ste 100, Stockton, CA 95206). A total of 23 individuals attended—inclusive of technical staff, the facilitation team, and GSA representatives.

The ESJGWA advertised Workshops #1 & #2 via postings on the ESJGWA and GSAs' websites and social media accounts as well as through emails to the ESJ Subbasin's Interested Parties Database. Direct invitations were also sent via email to various known interested parties and local community organizations.

Workshop #1 started with opening remarks from Brandon Nakagawa, South San Joaquin GSA representative and temporary staff support to the ESJGWA. He was then followed by a presentation on the C&E Plan development process by Stantec. Finally, the workshop ended with a presentation from Steve Schwabauer on the Draft Domestic Well Mitigation Program being developed as a management action for the Subbasin.

Workshop #2 was also an in-person public workshop held from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on July 17, 2024 at the same location as the first. There were 18 attendees inclusive of consultant and GSA staff. This workshop focused on key topics related to updates regarding the development of the Subbasin's C&E Plan Update and its corresponding Stakeholder Engagement Survey as well as provide them with an overview of the requirements of the Brown Act.

The ESJGWA advertised both workshops via postings on the ESJGWA and GSAs' websites and social media accounts as well as through emails to the ESJ Subbasin's Interested Parties Database. Direct invitations were also sent via email to various known interested parties and local community organizations.

One clear area for improvement discussed during each meeting was outreach and advertisement for these workshops. While decently attended, the workshop attendees mostly comprised water industry professionals. Strategies discussed for engaging general members of the public and other beneficial groundwater use and user groups included clearly and more timely agenda posting as well as more direct and intentional engagement with underrepresented communities and speakers of other languages.

#### 3.1.3 Noted Areas for Improvement

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** During the data collection phase of this document's development, Stantec reviewed a number of documents created by or related to the Subbasin GSAs and their existing actions or commitments for SGMA-specific outreach. These documents included the following:

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- Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin 2022 GSP:
  - Section 1.3 – Notice and Communication
  - Section 6.0 – Projects and Management Actions
  - Section 7.7 – Public Outreach
  - Appendix 1-H: Stakeholder Engagement and Public Outreach Plan
  - Appendix 1-I: Public Comments Received
  - Appendix 1-J: Response to Public Comments
- Stanislaus County Superior Court: CalSPA v. Interested Persons re Validity of Eastern San Joaquin GSGS Plan (March 16, 2020)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR) GSP Assessment Staff Report (January 28, 2022) (i.e., GSP determination letter)
- 2022–2023 San Joaquin County Grand Jury Report for Case #0622 (June 26, 2023)

This review denoted more specific activities and tactics that not only align with the concerns and suggestions provided by survey and interview respondents, but it could be taken a step beyond the direct input received in order to further bolster the GSAs' new approach to GSP implementation. (For more detailed information concerning the outcomes of the data collection, please see **Appendix A.**)

Between the documents reviewed and direct feedback provided by interested parties in the surveys and interviews, there seemed to be a consensus among most respondents that the ESJ Subbasin's GSAs made a good-faith effort to communicate and engage with the public during the development of the GSP but that there were gaps or inefficiencies in those efforts that persist in GSP implementation, leading to a consistent lack of adequate support in key areas. Respondents noted that their communities held collective fears regarding:

- possible demand reduction strategies that might be overly limiting and disruptive to their lives and livelihoods;
- a lack of clear answers and progress regarding long-term sustainability approaches;
- a lack of consistent and/or effective engagement with vulnerable and/or underrepresented communities;
- high water management costs and raised water rates as a result (i.e., a lack of public understanding around the GSAs' approach funding);
- overly bureaucratic processes that might limit the effectiveness of the GSAs and the ESJGWA if things escalate beyond the local level;
- and a significant lack of transparency in a number of capacities but particularly in how, where, and when GSAs share information as well as engage with each other and the public.

Survey respondents indicated that they or their communities generally lack knowledge about current groundwater conditions and the current status of projects and management actions as reflected through their medium to high level of concern about current the quality and levels of the Subbasin's water resources. This could indicate varying levels of understanding regarding the technical information included in the Subbasin's GSP or Annual reports or perhaps a need for editorial reviews with the public eye in mind.

Water management professionals that participated in this data collection process noted similar concerns. These interested parties voiced concerns about how to effectively garner and maintain public interest in water management issues, how to manage expectations versus GSA capabilities, how to connect with

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interested parties in meaningful ways and engage underrepresented groundwater users, and—in light of some of the information presented to them during the data collection phase—how to work together to fully achieve and maintain C&E-specific SGMA compliance in light of evolving staff and finance resource needs as well as uncertainty around the legislation. Water managers positively received the feedback provided by other beneficial uses and users in their communities but struggled to figure out how to close the gaps amidst those barriers.

Overall, water managers along with non-water manager surveyed and included in the interviews had a number of concerns and hopes that aligned with one another, including:

- better GSA and ESJGWA coordination;
- increased clarity surrounding GSA and ESJGWA governance structures and responsibilities;
- better management, availability of, and transparency for SGMA-related documentation;
- making technical information more easily digestible;
- solution-based communication rather than philosophy or process-based communication;
- providing clear and regular updates regarding Subbasin conditions as well as projects and management actions;
- providing greater opportunities for engagement in formats, time, and/or locations more convenient for interested parties;
- and increased direct outreach to underrepresented groundwater users.

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** The 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey picked up where efforts from 2023 left off under a new DWR's FSS Program. Collected from the survey responses included most survey responses stemming from representatives from the agricultural sector and least representation from general citizens. Out of the GSAs coordinating SGMA efforts within the Subbasin, respondents using water falling under the oversight of the Eastside San Joaquin GSA had the most respondents and both Oakdale Irrigation District GSA and San Joaquin County GSA had the least amount of survey respondents.

Although the majority of respondents outlined their strong understanding of SGMA in general, there were still a collection of respondents who carried little to no understanding of SGMA and SGMA related documents and efforts within the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin. A major area of improvement relating to this was the need outlined by respondents to make GSP-related documents more reader-friendly and accessible. Respondents suggested that having summaries prepared in layman's terms and / or geared towards diverse groundwater users and interest groups could help groundwater users within the Subbasin have a stronger understanding of SGMA efforts, projects, impacts and up-to-date groundwater conditions and quality.

Most respondents had a strong level of concern for groundwater levels and / or water quality throughout the Subbasin and felt that groundwater banking programs and incentivizing use of available surface water would be the most appropriate approaches to addressing unsustainable groundwater use.

## **4.0 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

This section draws on the findings of the data collection process described above to outline tools, activities, and strategies the ESJ Subbasin GSAs may employ to take action on the identified areas for improvement. The recommendations herein are organized pursuant to the requirements outlined in the CWC and DWR Emergency Regulations to help facilitate a clear path to SGMA compliance where communications and engagement are concerned. As mentioned, this C&E Plan builds on the 2023 C&E Framework as informed by survey respondents. All previous work efforts are published in the Appendices to this C&E Plan.

### **4.1 Recommendations for Activities and Tactics**

#### **4.1.1 Activities**

For the purposes of this C&E Plan, an activity serves as a category for types of beneficial uses and users of groundwater to be engaged throughout GSP implementation. At this time, it is recommended that the GSAs and ESJGWA work together to ensure that the following types of activities are prioritized in communications and engagement efforts. As many of the needs, initiatives, or tactics to be implemented overlap with one another, these activities should be viewed as opportunities for more intentional and detailed coordination between all responsible parties to maximize resources and make progress on the previously mentioned areas for improvement within the Subbasin. Additionally, by intentionally engaging with the public in this manner or coordinating their activities through these lenses, the GSAs may also find increased opportunities for collaboration with a number of possible community partners within the region.

- **Administrative Services**
  - This denotes tactics that benefit communication, coordination, and information/document management efforts and between or on behalf of the GSAs and ESJGWA.
- **Agricultural-Specific Engagement**
  - This denotes outreach tactics that target the Subbasin's large agricultural community.
- **Community Bridging Engagement**
  - This denotes outreach tactics that bridge the gaps in communication and understanding on groundwater and SGMA-related topics between groundwater users that reside in agricultural communities and those that reside in urban/metropolitan communities. This gap in communications and understanding is often referred to colloquially as the "ag-urban divide" in the water management community.
- **DAC-Specific Engagement**
  - This denotes outreach tactics that target the Subbasin's disadvantaged communities and underrepresented groundwater users as well as community organizations that focus on similar demographics.
- **Enviro-Specific Engagement**

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- This denotes outreach tactics that target the Subbasin’s environmental groundwater users and community organizations that focus on similar demographics.
- Multi-Party Engagement
  - This denotes outreach tactics that target the Subbasin’s groundwater users on a larger, compiled scale in order to communicate and engage with multiple types of interested parties at the same time. This strategy is particularly helpful where maximizing GSA/ESJGWA resources, leveraging external partnerships, and expanding engagement opportunities are concerned.
- Technical Advisory Committee
  - This denotes outreach tactics that target the technical expertise of the GSAs or ESJGWA in order to facilitate appropriate and transparent decisions and decision-making processes where groundwater management as is concerned and as aligned with SGMA.
- Urban-Specific Engagement
  - This denotes outreach tactics that target the Subbasin’s urban communities (i.e., beneficial uses and users of groundwater that work or reside in more metropolitan areas).

Based on the input from the data collection process as well as review of all relevant documents, the GSAs may consider several methods and strategies for improving outreach and engagement efforts during GSP implementation. Details regarding how these tactics were developed as well as specific, actionable suggestions that align with specific areas identified for improvement can be found in **Appendices A, B, C, and D** attached to this C&E Plan. The recommended tactics that are similar or connected to one another have been grouped into the following categories and all categories (or ungrouped tactics) have been organized so as to align with applicable codes and regulations. The relevant sections of the codes and regulations have been linked below, corresponding with the recommended tactic.

#### 4.1.2 Legislation Driven Priorities

##### Enterprise System Management and Transparency

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [SB 272 §6270.5\(a\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs and/or ESJGWA maintain a catalog of data management systems (e.g., interested parties databases). To maintain full transparency around the information collected, uses, and management processes for those systems, it is recommended that the GSAs (and/or ESJGWA) publish their methodology for how they maintain and use the data collected within these systems. This could be as simple as a memorandum included in the GSAs’ and/or ESJGWA website.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Memorandum
- **Responsible Parties:** GSAs with coordination and collaboration support from ESJGWA, as needed.

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#### 4.1.3 SGMA Driven Priorities

##### 4.1.3.1 Notification and Documentation Strategy

###### Communications and Engagement Tracker

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10723.8.\(a\)\(4\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** The level of communications and engagement SGMA requires that GSAs participate in necessitates a level or organization and record keeping that goes beyond the GSAs current practices. Therefore, it is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s) and with the support of the ESJGWA where necessary and feasible—that the GSAs establish a comprehensive tracker that catalogues the type and timing of outreach manually input by the GSAs. While the GSAs would be responsible for populating the tracker regularly, the tracker could be housed and maintained by the EJSGWA as part of its coordination duties. As an example, this format could look like a standard fillable PDF that all GSAs have access to. Upon completion of an outreach activity (e.g., meeting notification, public workshop, distribution of educational materials), the GSAs could then forward the completed (filled) copy outlining the details of that outreach activity to ESJGWA staff for cataloging into the database. This will also be helpful for reporting engagement statistics during meetings and in documents such as the Annual Report and the GSP's 5-year updates.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Fillable PDF and database that together comprise a communications and engagement tracker. This could also be a webform that funnels into a database.
- **Responsible Parties:** The ESJGWA could develop the initial tracker and support GSA updates to it, or the GSAs could maintain a copy (in identical formats for consistency) of their own and send regular updates to the ESJGWA for inclusion in meetings or workshops, reports, and each iteration of the GSP.

