

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Implementation in the Ukiah Valley Basin: The Process



Malka Kopell, Senior Mediator
Center for Collaborative Policy
California State University, Sacramento

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Center for Collaborative Policy

- Founded in 1992
- Not-for-Profit / Fee-for-Service Unit of Sacramento State
- Mission - *Build the capacity of public agencies, stakeholder groups, and the public to use collaborative strategies to improve policy outcomes.*
- SGMA support to DWR and SWRCB
 - Local Assistance – 16 GSA Formation Efforts

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Comprehensive statewide legislation that creates a framework for sustainable groundwater management

- Became law on January 1, 2015
- All medium and high priority basins managed sustainably
- Emphasis on local control with State oversight
- Mandates Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)
- Mandates Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)

- Required formation of GSAs to implement SGMA at the local level