###### Outreach Toolkit

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [DWR Emergency Regulations §354.10 \(d\)\(1-4\)](#); [CWC §10727.8\(a\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** There is ample room for the public to be exposed to mixed messages and varying levels of detail with so many parties involved. Therefore, it is recommended that the GSAs—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s) and with the support of the ESJGWA where necessary and feasible—establish a suite of template materials for notices, announcements, meeting materials, and educational materials for use by the ESJGWA and its member agencies. These template materials would benefit from following the same style guide. The GSAs would need to decide what all they would like developed and what style they would like those materials to take on to maintain uniformity; the ESJGWA could undertake development of the toolkit with support of its staff or an Outreach Coordinator. Tangentially, collecting and maintaining a library of memorandums, guides, and/or white papers relevant to communications and engagement is recommended. Having easy access to beneficial guides in a central location may help facilitate an environment built on best practices where outreach is concerned.

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- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Template outreach materials and a collection of memos and guides focused on outreach best practices for GSAs to reference.
- **Responsible Parties:** ESJGWA

#### 4.1.4 Community Driven Priorities

##### Interested Parties Database

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10725.2c](#); [CWC §10723.2](#); [CWC §10723.4](#); and [CWC §10723.8.\(a\)\(4\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s) and with the support of the ESJGWA where necessary and feasible—that a shared and comprehensive Interested Parties Database (IPD) be established. This IPD should allow the ESJGWA and/or member agencies to distribute information to those in their jurisdiction or to the entire Subbasin. The new IPD should have fields that allow the sender to tailor the end reader by GSA jurisdiction, the entire subbasin, or even by target audience where possible. It is recommended that this database be housed by third-party such as through MailChimp or Constant Contact for easy maintenance, easy access for all responsible parties, standard style and messaging, and to track public receipt and engagement for all distributed content. This new IPD could be managed by the ESJGWA and/or the Subbasin's Outreach Coordinator. This will also be helpful for reporting engagement statistics during meetings and in documents such as the Annual Report and the GSP's 5-year updates.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** A combined and comprehensive Interested Parties Database that can be sorted by audience and track audience statistics to monitor engagement success (e.g., MailChimp or Constant Contact). Branded customer relationship management communications templates should be created for the ESJGWA and separately for the GSAs for consistency in communications going forward.
- **Responsible Parties:** ESJGWA with GSA contribution.

##### 4.1.4.1 Targeted Outreach

##### Speaker's Bureau

**Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10723.2](#)

**Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs develop and implement a Speaker's Bureau. This tactic involves developing relationships with non-governmental organizations and other community groups and attending/presenting at their meetings at a regular frequency to provide information on SGMA implementation. Attending the meetings and gatherings of these organizations or groups of community members may be one step in the right direction for trust building and improved engagement.

**Suggested Tools and Materials:** N/A

**Responsible Parties:** GSAs and ESJGWA

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#### Targeted Outreach

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10723.2](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs outline and implement specific efforts, possibly through a workgroup or committee as mentioned below, to identify, contact, educate, and engage with underrepresented groundwater users and non-English speakers on groundwater resource management in the Subbasin. This tactic would heavily benefit from close communication and coordination with local non-governmental organizations and other community groups. If a Speaker’s Bureau were to be implemented, this workgroup could be responsible for its management and implementation. This also includes engagement with underrepresented communities and speakers of other languages. It is, therefore, highly recommended that outreach materials be developed in a timely fashion, well ahead of engagement opportunities, to allow for translation in other languages where feasible. Those materials could then be distributed concurrently with their English counterparts and reach a wider audience. In tandem with that effort, verbal interpretation services may be utilized to build upon this effort and ensure more seamless engagement with attendees speaking languages other than English.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Guides and memos denoting strategies and best practices for engagement with underrepresented groundwater users. Preferred translation and interpretation vendors should also be identified. Community partnerships could be leaned here as well.
- **Responsible Parties:** GSAs with as needed support from ESJGWA

#### Workgroups and Committees

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10727.8\(a\)](#) and [DWR Emergency Regulations §354.10 \(d\)\(3\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs consider establishment of a Small Community/Under-represented Community Committee or workgroup to engage on well protection and other related projects and management actions that affect underrepresented groundwater users.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** N/A
- **Responsible Parties:** GSAs with as needed support from ESJGWA

#### Native American Heritage Commission

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10723.4](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs submit and receive Tribal and Sacred Land tribal contact list to the Native American Heritage Commission. Remaining apprised of and in contact with any recognized Indigenous communities within the region is not only a best practice, but a core component of inclusive engagement especially where project implementation is concerned. This could be a task undertaken by the suggested workgroup/committee noted above.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** N/A
- **Responsible Parties:** GSAs with as needed support from ESJGWA

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#### 4.1.4.2 Web Strategy

##### Website Management

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10725.2c](#) and [CWC §10723.4](#); [DWR Emergency Regulations §354.44 \(b\)\(1\)\(B\) and § 354.10 \(d\) \(1-4\)](#); [CWC §10727.8\(a\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs establish web pages on the ESJGWA and GSA websites, as applicable, to contain clear and accessible audience-specific mapping, informational resources, notification processes for meetings or events, the GSAs’ and ESJGWA’s administrative and financial records, project and management action updates, governance structures, up to date meeting information and materials, decision-making structures, etc. These webpages should receive regular updates with meeting information and materials, the status of ongoing projects and management actions noted in the GSP (or as relevant), and materials designed for public consumption. Regular can mean any number of different frequencies (e.g., weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly) as long as they are consistent. The GSAs must decide if, to comply with SGMA, they would prefer to maintain their own webpages on a “per GSA” basis or if they would prefer the ESJGWA to maintain a host of webpages on its site with all the aforesaid updated regularly on the GSAs’ behalf.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** N/A
- **Responsible Parties:**
  - Option 1 – GSAs maintain their own webpages with the elements listed above.
  - Option 2 – ESJGWA maintains all of the GSAs’ webpages on its website with the elements listed above for each GSA.
  - Option 3 – Some combination of options 2 and 3.

##### Comment Portal

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [CWC §10723.8.\(a\)\(4\)](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the GSAs and/or ESJGWA establish, maintain, and respond to public comments through an email contact portal. The portal should collect data on the commenter in a similar fashion as the IPD, and comments should be submitted with tags denoting them as general, project, or document specific. Links to the portal would be available and clearly mapped/labeled on ESJGWA and/or member agencies websites.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Comment Portal
- **Responsible Parties:** GSAs with as needed support from ESJGWA

#### 4.1.4.3 Staff Resources

##### Funding and Financing

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** [DWR Emergency Regulations §354.10](#)
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that the ESJGWA evaluate in coordination with its member agencies

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funding, grant or in-kind support resources for facilitation, media relations, or outreach coordination services so support the addition of new staff to its ranks, a dedicated outreach coordinator for the Subbasin, or some other combination of increased staff to support communications and engagement efforts related to GSP implementation.

- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Grants and Loans
- **Responsible Parties:** ESJGWA

#### Outreach Coordinator

- **Applicable Codes and Regulations:** All mentioned above
- **Reasoning:** It is recommended—in compliance with the above-mentioned code(s)/regulation(s)—that an outreach coordinator be contracted to assist the ESJGWA and its member agencies, as necessary, with the tactics listed in this C&E Plan as well as any other or ongoing communications and engagement efforts occurring in the Subbasin (as needed). This could be an internal staff member within the County's (as they are the plan manager) existing operations, a new hire, or consultant staff. The ESJGWA and GSAs would need to decide if/how to share costs surrounding the involvement of an outreach coordinator, if chosen.
- **Suggested Tools and Materials:** Outreach Coordinator
- **Responsible Parties:** ESJGWA

## 4.2 Resources and Support

This C&E Plan was developed with the understanding that the ESJGWA and the GSAs do not all possess the same staffing, financial, and/or community resources as their inter- and intra-basin counterparts in addition to varying levels of perceived interested from the public in each GSA's jurisdiction. As such, this section outlines a number of materials, agencies, and programs that the responsible parties may utilize and reach out to for SGMA-specific support in their communications and engagement efforts throughout GSP implementation to bridge those gaps as much as feasible.

### 4.2.1 Potential Community Partners

In addition to a number of new items, many of the activities and tactics described in this section are currently in use and can be improved by better utilizing existing communication channels and leveraging partnerships with trusted outreach partners such as industry associations or community organizations. These partnerships provide access to communication channels and events which can enhance not only the quality of SGMA communications but the quality as well throughout GSP implementation. Prospective partners should include special districts, agencies, and municipalities; community groups, non-profits, and industry associations; and local school districts and universities.

## 4.3 Adaptive Approach to Communication and Engagement

Though extensive outreach was conducted, the community input received to guide the development of this C&E Plan remains limited. Stakeholder involvement in interviews and surveys may have been limited due to technological challenges (e.g., limited access to internet), pandemic-related challenges (e.g., lack

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of in-person opportunities for input), limited availability, competing priorities, or simply misalignment of schedules. This document has been developed with the recognition that additional input is needed throughout GSP implementation to ensure that communications and engagement approaches reflect stakeholder needs and priorities. Opportunities for additional stakeholder input will be pursued as part of the outreach and engagement activities further detailed in Section 3.

As input from interested parties used to develop this C&E Plan was limited, additional feedback throughout GSP implementation is needed to ensure that communications, outreach, and engagement strategies and tactics align with the needs and priorities of groundwater users throughout GSP implementation. The GSAs intend to evaluate the effectiveness of communications and engagement activities at least annually throughout GSP implementation and adjust their approach to stay aligned with the needs of groundwater users, GSA representatives, current initiatives, legislation, and the overall schedule for GSP implementation. Some questions the GSAs and ESJGWA may use to help evaluate the quality of their engagement and assist with any pivoting that may need to occur include the following:

- Is there a shared understanding of the GSP's goals and its implementation timeline?
- Are interested parties educated about the GSP implementation process and their own role?
- Do all interested parties engaged feel included? Have their concerns listed in the documents included within **Appendices A, B, and C** been fully responded to and rectified?
- Has there been behavior changes related to the program goals? Or are improved trust/relationships evident among participants?
- Has the C&E Plan been fully implemented?
- Has the interested parties database been expanded?
- Have there been well-attended and robust public meetings at all of the necessary junctures?
- Are all established venues for interested parties open and effective?
- Are there formal mechanisms to assess outcomes and make improvements?

The GSAs may continue to use and build upon these outlined questions over the course of GSP implementation to encourage timely review and evaluation of engagement strategies. Data needed to support responses to these self-assessment questions may be derived from any number of feedback loops the GSAs and/or ESJGWA may choose to employ. Some examples include physical or electronic surveys and polls, communications data from notification systems such as MailChimp or Constant Contact, or even a public comment process.

#### 4.4 Annual Workplan and Budget

The ESJGWA envisions that annually, in preparation of the ESJGWA's Annual Work Plan and Budget (July 1 – June 30), the options presented in this C&E Plan would be evaluated, selected, and incorporated for adoption by the ESJGWA Board. The ESJGWA 's Annual Work Plan and Budget processes are based on the collaborative and consensus building themes enumerated in its JPA. Once adopted by the Board, ESJGWA staff will have clear direction and funding to implement the approved C&E options for that Fiscal Year as scoped from the list of recommendations made here as well as existing communications and engagement commitments noted in other SGMA documentations (e.g., GSP).

**APPENDIX A**  
**COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT INVENTORY**  
**SUMMARY**

## **Appendix A COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT INVENTORY SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

This document provides a summary of the inventory of communication and engagement commitments and recommendations contained in the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority's (ESJGWA) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and other related documents. The purpose of this inventory is to, among other things, identify existing communications and engagement commitments made by the ESJGWA and/or its 16 member agencies; identify GSP implementation actions that can be supported through outreach; and collate comments from agencies, individuals, and organizations that indicate opportunities for improvement in communications and outreach.

### **Reference Documents**

This inventory of communication and engagement comprises a review of the following four documents.

- Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin 2022 GSP:
  - Section 1.3 – Notice and Communication
  - Section 6.0 – Projects and Management Actions
  - Section 7.7 – Public Outreach
  - Appendix 1-H: Stakeholder Engagement and Public Outreach Plan
  - Appendix 1-I: Public Comments Received
  - Appendix 1-J: Response to Public Comments
- Stanislaus County Superior Court: CalSPA v. Interested Persons re Validity of Eastern San Joaquin GSGS Plan (March 16, 2020)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR) GSP Assessment Staff Report (January 28, 2022)
- 2022–2023 San Joaquin County Grand Jury Report for Case #0622 (June 26, 2023)

The Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin 2022 GSP and its appendices note the existing commitments made by ESJGWA and/or its 16 member agencies. The DWR GSP Assessment Staff Report, Stanislaus County Superior Court document, and findings and recommendations from the 2022–2023 San Joaquin County Grand Jury Report for Case #0622 provide clarity around public need and perception around the existing commitments and their execution thus far. In combination, these documents can create roadmap for enhanced and effective communications and engagement in the region. Further, where the report for Case #0622 is concerned, the 2023 Communications and Engagement Plan that this summary functions as an appendix to aims to satisfy the needs identified in the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

### Applicable Statutes and Regulations

Passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 served to establish a framework to help protect groundwater resources over the long-term. The Act is comprised from a three-bill legislative package including AB 1739 (Dickinson) SB 1168 (Pavley) and SB 1319 (Pavley), and subsequent statewide Regulations. In signing SGMA, then-Governor Jerry Brown emphasized that “groundwater management in California is best accomplished locally.” To foster local management objectives, SGMA and follow-on regulations provided local public agencies that elected to serve as GSAs general guidelines and broad authorities over how it would engage with beneficial users and uses of groundwater. Communication and engagement actions – as defined through SGMA (chaptered through the California Water Code (CWC) or DWR Emergency Regulations – applicable to connecting interested parties to the work of GSAs and DWR are described in Table A-1.

**Table A-1. CWC and DWR Emergency Regulations**

Action	Summary	Applicable Code or Section	Responsible Agency
 Notice and Communication content requirements for Groundwater Sustainability Plan			GSA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summary of notification and communication	Description of beneficial users and nature of consultation	§ 354.10 (a)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrative Record	List of public meetings where Plan was discussed	§ 354.10 (b)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summary of comments and responses	Summary of comment regarding the Plan and any responses	§ 354.10 (c)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication Section	Required subsections/content:	§ 354.10 (d)	
	1) Explanation of the Agency’s decision-making process		
	2) Identification of opportunities for public engagement and a discussion of how public input and response will be used		
	3) Description of how the Agency encourages the active involvement of diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population within the basin		
	4) Method the Agency shall follow to inform the public about progress implementing the Plan, including the status of projects and actions		
 Communication activities to support Groundwater Sustainability Plan development			GSA

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overarching Guidance	The groundwater sustainability agency shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans. A list of interested parties developed pursuant to Section 10723.2 and an explanation of how their interests will be considered in the development and operation of the groundwater sustainability agency and the development and implementation of the agency's sustainability plan.	CWC §10723.2  CWC §10723.8. (a)(4)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication and Engagement Plan	Developed to support notification requirements, state opportunities for Interested Party involvement in the Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and inform content to be provided in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan	§ 354.10 (d) (1-4) and CWC §10727.8 (a)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Website	Required as a component of notification and to provide for electronic notice to any person who requests electronic notification	CWC §10725.2(c)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interested Party Database	Establish and maintain Interested Party Database	CWC §10723.4	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committees	Groundwater Sustainability Agency may establish advisory committees and describe their role/function as part of its Groundwater Sustainability Plan Initial Notification; may include Groundwater Sustainability Agency's approach to involvement of diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population within the basin	CWC §10727.8 (a) and § 354.10 (d)(3)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Groundwater Sustainability Agency Meetings	Where consistent with California Public Records Act and Brown Act, posting of meeting agendas and summaries for public, agency and interested party review	Water Code §10725.2	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project and Management Action Notification	The Plan shall include the process by which the Agency shall provide notice to the public and other agencies that the implementation of projects or management actions is being considered or has been implemented, including a description of the actions to be taken.	§ 354.44 (b)(1)(B)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Agency, Public and Interested Party Engagement	Additional communication and engagement actions as determined		

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		by the governing body/plan manager		
	Public Hearing: Groundwater Sustainability Plan Adoption	The Groundwater Sustainability Agency may adopt or amend Groundwater Sustainability Plan after a public hearing. CEQA is not applicable to plan preparation and adoption per the following requirements:		GSA
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City/County Notification	Public hearing held at least 90 days after notice to city and county within area of plan	Water Code §10728.4	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Notification	Where consistent with California Public Records Act and Brown Act, posting of meeting agendas and summaries for public, agency and interested party review.	Water Code §10725.2	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City/County Consultation	Groundwater Sustainability Agency shall review and consider comment from city or county and shall consult with any city or county requesting consultation within 30 days of receipt of notice	Water Code §10728.4	
	Post complete Groundwater Sustainability Plan to Department Website	Upon receipt of Groundwater Sustainability Plan consistent with Water Code §10733.4(a) or (b), DWR shall post the Groundwater Sustainability Plan to the department's website	Water Code §10733.4(c)	DWR
	Public Review Period: Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan	60-day public comment period from date document is posted to the DWR website. All comments to DWR must be copied to the Groundwater Sustainability Agency	Water Code §10733.4(c)	DWR
	Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Review and Approval	Up to 2-year department evaluation of groundwater sustainability plan. The assessment may include recommended corrective actions to address any deficiencies identified by the department	Water Code §10733.4(d)	DWR
	Implement Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan	Groundwater Sustainability Agencies shall begin implementation upon submittal to DWR for review	Water Code §10733.4(e)	GSA
	Groundwater Sustainability Plan Annual Report	Developed annually for submittal to DWR on or before April 1 a report on Groundwater Sustainability Plan results, including: a) Groundwater elevation data b) Annual aggregated data identifying groundwater extraction for the preceding water year c) Surface water supply used for or available for use for groundwater recharge or in-lieu use	Water Code §10728	GSA

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		d) Total water use e) Change in groundwater storage		
	Groundwater Sustainability Plan Evaluation	The Groundwater Sustainability Plan is to be periodically evaluated to assess changing conditions and whether actions are meeting the Plan’s objectives and goals “at least every five years” and whenever the Plan is amended [DWR § 356.4]. Coordination Agreements, where present, are to be recirculated and signed by all parties. Action during update would include documentation of Interested Party engagement if such activities are identified as a management action	Water Code 10728.2, Water Code §10728.4 (tiers to §10727.2(b)(1) <sup>5</sup>  § 357.4	GSA
	Public Hearing: Groundwater Sustainability Plan Adoption	If the Groundwater Sustainability Plan is amended or otherwise subject to adoption, a public hearing may be required. Adoption requirements include:		GSA
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notification	Public hearing held at least 90 days after notice to city and county within area of Plan	Water Code §10728.4	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Notification	Where consistent with California Public Records Act and Brown Act, posting of meeting agendas and summaries for public, agency and interested party review.	Water Code §10725.2	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation	Groundwater Sustainability Agency shall review and consider comment from city or county and shall consult with city or county requesting consultation within 30 days of receipt of the notice	Water Code §10728.4	
	Groundwater Sustainability Plan Evaluation	Groundwater Sustainability Agency shall provide a written assessment at least every five years describing whether the Plan implementation, including implementation projects and management actions, are meeting sustainability goals	§ 356.4	GSA
	The California Department of Water Resources Groundwater Sustainability Plan Assessment and Re-Evaluation	Developed by DWR for release “at least every five years” following initial submission. May include recommended corrective actions to address deficiencies identified by department. DWR shall issue an assessment for each basin for	Water Code §10733.8	DWR

<sup>5</sup> (b) (1) Measurable objectives, as well as interim milestones in increments of five years, to achieve the sustainability goal in the basin within 20 years of the implementation of the plan.

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		which a plan or alternative has been submitted		
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**Table A-1 Legend:**

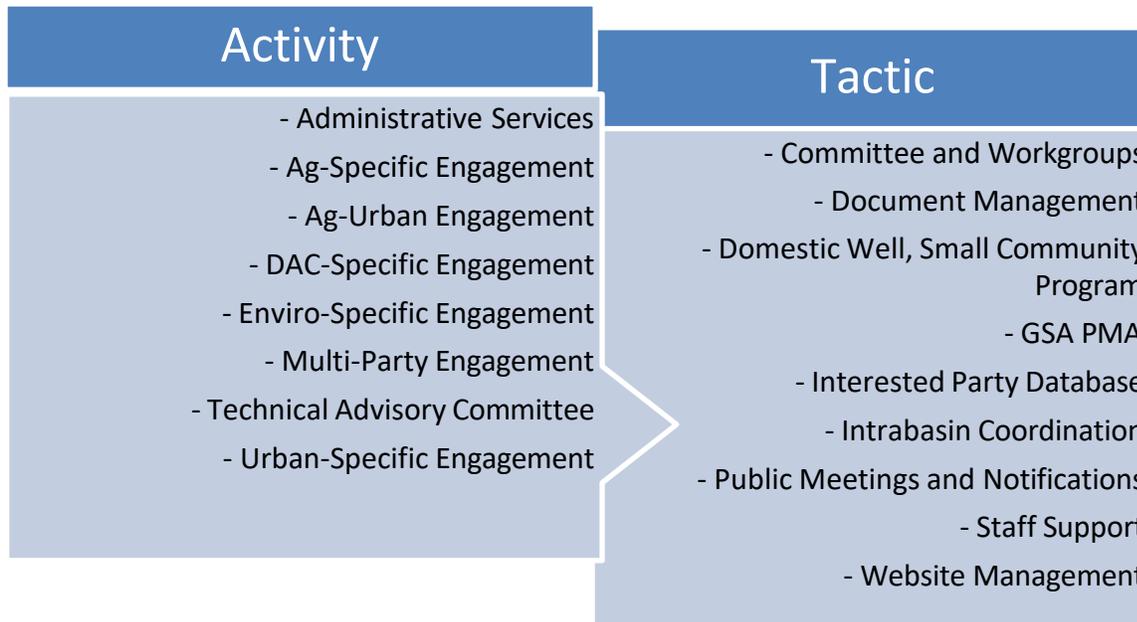
Icon	Description
	Denotes a public notification milestone to be completed by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency. These include noticing the public hearings, public meetings, and other related actions.
	Denotes a public hearing and public meeting hosted by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency or the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) consistent with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) or as defined and implemented by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency.
	Denotes delivery of a notification to DWR such as the Groundwater Sustainability Agency Formation, the Groundwater Sustainability Plan and the Groundwater Sustainability Agency Annual Report.
	Denotes a review and approval period to be completed by DWR.
	Denotes a period of public comment for interested parties to review documents released by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency or DWR.
	Denotes a key document to be undertaken by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency as part of its development of documents pursuant to SGMA.
	Denotes communication activities that support development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

### Inventory Organization

Each discrete statement or comment identified during the review of these documents were categorized to allow for sorting by activity, tactic, responsible agency, staff recommendation and applicable California Water Code or DWR Emergency Regulation. Each category contains the identified statement/comment, source and reference location. Below is a description of these sorting categories. These descriptions are provided to assist the reader during review of the Communication and Engagement Inventory Tables.

### Activity and Tactic

For purposes of this document, “Activity” is associated with a specific audience or agency function. The “Tactic” is the approach or deliverable that is assigned to support the identified “Activity.” An identified “Activity” may be supported by more than one “Tactic.”



## Recommendations

As part of this review, staff identified 10 outreach, coordination and collaboration approaches for ESJGWA and subbasin GSAs to consider implementing to respond to the identified Activities and Tactics. These approaches are intended to be references that would be further elaborated in the updated Communication and Engagement Plan. Below are the 10 recommended approaches:

1. Enterprise System Management Transparency: Maintain a catalog of data management systems and GSA's and / or ESJGWA publish their methodology for how they maintain and use the data collected within these systems.
2. Communication and Engagement Tracker: Establish a comprehensive Communication and Engagement Tracker that would catalog the type and timing of outreach activities to be posted on the ESJGWA and member agency websites.
3. Outreach Toolkit: Establish a suite of template materials for notices, announcements, meeting materials, and educational materials for use by the ESJGWA and its member agencies.
4. Interested Party Database: Establish a comprehensive interested parties database accessible for subbasin, GSA, and target audience engagement.
5. Speakers Bureau: Develop relationships with non-governmental organizations and other community groups and participate in their meetings regularly to provide information on SGMA implementation.
6. Targeted Outreach: Outline and implement specific efforts, possibly through the previously suggested workgroup, to identify, contact, educate, and engage with underrepresented groundwater users and non-English speakers on groundwater resource management in the Subbasin.
7. Workgroup and Committees: Consider establishment of a Small Community/Under-represented Community Committee to engage on well protection and other related PMAs.
8. Native American Heritage Commission: Submit and receive Tribal and Sacred Land tribal contact list to the Native American Heritage Commission.
9. Website Management: Establish web pages on the ESJGWA and GSA websites, as applicable, to contain clear and accessible audience-specific mapping, information resources, notification processes, administrative and financial records, governance structures, up to date meeting information and materials, decision-making structures, etc.

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10. Comment Portal: Establish, maintain and respond to public comments through general and project specific email contact portal.
11. Funding and Financing: ESJGWA in coordination with member agencies evaluate funding, grant or in-kind support resources for facilitation, media relations, or outreach coordination services.
12. Outreach Coordinator: Onboard an Outreach Coordinator to assist ESJGWA and its member agencies, as necessary, with the tactics in the C&E Plan as well as other communication and engagement efforts within the Subbasin.

# **APPENDIX B**

## **GSA Manager Survey Results and Analysis**

## Appendix B GSA MANAGER SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### Introduction and Overview

A 9-question survey was distributed to the managers of the Eastern San Joaquin (ESJ) Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) in April 2023. The focus of the survey was to solicit responses to items related to outreach actions and priorities and gather presumptions to the roles and responsibilities of individual GSAs and the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) as associated to engagement actions to beneficial users and uses of water in the Subbasin. Representatives of nine of 16 GSAs responded to the survey (see Table B-1).

Findings and results of this survey serve to inform existing practices of GSAs and ESJGWA to prepare a roadmap of potential implementation actions to assist in the update of the ESJGWA Communication and Engagement (C&E) Plan and advise Subbasin GSAs on potential adaptations of existing practices to expand cross-coordination engagement actions between GSAs and the ESJGWA.

**Table B-1. Groundwater Sustainability Agency Manager Survey Respondents**

Agency	Respondent
City of Manteca GSA	David Breitenbucher
Linden County Water District GSA	John S Villierme
Lockeford CSD GSA	Joe Salzman
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	Jason Colombini
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	Scot Moody
Stanislaus County GSA	Christy McKinnon
South Delta Water Agency GSA	John Herrick
South San Joaquin Irrigation District GSA	Brandon Nakagawa
Stockton East Water District GSA	Justin Hopkins

### Survey Results and Findings

This section segments survey results into three categories of responses and includes aggregated or agency-specific responses. Findings contained within each section relate to observed consistency among respondents and suggestions on next steps.

#### Segment One: Outreach and Staffing

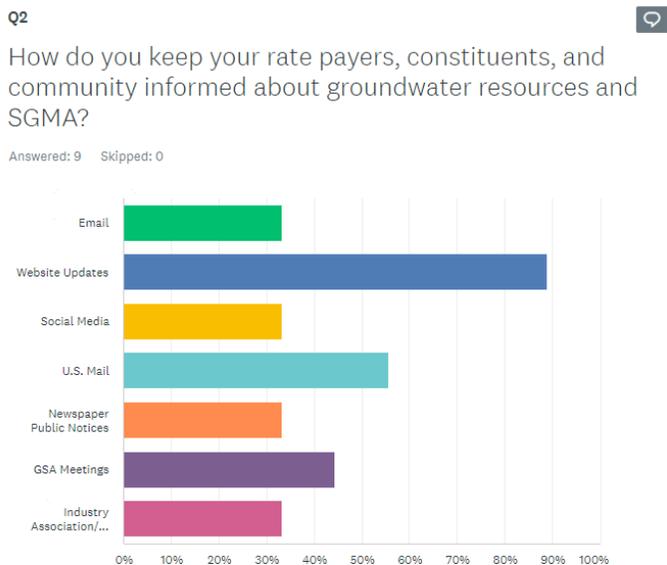
Questions two through five collected responses to the range of methods applied to distribute information to interested parties; the frequency by which communication is provided to interested parties; the types of

communication channels that are used; and whether such activities are directly or indirectly supported by agency staff. The discussion below represents an aggregated analysis of responses. Findings contained in this section are informed through an audit of the ESJGWA website and the websites of the 16 member agencies of the ESJGWA (see Appendix D). See Figure A-1 for a graphical display of results for Q2-Q4.

The majority of respondents state that they engage quarterly with interested parties on the activities of their GSA. These are most frequently deployed through meetings of their GSA's Board of Directors or through workshops. All respondents rely on communication through their agency's website, with communications through U.S. Mail, and the conduct of GSA meetings as the next highest priority methods. Six of nine respondents reported they commit staff and budget resources to support outreach activities, either through part-time assignment or staff resources through membership with the ESJGWA. Three of nine respondents reported they do not provide staff or budget resources to support communication actions to support GSP implementation.

**Findings:** The methods, frequency, communication channels and staffing commitments among the nine respondents vary widely and lack consistency in their approach and execution. While each rely on their agency's website as the lead vehicle to engage interested parties in matters of the GSA, the level of detail to clearly explain the agency's role and responsibility as a GSA and its relationship to the ESJGWA is frequently lacking.

**Figure B-1. Responses to Questions 2 Through 4**



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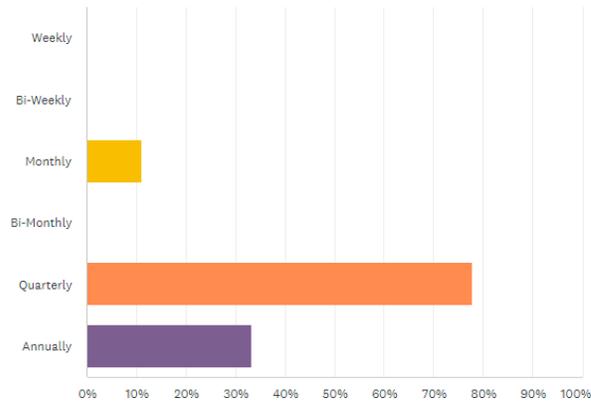
### Appendix B — GSA Manager Survey Results and Analysis

Q3



How often do you communicate with your rate payers, constituents, and community about groundwater resources and SGMA? Check all that apply.

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

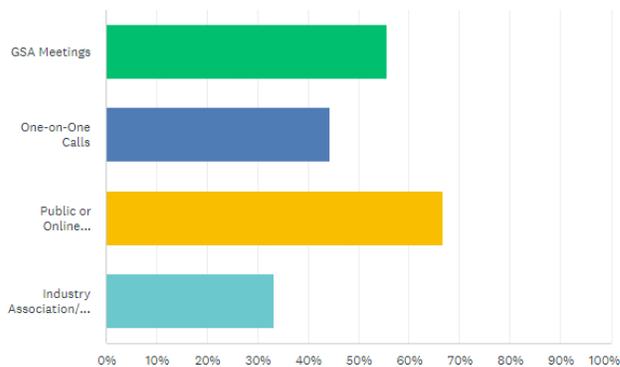


Q4



What types of groundwater-related engagement opportunities do you currently provide your rate payers, constituents, and community?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



## Segment Two: Constituent Concerns and Responses

Questions six through eight identify the perceived pressures from interested parties to change existing engagement actions, a description of successful communication and engagement activities, and solicitation of actions that would support GSAs continue to respond to the communication needs of their interested parties. Responses to this latter element is considered a desire of the responding GSA that the activity be provided by ESJGWA. Verbatim responses of each agency are contained in Table B-2 and Table B-3. Findings in this section are informed through review of results of the Interested Party Survey

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conducted during the same period and interviews with representatives of key groundwater user communities.

**Table B-2. Responses to Question 6**

<b>Q6: What pressures do you currently face from your rate payers, constituents, and community to change or increase your communications and engagement activities?</b>	
City of Manteca GSA	No pressures.
Linden County Water District GSA	None
Lockeford CSD GSA	No pressure; their awareness of groundwater is minimal.
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	None, I feel we are open with our board meetings and we host public forums that are well attended
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	None.
South Delta Water Agency GSA	none
South San Joaquin ID GSA	Many of the pressures are related to keeping up with SGMA activities occurring Statewide. As questions and calls come in, customers and constituents are keenly interested in DWR/SWRCB activities as it relates to other Basin GSPs, industry trends, and drought.
Stanislaus County GSA	Occasional suggestions and requests
Stockton East Water District GSA	None

**Table B-3. Responses to Questions 7 and 8**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Q7: What communication practices do you believe have been the most effective in providing quality communications and engagement activities independent of any pressures you may or may not be facing from your community?</b>	<b>Q8: What areas of support do you feel would best help you in responding to these pressures?</b>
City of Manteca GSA	Social media.	Sample posts and images that can be used for social media. AWWA provides great, free resources for water week every year. AWWA tells you what to say, images etc. It would be great if we could have similar resources for GSA/SGMA/GSP related items.
Linden County Water District GSA	Direct mailing	N/A
Lockeford CSD GSA	Public meetings	Continue ongoing efforts.
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	Mailing out notices to everyone in the district of upcoming public forums/meetings	Showing that we are being efficient with the public's money and actually completing capital projects
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	Speaking to community groups.	N/A

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South Delta Water Agency GSA	Public Meetings	N/A
South San Joaquin ID GSA	One on one communication is by far the most effective outreach method, however, it is very inefficient. There can be value added when speaking with local industry leaders or others who can help get the word out.	There are multiple resources already being taken advantage of including Maven’s Notebook, Water Rights, SJV Water, GRA Summit, and ACWA.
Stanislaus County GSA	Establishing one on one professional relationships and community workshops.	Creating databases/maps and establishing contact information for subbasin management areas, facilitating workshops.
Stockton East Water District GSA	Direct outreach.	Opportunities to engage constituents that do not respond to town hall meetings or participate in electronic communication.

**Segment Three: Groundwater Sustainability Agency Roles and Responsibilities**

Questions nine and 10 collect responses from GSA managers on how they view the role of their GSA or the ESJGWA when it comes to communication and engagement actions to beneficial users and uses of groundwater in the subbasin. Verbatim responses to these questions are provided below in Table B-4 and Table B-5. Findings in this section draw from the collective responses to questions by participants, an evaluation of the websites of member agencies to the ESJGWA, a review of the Joint Powers Agreement that established the ESJGWA, and responses to the Interested Parties Survey.

**Table B-4. Responses to Question 9**

<b>Q9: In two sentences, how would you define the role of your GSA when it comes to communication and engagement activities?</b>	
City of Manteca GSA	Social media is preferred.
Linden County Water District GSA	LCWD passes on all necessary information to our customers in the form of billing inserts, website and in our annual Consumer Confidence Report. We have received very minimal interest/input from our customers.
Lockeford CSD GSA	Provide updates on residential/commercial water use and convey to ratepayers. Present future scenarios of impacts to ratepayers related to groundwater status.
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	As a public district, it's our job to accomplish the reason the district was created for and be very transparent in what we are doing in the process. It's important to actively engage the community.
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	Getting out to talk to as many people as possible.
South Delta Water Agency GSA	Keep landowners within boundaries up to speed on any new developments. Our GSA does not have a groundwater problem, is not undertaking separate projects and so just tries to keep everyone informed of the larger groups efforts.
South San Joaquin ID GSA	The SSJGSA has been entrusted to develop and implement the ESJ GSP on behalf of its members. Foundational to that commitment, the SSJGSA strives to transparently and efficiently communicate the obstacles to and progress towards achieving groundwater sustainability.

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Stanislaus County GSA	To support the GSA and follow through with regional management commitments.
Stockton East Water District GSA	My GSA is responsible for engaging our constituents, when necessary and as required, to further implementation of our GSP projects.

**Table B-5. Responses to Question 10**

<b>Q9: In two sentences, how would you define the role of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority when it comes to communication and engagement activities?</b>	
City of Manteca GSA	A presence in social media directly from the Authority would be great!
Linden County Water District GSA	Linden County Water District has partnered with the ESGWA to hold public outreach workshops. LCWD also uses information from the ESGWA website to inform our customers.
Lockeford CSD GSA	Provide essential role in communicating with DWR. Coordinating discussion and action amount participating GSAs within the Authority
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	I think it ESJ's role to show the macro level of what all the efforts of the individual GSAs are doing for the public. This could be through an annual mailer to everyone in the GWA boundaries.
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	None. It is the role of the GSA.
South Delta Water Agency GSA	The GWA's role is to make sure the public as a whole is kept up to speed and checking on the constituent GSA's effort at same
South San Joaquin ID GSA	The ESJGWA supports the implementation of a single GSP for 16 independent GSAs. The ESJGWA will continue its support of its members as they endeavor to educate, to communicate with, and to support their constituents and, to represent the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin as a leading example Statewide of achieving groundwater sustainability.
Stanislaus County GSA	To facilitate and coordinate activities on a subbasin wide basis between the subbasin GSA member agencies and to support the GSAs.
Stockton East Water District GSA	To engage the greater community on the importance of sustainability and the need for regional funding to support projects that help achieve sustainability.

**Findings:** Responding GSAs generally recognize that communication and engagement with beneficial users and uses of groundwater is the responsibility of individual GSAs. Respondents also generally express a position that the role of the ESJGWA as responsible for providing coordination among and between member agencies and serve as the primary point of contact with the California Department of Water Resources for the adopted GSP.

While messaging of these responsibilities are frequently delivered through regular meetings of each agency's board of directors, the written messages contained in most agency's website are frequently inconsistent to these viewpoints. These agency websites often defer to the ESJGWA as the responsible agency. The exception here is South San Joaquin Irrigation District GSA, which includes a page that describes the governance structure of its GSA, inclusive of meeting minutes and its relationship to the ESJGWA.

# **APPENDIX C**

## **Interested Parties and Stakeholder Engagement Surveys: Results and Analysis**

## **Appendix C Interested Parties and Stakeholder Engagement Surveys: Results and Analysis**

### **Introduction and Overview**

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** An 18-question survey was distributed to the public in the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin to solicit questions to a range of topics applicable to beneficial users and uses of groundwater in the region. The survey serves to inform preparation of an update to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) Communication and Engagement (C&E) Plan, a document that assists subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) implement a single Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Conducted via SurveyMonkey, the survey was released on March 10, 2023, and closed on April 1, 2023. Notification for the survey was conducted by email to the ESJGWA Interested Parties Database (also referred to as Interested Parties List), existing lists of members of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, and in partnership with the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau, the San Joaquin County Agricultural Commissioner, and the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition. As Stantec did not have access to the data comprising the interested parties databases of the previously mentioned partners, there is currently no definitive number denoting how many individuals were sent and/or exposed to the survey. Although, given the number of responses, and the estimated sizes of those audiences, it is assumed that the survey reached at least a couple hundred people in the region.

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** A 12-question survey was distributed to the public in the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin to solicit questions to a range of topics applicable to beneficial users and uses of groundwater in the region. The survey serves to inform preparation of the 2024 Update to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) Communication and Engagement (C&E) Plan, a document that assists subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) implement a single Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The survey was conducted via SurveyMonkey with hard copies of the survey available. The survey was released on July 29, 2024, and closed on August 31, 2024. Notification for the survey was conducted by email to the ESJGWA Interested Parties Database (also referred to as Interested Parties List), existing lists of members of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, and in partnership with the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau, the San Joaquin County Agricultural Commissioner, and the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition. Outreach efforts also took place during public events, workshops and meetings highlighting the survey with hard copies in English and Spanish were available for interested members of the public to complete. As Stantec did not have access to the data comprising the interested parties' databases of the previously mentioned partners, there is currently no definitive number denoting how many individuals were sent and/or exposed to the survey. Although, given the number of responses, and the estimated sizes of those audiences, it is assumed that the survey reached at least a couple hundred people in the region.

## Demographics

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** The survey yielded responses from 120 participants and requested each self-identify which GSA they belong to and their water user type consistent with California Water Code (CWC) §10723.2. A majority self-identified as belonging to one GSA, with 14 stating membership in two or more GSAs. Table C-1 shows these results in aggregate form. Approximately two-thirds of respondents self-identified as agricultural water users, with about half of these respondents also stating ownership of a private domestic well. This later response indicates on-farm or rural area residency. Participation by interested parties who self-identify as a disadvantaged community or environmental water user were two and one, respectively. Each of these respondents also self-identified as agricultural water users. Fifteen respondents listed private domestic well as their exclusive water use type. City water system was the next largest group at 23 respondents. Two small community water systems also participated. Four participants were interested parties outside of the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin. More than 50 participants requested they be added to the ESJGWA Interested Parties List.

All respondents described a moderate level of concern to groundwater levels and groundwater quality. On a scale of one to 10 – with 10 being a high level of concern – the average level of concern for groundwater levels was nearly 7, with groundwater quality concern ranking 6.5.

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** The survey yielded responses from 57 participants and requested each self-identify which GSA they belong to and their water user type consistent with California Water Code (CWC) §10723.2. A majority self-identified as belonging to one GSA, with 17 stating membership in two or more GSAs. Table C-1 shows these results in aggregate form. Over half of the survey respondents self-identified having agricultural sector being their main involvement of groundwater in the basin. The next leading survey respondent group were representatives from City Water Systems with 27% of survey responses coming from this user group. 13% of survey participants self-identified as Private Domestic Well Owners, 7% of survey respondents self-identified as Disadvantaged Community representatives, and the least-represented user groups included Small Community Water System with 5% of respondents self-identifying in this user group and 4% self-identifying as general citizens within the basin.

**Table C-1. GSA Membership of 2023 and 2024 Survey Respondents**

2023 Interested Parties Survey - Agency	2023 Responses
Central Delta Water Agency GSA	1
Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	4
City of Lodi GSA	2
City of Manteca GSA	18
City of Stockton GSA	3
Eastside San Joaquin GSA	12
Linden County Water District GSA	0

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Lockeford Community Services District GSA	1
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	26
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	4
San Joaquin County GSA	14
South Delta Water Agency GSA	1
South San Joaquin GSA	20
Stockton East Water District GSA	25
Woodbridge Irrigation District GSA	6
Other/Out of Basin	4
<b>2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey – Agency</b>	<b>2024 Responses</b>
Central Delta Water Agency GSA	0
Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	8
City of Lodi GSA	4
City of Manteca GSA	7
City of Stockton GSA	5
Eastside San Joaquin GSA	12
Linden County Water District GSA	3
Lockeford Community Services District GSA	0
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	10
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	1
San Joaquin County GSA	1
South Delta Water Agency GSA	0
South San Joaquin GSA	8
Stockton East Water District GSA	9
Woodbridge Irrigation District GSA	0
Other/Out of Basin	1

## 2023 Interested Parties Survey Design

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** The core design of the survey was to collect and compile responses to questions that fall under three categories and allow for comparison of responses by water user groupings (i.e., agriculture vs. Municipal and Industrial).

1. Information Channels
2. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and Groundwater Conditions
3. Management Actions and Funding

A key limitation of this survey is sampling size. Here the volume of responses is a small fraction of the total pool of potential participants. As such, the data provided here should be considered anecdotal with activities implemented pursuant this document to be adapted as new information is gathered.

## 2023 Interested Parties Survey Results

This section segments survey results into three categories of responses: Information Channels, SGMA and Groundwater Conditions, and Management Actions and Funding.

### Category One: Information Channels

Information channels are the resources interested parties commonly visit or consult to learn about issues and engage. These channels include websites, trusted information sources, and the method information is delivered.

#### Websites

Participants were asked to rank in priority seven websites they could consult for information regarding groundwater updates and activities. To identify top-of-mind information resources, participant rankings for the top choices were combined to represent a cumulative score (e.g., combine “votes” of rankings 1, 2 and 3; see Table C-2).

**Table C-2. Website Rankings**

Website	Cumulative Score
My Local GSA	64
San Joaquin County	58
California Department of Water Resources	55
East San Joaquin Groundwater Authority	47
San Joaquin County Farm Bureau	38
San Joaquin Flood Control Agency	12
Non-Profit Organization	3

Participants were additionally asked to describe other websites they visit for groundwater related information (see Table C-3).

**Table C-3. Other Websites Visited**

Website	Number of Responses
No Websites	6
City Utility Bill/City Websites	3
San Joaquin County & Delta Water Quality Coalition	2
Media	2
Irrigation District Board Meetings	1

Website	Number of Responses
Wine Institute	1

### **Trusted Information Resources**

Participants were asked to identify their trusted information resources they consult to gather groundwater related information. Table C-4 shows the results based on cumulative responses.

**Table C-4. Information Resources**

Resource	Responses
My Irrigation District(s)	46
Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority	37
My Groundwater Sustainability Agency	36
The Internet	30
Government Agencies	29
My Groundwater Well	28
Family, Friends, or Neighbors (i.e., word of mouth)	22
Local Newspapers	16
Other (please specify)	12
Industry Associations/Organizations	9
My Ranch Manager	5
Non-Profit Organizations	3
Local Civic Clubs	1

### **Information Delivery**

Information delivery consists of written documents, information delivered during meeting, and other venues. Respondents were provided a list of commonly used methods and requested to identify which they prefer to receive groundwater related information (see Table C-5).

**Table C-5. Preferred Information Delivery Methods**

Communication Channel	Responses
Email	90
U.S. Mail	51
Website Updates	44
GSA Meetings	26
Industry Association/Organization Meetings	24
Social Media	22
Newspaper Public Notices	18

## Category Two: SGMA and Groundwater Conditions

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** Survey Participants were requested to respond to a series of questions related to their awareness and level of concern or familiarity to SGMA, local management of groundwater resources, and regional groundwater conditions.

### SGMA

Respondents were asked to define their level of familiarity of SGMA and their involvement in groundwater management planning in the Subbasin. Nearly 30 percent of respondents stated a high level of involvement, while nearly 60 percent had some level of engagement (see Table C-6).

**Table C-6. SGMA Familiarity**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Not at all	15	12.5%
Read about it, but otherwise not much	34	28.33%
Had a few conversations about it	36	30%
Provided input to people involved with it	16	13.33%
Was actively engaged	19	15.83%

### GSA Familiarity

Respondents were asked to describe their level of familiarity with the responsibilities of their local GSA. Responses show that a majority of respondents have limited understanding of local GSA responsibilities.

**Table C-7. GSA Familiarity**

Answer Choices	Responses	
No familiarity	24	22.5%
Somewhat familiar	47	39.17%
Pretty familiar, but I still have questions	22	18.33%
Completely understand	24	20%

### Documents and Content Quality

Respondents were asked to identify a range of documents they have read and share their opinion to the clarity of the content provided in these documents. Approximately half of respondents have read some or all of the adopted GSP for the Subbasin, with the rate of review for the revised GSP declining to less than a third. About 25 percent of respondents review subbasin annual reports. Clarity of content was generally found to be challenging for a majority of respondents. See Figures C-1 and C-2.

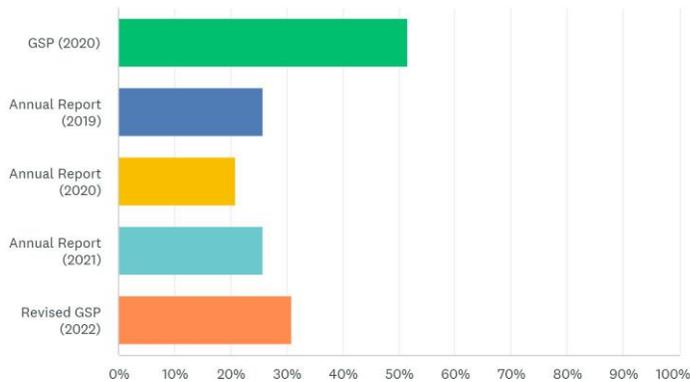
**Figure C-1. Documents Reviewed**

Q7



Have you read some or all of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) or its Annual Reports? Check all that apply.

Answered: 120 Skipped: 0



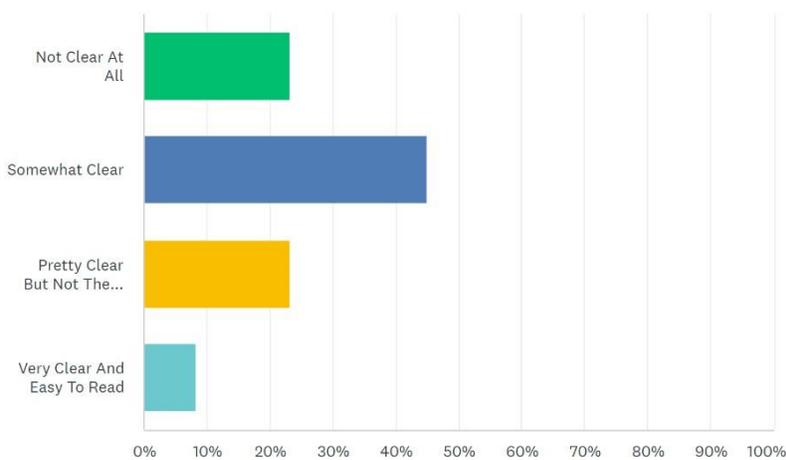
**Figure C-2. Document Clarity**

Q8



Please rank the clarity of the technical information provided in the GSP or the Annual Reports.

Answered: 120 Skipped: 0



### Category Three: Management Actions and Funding

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** Respondents were asked to respond to potential approaches that would address unsustainable groundwater use and who should pay for projects and management actions. A majority of respondents expressed preference towards groundwater banking programs and

increase use of available surface water to the region. Less than 15 percent of respondents preferred demand reduction (i.e., limit groundwater pumping).

A majority of respondents expressed a preference that projects and management actions be paid by all beneficial users of water in the region, with less than 20 percent stating that project beneficiaries/their GSA should pay for these actions. See Tables C-8 and C-9 for participant responses.

**Table C-8. Actions to Address Unsustainable Groundwater Use**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Limit groundwater pumping	17	14.17%
Groundwater banking programs	57	47.5%
Incentivize use of available surface water	63	52.5%
Urban-Ag Partnerships to increase agricultural surface water use	28	23.33%
Expanding or constructing new public water systems in rural residential areas	28	23.33%

**Table C-9. Funding of Project and Management Action**

Answer Choices	Responses	
All Beneficial Users of Water	66	55.00%
Only Project Beneficiaries	12	10.00%
San Joaquin County	26	21.67%
My GSA	9	7.50%
Ballot Measure	20	16.67%

## 2023 Interested Parties Survey Findings

As mentioned previously, survey results should be considered anecdotal due, in part, to the number of respondents in relation to the total population in the Subbasin. As such, findings described below should be considered as representative of this group’s perceptions and should be considered as a point of reference in future interactions with interested parties.

### Finding No. 1: Awareness of Groundwater Conditions and Responsibilities

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** On an aggregate basis, survey respondents expressed a moderate to high level of concern over groundwater levels and groundwater quality. Contributors to this level of concern may be associated with:

- A low level of awareness to the responsibilities of subbasin GSAs (Table C-7).
- A limited level of engagement during GSP development (Table C-6).
- Perceived difficulty in understanding the content provided in annual reports and the subbasin’s GSP (Figure C-2).
- A lack of a clear single-source of information related to groundwater management in the subbasin (Table C-2 and Table C-4).

As discussed in Table C-2 and C-4, the ESJGWA ranked fourth as a top-of-mind website yet was second as a trusted resource (Table C-4). The generic “My Local GSA” was the leading website; however, it scored third as a trusted resource. It is important to consider whether the aggregate scores that led “My Local GSA” to be ranked as the leading top-of-mind website to be valid. As described in Appendix A: East San Joaquin Subbasin Website Audits, few Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin GSAs host and regularly maintain a web page.<sup>6</sup> As such, it is reasonable to question why respondents reference “My Local GSA” as the leading top of mind information resource, when few of these sites describe:<sup>7</sup>

- The role and responsibility of the GSA within their jurisdictional footprint and in relation to ESJGWA
- Explains the agency’s formation and decision-making/governance process
- Describes the agency’s meeting schedule and location of meeting agendas and summaries<sup>8</sup>
- Describes opportunities for public engagement and how public input is used
- Describes the method the agency shall follow to inform the public about progress implementing the adopted GSP, including the status of projects and management actions.
- Provides a method for interested parties to be placed on a list to receive meeting notices and documents<sup>9</sup>

## Finding No. 2: Projects and Management Actions

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** Respondents generally support projects and management actions at the subbasin-wide level in lieu of individual GSAs. They additionally do not support demand reduction actions (e.g., limit groundwater pumping). This subbasin-wide observation draws from the *who should pay* question detailed in Table C-8. Here more than three quarters of respondents identified “All Beneficial Users of Water” and “San Joaquin County”<sup>10</sup> as the source of funds to implement physical projects.

## Finding 3: Documents and Information Quality

**2023 Interested Parties Survey:** While responses indicate that a majority found the GSP and annual reports a challenging read, it is important to recognize that many have taken the time to read these technical reports. Surmounting this issue can be addressed through changes in approach to technical editing of published documents and information materials that improve broad community understanding of groundwater management.

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<sup>6</sup> California Water Code §10725.2(c) requires establishment of a website as a component of notification and to provide electronic notice to any person who requests electronic notification.

<sup>7</sup> Comments, unless otherwise noted, link to CWC §10723.8 and DWR Emergency Regulations § 354

<sup>8</sup> Required by California Water Code §10725.2

<sup>9</sup> Associated with California Water Code § 10723.4

<sup>10</sup> Answer is considered tacit support to fund projects through existing County revenues or new county revenues.

## 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey Design

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** The core design of the survey was to collect and compile responses grouped into four main categories:

1. **Background and Awareness:** This category assesses survey respondents' familiarity with local groundwater management structures, including which agencies they interact with, their knowledge of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and their exposure to key groundwater management and planning documents. Survey questions falling in this category were used to gauge the baseline awareness from stakeholders of SGMA and the Eastern San Joaquin Basin's SGMA efforts.
2. **Engagement and Interest:** Questions falling under this category aimed to gain an understanding of stakeholders' involvement in groundwater issues and the sources they rely on for updates and information. It reveals the level of active engagement and areas of personal or professional interest, helping tailor future outreach efforts.
3. **Information Needs and Preferences:** Focusing on communication effectiveness, this category gathered feedback on improving accessibility and readability of groundwater documents, as well as preferred channels by community members for receiving updates. It is the understanding that this input can guide the development of more user-friendly resources focused on the basin's SGMA efforts.
4. **Concerns and Opinions:** This category captured stakeholders' concerns about groundwater levels and quality, along with their preferred strategies for addressing unsustainable practices. It provided insight into community priorities and viewpoints on water management challenges and potential solutions.

## 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey Results

This section segments survey results into the four categories referenced above: Background and Awareness, Engagement and Interest, Information Needs and Preferences, and Concerns and Opinions.

### Background and Awareness

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** The first few questions of the survey were used to set the baseline of respondents understanding and awareness of their basin, SGMA efforts and knowledge of key planning and resource documents of the Eastern San Joaquin Basin.

**Table C-10. Outlining Percentage of Respondents Associated with each Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA)**

GSA	Percent
Central Delta Water Agency GSA	0%
Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	14%

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<b>GSA</b>	<b>Percent</b>
City of Lodi GSA	7%
City of Manteca GSA	12%
City of Stockton GSA	<b>9%</b>
Eastside San Joaquin GSA	21%
Linden County Water District GSA	5%
Lockeford Community Services District GSA	0%
North San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA	18%
Oakdale Irrigation District GSA	2%
San Joaquin County GSA	2%
South Delta Water Agency GSA	0%
South San Joaquin GSA	14%
Stockton East Water District GSA	16%
Woodbridge Irrigation District GSA	0%
Other/Out of Basin	2%

As it relates to respondents current understanding of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), 44 respondents outlined that they had a strong understanding of SGMA while 13 outlined that they did not have a strong understanding of SGMA.

As it relates to respondents current understanding and familiarity of Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) documents, the document most familiar with respondents included the 2022 Revised GSP with 28 respondents having familiarized themselves with it and the least familiar report was the 2019 Annual Report with only 8 respondents having read the report. There was a total of 21 respondents who have not read or had a strong familiarity of any of the GSP documents. The percentage breakdown of respondents who have read each document is outlined in the table below.

**Table C-11. Percentage of Respondents Familiar with each GSP Document**

<b>GSP Document</b>	<b>Percent</b>
2022 Revised GSP	49%
2020 GSP	40%
2021 Annual Report	25%
2020 Annual Report	16%
2019 Annual Report	14%

## Engagement and Interest

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** Questions falling under this category aimed to gain an understanding of stakeholders' involvement in groundwater issues and the sources they rely on for updates and information. It reveals the level of active engagement and areas of personal or professional interest, helping tailor future outreach efforts.

Understanding that many community members self-identify in a collection of interest / user groups focused on sustainable groundwater management, Participants were asked to outline their main interest / user group from a variety of options. Their percentage of each user group is outlined in the table below.

**Table C-12. Percentage of Respondents Main Interest / User Group**

Interest / User Group	Percent
Agriculture Sector	61%
City Water Systems	27%
Private Domestic Well Owner	13%
Public Agency	9%
Disadvantaged Community	7%
Small Community Water System	5%
General Citizen	4%

Outlined via the table below are sources where participants seek and receive information from as it relates to the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin. Participants had the chance to identify multiple sources and outline other sources not provided on the list.

**Table C-13. Number of Respondents and Where They Gather Information on Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin**

Sources of Information	Number of Respondents
Local Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA)	26
Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority	25
San Joaquin County	14
California Department of Water Resource (CADWR)	10
Non-Profit	5
San Joaquin County Farm Bureau	3
San Joaquin County Flood Control Agency	1

A handful of participants identified “Other” sources not provided in the list and provided additional information on such resources. Other resources outlined included their water operator, friends and family, San Joaquin County Advisory Water Commission, social media, Mavens Notebook, City of Stockton Municipal Utilities District and Restore the Delta. One respondent shared that they do not believe that there are no readily available resources unless one already carries an interest in water and the interfaces with their local water district.

## Information Needs and Preferences

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** Focusing on communication effectiveness, this category gathered feedback on improving accessibility and readability of groundwater documents, as well as preferred channels by community members for receiving updates. It is the understanding that this input can guide the development of more user-friendly resources focused on the basin's SGMA efforts.

Survey participants had the opportunity to share suggestions on ways to make Eastern San Joaquin GSP documents and resources more user friendly and readable.

The feedback received emphasized the need for improved accessibility and navigation of resources, suggesting a clickable table of contents and separate appendices for these often-lengthy documents. A concise executive summary, possibly including an outline of major changes or issues from previous years, would further support reader understanding. Since some first-time readers discovered the report through social media or word of mouth, recommendations on mailing a flyer or strengthening advertisement of such reports could enhance outreach efforts. It was also noted from collection of participants that creating targeted guides for specific groups (such as residents, domestic well owners, and agriculture stakeholders) with key information, and directing them to GSP document(s) for more details, would make the report more accessible and relevant to different stakeholders.

A handful of respondents outlined the desire for factsheets covering main takeaways in a digestible format. Recommendations were shared to support the consciousness of information with repeated requests for a simplified summary in layman's terms to make GSP documents more public-friendly. Visual aids, such as simple charts, icons, and executive summaries for both the entire groundwater area (GWA) and individual groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs), were recommended to enhance clarity for community members.

Most respondents shared the interest in 2–3-page summaries with references to the full reports to make these lengthy documents more accessible to a wider audience. The feedback related to this interest stressed the maintenance of clarity and structure, ensuring the report is thorough without oversimplifying complex information. Acronyms and abbreviations related to departments and functions should be clearly explained, and the content should be tailored to meet the audience's specific needs. Double-sided factsheets for each GSA, highlighting key points, were also recommended for quick reference.

Distribution of GSP documents beyond GSA's and Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority's websites were also highly preferred among respondents with suggestions to use mail, email, and prominent and consistent placements on websites to reach a wider audience.

Preferences for preferred channels of information sources are outlined via the table below. Participants had the chance to identify multiple sources and outline other sources not provided on the list.

**Table C-14. Respondents Preferred Channels for Groundwater-Related Information**

Sources of Information	Number of Respondents
Email	37
Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Meetings	20
Website(s)	19
U.S. Mail	18
Social Media	12
Newspaper Notices	8
Industry / Association Notices	5

A handful of participants identified “Other” sources not provided in the list and provided additional information on such resources. Other sources included Board Meetings and Advisory Water Commission Meetings and use of flyers.

### Concerns and Opinions

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** This category captured stakeholders' concerns about groundwater levels and quality, along with their preferred strategies for addressing unsustainable practices. It provided insight into community priorities and viewpoints on water management challenges and potential solutions.

Overall, there was a high-level of concern regarding groundwater levels and / or quality throughout the subbasin with 18 respondents outlining an “Extremley” high level of concern, 14 respondents outlining a “Very” high level of concern, 10 respondents outlining they were “Somewhat” concerned and 4 sharing that they were “A Little” concerned

Respondents shared their preferred approaches to address sustainable groundwater use within the Subbasin. Outlined via the table below these preferred approaches and the number of respondents who preferred such approach. Participants had the chance to select multiple approaches and share other approaches not provided on the list.

**Table C-15. Preferred Approaches to Address Unsustainable Groundwater Use**

Approach to Address Unsustainable Groundwater Use	Number of Respondents
Groundwater Banking Programs	35
Incentivize Use of Available Surface Water	34
Urban-Ag Partnerships to Increase Agricultural Surface Water Use	28
Limit Groundwater Pumping	13
Expanding or Constructing New Public Water Systems in Rural Residential Areas	10

A handful of participants identified “Other” approaches not provided in the list. Other approaches identified included but not limited to; limiting well development on formerly non-irrigated lands, use of recycled water for land irrigation and drinking-water sources, implementing SGMA fees, expansion of storage projects and allowing water district to annex properties within the sphere of influence.

## **2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey Findings**

Like the 2023 Interested Parties Survey Findings, the 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey results should be considered anecdotal due, in part, to the number of respondents in relation to the total population in the Subbasin. As such, the findings described below should be considered as representative of this group’s perceptions and should be considered as a point of reference in future interactions with interested parties.

### **Finding No. 1: Awareness and Knowledge of Groundwater Management**

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** The majority of respondents carried a strong understanding of the Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) they were affiliated with and the overall understanding of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Although most respondents carried such understanding, it should be noted that there were still a handful of survey participants having little to no knowledge on their affiliated GSA, relating roles and responsibilities, and the impact of SGMA in the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin.

Survey participants had strengthened their understanding of the role in SGMA in the Subbasin by having a varying level of understanding of GSP related documents. With over half of respondents having read or familiarized themselves with the 2020 Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and 2022 Revised GSP, fewer respondents had an understanding of the relating Annual Reports. Notably, 21 respondents indicated they had not read any GSP documents. This latter result could likely play into suggestions and input on improving GSP documents format, accessibility and readability.

### **Finding No. 2: GSP Document Accessibility, Readability and Outreach Methods**

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** The key findings indicate a strong demand among survey respondents for improving the readability and accessibility of GSP Documents. Common suggestions included adding clickable tables of contents, summaries, and fact sheets on major topics like storage changes and management actions. Respondents also recommended using simpler language, visuals, icons for infrastructure locations, and clear explanations of technical terms. Brief, layman-friendly summaries (no longer than 2-3 pages) and accessible formats beyond online platforms were also requested.

For groundwater information, local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) were the most frequently accessed sources, followed by San Joaquin County, the California Department of Water Resources, and other local organizations.

When it comes to communication preferences, email was the most favored method, followed by GSA meetings, website updates, U.S. mail, and social media. This suggests that a mix of digital

and traditional communication could effectively reach the intended audience and diversify levels of audiences and interest groups receiving and seeking this information.

### **Finding No. 3: Groundwater Conditions and Use**

**2024 Stakeholder Engagement Survey:** More than half of respondents carried significant concern regarding groundwater levels and quality within the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin. Comments from respondents cited issues like declining groundwater levels, land subsidence, and worries about water quality in areas with increased development. Survey respondents selected and identified preferred approaches to address unsustainable groundwater use within the Subbasin. The preferred approach with 35 respondents selecting included the development of groundwater banking programs. Additional approaches are outlined below.

- **Annexation for Water Districts:** Allowing water districts to annex properties within their sphere of influence.
- **Increase of Water Supply:** Focusing on expanding water supply through storage projects and other methods.
- **Infrastructure Expansion:** Expanding canal and pipeline infrastructure to deliver surface water to agricultural properties lacking access.
- **Advocacy for Drought-Friendly Crop Options for Farmers:** Encourage farmers to grow less water-intensive crops, particularly in areas like valleys.
- **Restriction of Well Development:** Limit new well development on lands previously without irrigation.
- **Advocacy and Incentivize Efficient Water Use:** Incentivize efficient water use, learning from practices in other Subbasins.
- **Promotion of Recycled Water:** Promotion of recycled water for both irrigation and as a drinking water source.

Additional thoughts and opinions regarding SGMA implementation and efforts within the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin were collected from the last question of the survey and summarized via the bulleted list below.

- **Urgency for SGMA Fee Compliance:** A handful of respondents advocated for Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin users pay SGMA fees to fund storage projects and sustainable groundwater practices.
- **Request for Information on Restrictions and Costs:** Some respondents desired additional information and communication on groundwater pumping restrictions and associated costs within the Subbasin.
- **Calls for Public Meetings:** Request Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to hold public meetings to provide updates on sustainability, potential pumping limits, new fees, and groundwater storage projects.
- **Concern Over Groundwater Supply and Regulation:** While acknowledging the challenge of increasing supply, some respondents outlined the need to regulate pumping and keep stakeholders informed about agricultural users and compliance burdens.
- **Lack of Engagement and Transparency:** Some respondents identified a need to strengthen and ensure all GSAs are sharing information on and participating in sustainability efforts.
- **Funding Concerns:** Concern was outlined over inconsistent and overall sustainable funding for SGMA efforts throughout the Subbasin.

# **APPENDIX D**

## **Website Audit**

## Appendix D WEBSITE AUDIT

### Introduction and Overview

This document summarizes a high-level audit of the websites of Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) and the individual GSAs within East San Joaquin (ESJ) Subbasin consistent with requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA). It further outlines a range of potential amendments agencies may consider making to their websites to improve awareness of groundwater management activities in the Subbasin for interested parties. Information contained in this document draws from statutory and regulatory requirements from SGMA and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Emergency Regulations, and governance documents adopted by subbasin GSAs.

### Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

SGMA and follow-on Emergency Regulations adopted by DWR references but does not explicitly direct GSAs establish and maintain a website. References to agency websites are defined in the following sections of the California Water Code (CWC) and DWR Emergency Regulations:

CWC §10725.2(c) In addition to any other applicable procedural requirements, the groundwater sustainability agency shall provide notice of the proposed adoption of the groundwater sustainability plan on its Internet Web site and provide for electronic notice to any person who requests electronic notification.

§353.6. Initial Notification. (a) Each Agency shall notify the Department, in writing, prior to initiating development of a Plan. The notification shall provide general information about the Agency's process for developing the Plan, including the manner in which interested parties may contact the Agency and participate in the development and implementation of the Plan. The Agency shall make the information publicly available by posting relevant information on the Agency's website.

Many other SGMA statues and state regulations further lend themselves to the efficient delivery of communication and engagement actions with interested parties, including public noticing consistent with California's open meeting laws and the requirement that "each agency 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. Any person may request, in writing, to be placed on the list of interested persons."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> California Water Code § 10723.4

## **Subbasin Governance Documents**

Governance among the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin GSAs is defined through the ESJGWA Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), the South San Joaquin GSA JPA, and the Eastside San Joaquin GSA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

### **Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority JPA**

The ESJGWA JPA constitutes the overarching agreement of the GSAs to the roles and responsibilities of the signatory agencies of the JPA. As described in its adopted GSP, the ESJ GSP was developed jointly by the ESJGWA via a JPA formally signed by 16 GSAs within the subbasin. These signatories collectively represent 21 agencies in the Subbasin. Formal signatories to the JPA include the Central Delta Water Agency (CDWA), Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District (CSJWCD), City of Lodi, City of Manteca, City of Stockton, Eastside San Joaquin GSA (composed of Calaveras County Water District [CCWD], Stanislaus County, Calaveras County, and Rock Creek Water District), Linden County Water District (LCWD), Lockeford Community Services District (LCSD), North San Joaquin Water Conservation District (NSJWCD), Oakdale Irrigation District (OID), San Joaquin County No. 1, San Joaquin County No. 2 (Cal Water), South Delta Water Agency (SDWA), South San Joaquin GSA (composed of South San Joaquin Irrigation District [SSJID] including Woodward Reservoir, City of Ripon, and City of Escalon), Stockton East Water District (SEWD), and Woodbridge Irrigation District (WID).

As signed by the member agencies, the JPA's primary responsibility is to serve as a coordinating entity of Subbasin GSAs and represent the signatories during engagement with DWR. Implementation responsibilities for compliance with SGMA were largely reserved by individual GSAs.

### **South San Joaquin GSA JPA**

The South San Joaquin GSA JPA was adopted by SSJID, the City of Escalon, and the City of Ripon. The SSJID was designated as the GSA lead on behalf of the signatory agencies for contracting and matters relating to the group's representation on the ESJGWA JPA. Similar to the ESJGWA JPA, implementation responsibilities for compliance with SGMA are largely reserved by each signatory of the SSJGSA JPA.

### **Eastside San Joaquin GSA MOU**

The Eastside San Joaquin GSA MOU is between the County of Calaveras, the County of Stanislaus, Rock Creek Water District, and CCWD. The CCWD was designated as the GSA lead for purposes of contracting and other matters relating to representation of the GSA as a signatory to the ESJGWA JPA. Consistent with the limited powers of an MOU, responsibility for compliance with SGMA are reserved by the parties to the MOU.

## **Audit Approach**

As mentioned above, the objective of the audit is to evaluate subbasin websites for consistency with the requirements of SGMA and provide recommendations to amend websites to improve engagement with

interested parties. It included a high-level review of agency websites to identify the location of GSA information starting at the agency's home page and initial observations of content associated with governance, documentation, and notification processes (see Exhibit A). At its core, a GSA website would address the informational needs of each user and uses of groundwater within its jurisdictional boundary in three key areas:

1. Governance: Does the site explain the governing structure of the agency, its decision-making structure, and identify its members?
2. Documentation: Does the site provide a record of decisions made by the agency such as board meeting summaries, committee meeting summaries, major documents required by SGMA (e.g., GSP, Annual Reports, resolutions and organizational documents), and other information materials and maps?
3. Notices and advisories: Does the site include a method for interested parties to be added to a list consistent with CWC §10723.4?

## **Findings and Next Steps**

It is important to note that the web strategies of each subbasin GSA vary significantly in their approach to meet the above elements. These range from having no web presence at all to disclosing the governance structure, record of board meetings and its members, governance documents, and the entity's relationship to the ESJGWA. This variation, for example, undermines the ability of GSA constituent to understand the decision-making process of their governing body in relation to the ESJGWA. The lack of a cohesive web strategy across the region can result in inconsistent understanding to the specific roles and responsibilities of local GSAs and the ESJGWA among interested parties.

Recommendations:

- Provide clear and uniform descriptions of the governance structure, roles and responsibilities of each subbasin GSA, inclusive of their relationship to related overlying governance agreement(s).
- Develop and implement a consistent method to publish and distribute documents appropriate to the objectives of the ESJGWA and the responsibilities of subbasin GSAs.
- Consistently provide access to be added to a list of interested parties consistent with CWC §10723.4.

Below are suggested process steps for revision of the websites for ESJGWA and signatories of the ESJGWA JPA.

## **ESJGWA:**

### **Discussion**

The ESJGWA was primarily created to serve as a convenor and coordinator of activities among subbasin GSAs, to support broad communication and engagement actions in the subbasin and serve as the point of contact to DWR for the subbasin GSP. This observation is supported by Section 1.3.3 Decision-Making Process of the adopted GSP:

“The governing bodies of each of the individual GSAs take action and provide direction to their Board member representatives and must individually approve the final GSP. Projects will be administered by the GSA project proponents. Although the ESJGWA does not provide direct authority to require GSAs to implement projects, the GWA will be working on GSA-level water budgets and will be requesting annual or biannual progress reports to evaluate progress.”

### **Suggested Amendments**

**About Us:** Update the content to reflect the number of member agencies who are signatories to the JPA and refine the description of the authority’s roles and responsibilities consistent with the adopted GSP and the JPA.

**Governance Page:** Populate with the name and agency of each voting member, and their alternate, on the GWA Board of Directors and applicable committee. Include a description of the board term and the appointment process. Explain the roles and responsibilities of the board in relation to the member agencies. Explain the role and responsibilities of the governing bodies of member agencies in relation to GSP implementation and engagement with interested parties.

**Member Page:** Update the member agency page to be consistent with the signatories of the JPA. All member links should arrive at a SGMA specific page maintained by the GSA.

**Document Page:** Insert introductory text under the “Document” heading to define the contents of the identified subpages.

**Get Connected:** Add buttons for interested parties to self-identify the GSA they are a member(s). Program the database to allow for individual GSAs to conduct agency-specific outreach on an as-needed basis. Suggest including a link to DWR’s GSA Map Viewer to assist interested parties search their respective GSA by street address.

## **Subbasin GSAs:**

### **Discussion**

The powers of SGMA retained by subbasin GSAs have effectively resulted in establishment of a JPA that is a convenor of information and DWR representative on behalf of the member agencies. As demonstrated by the record of agencies who held meetings to adopt the ESJ GSP, the formal

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responsibility to implement the GSP fully rests with each individual GSA (see excerpt of Section 1.3.3 Decision-Making Process). Suggested amendments/outline of content for member agency web sites.

**Suggested Amendments**

**Governance:** Each subbasin GSA should clearly describe the governance structure of their respective GSA and its decision-making process in relation to the ESJGWA. This would include describing the frequency of meetings and notification processes consistent with the Brown Act.

**Documents and Information Materials:** These would, at a minimum, include copies of GSA meeting agendas, meeting summaries, board packets, and governance-related documents (e.g., GSA Formation Notification Page pursuant to CWC §10723.8).

**Interested Party Database:** Provide a direct link to the ESJGWA Get Connected webpage.

**Projects and Management Actions:** Provide a link or publish independently a list of Projects and Management Actions as identified in the adopted GSP. Provide detail of project status and next steps as applicable.

**Point of Contact:** Provide an email address or include a comment form for interested parties to contact a GSA representative.

**Table D-1. High-level Website Audit**

<b>Website Path and Link</b>	<b>Audit Notes</b>
<b><i>SEWD GSA</i></b>	
Home > Departments > Water Resources & Education > <a href="#">SEWD &amp; SGMA</a>	No SGMA specific IPD, governance discussion or documents.
<b><i>City of Stockton</i></b>	
Home > Services > Water > <a href="#">Stockton, CA</a>	No SGMA specific IPD, governance discussion or documents. Link to ESJGWA provided in lieu.
<b><i>Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District GSA</i></b>	
Home > District Services > Groundwater Management Act	No governance, no IPD, out of date.

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Website Path and Link	Audit Notes
<b><i>Linden County Water District</i></b>	
Home > <a href="#">News &amp; Notices</a>	No SGMA specific IPD, governance or documents.  Reference to quarterly meetings, but not library (including board meetings)
<b><i>SSJGSA</i></b>	
Home > About Us > <a href="#">Agendas and Minutes – SSJID GSA</a>	Shows officers, minutes, JPA, etc.; includes major documents; omits SGMA specific IPD
<b><i>South Delta Water Agency GSA</i></b>	
N/A	No web presence for GSA  No SGMA specific IPD
<b><i>Lockeford CSD GSA</i></b>	
Home > Updates & Reports > SGMA ( <a href="#">Sustainable Groundwater Management Act</a> )	No SGMA specific IPD, No details on governance ... two fact sheets, No link to ESJGWA
<b><i>Eastside San Joaquin GSA</i></b>	
N/A	No web presence for GSA  No SGMA specific IPD
<b><i>Calavera County Water District GSA</i></b>	
Home > Doing Business > Water Resources > <a href="#">SGMA</a>	Out of date on number of GSAs. Doesn't overtly state it is a GSA and when the agency meets.

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Website Path and Link	Audit Notes
<b>Stanislaus County GSA</b>	
Home > Environmental Resources > Groundwater Resources > <a href="#">SGMA</a> > ESJGWA	No SGMA specific IPD, nor relation to Eastside San Joaquin GSA.
<b>Rock Creek Water District GSA</b>	
N/A	No web presence for GSA No SGMA specific IPD
<b>Oakdale Irrigation District GSA</b>	
Home > District Services > Water Operations > <a href="#">Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)</a>	No SGMA specific IPD, governance description, documents.
<b>Central Delta Water Agency GSA</b>	
All on home page	No SGMA Specific IPD; links of docs, link to the GWA, governance description.
<b>City of Lodi GSA</b>	
Home > Your Government > Departments > Public Works > <a href="#">Water</a>	No apparent “GSA” link or details of city responsibility. No SGMA specific IPD, governance or description.
<b>City of Manteca GSA (link broken from ESJGWA site)</b>	
N/A	No web presence for GSA No SGMA specific IPD
<b>NSJWCD GSA</b>	

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Website Path and Link	Audit Notes
Home > <a href="#">SGMA</a>	No SGMA specific IPD, governance or description of agency role. Does not say it is a GSA.
<b>Woodbridge Irrigation District GSA</b>	
N/A	No web presence for GSA No SGMA specific IPD
<b>San Joaquin County No. 1 and No. 2</b>	
Home > Water Resources Management > <a href="#">Groundwater</a>	Link from member page goes to the general county website. Content associated with the GSA appear to be housed on the county's Flood Control and Water Conservation District website. Page says ESJGWA adopted the plan; it did not. No direct link to IPD.
<b>California Water Service Company</b>	
	The foundation for why this CPUC regulated utility is shown as a member agency is primarily referenced in the adopted GSP. Additionally, the utility's website includes no reference to ESJGWA on its Stockton District Information Page.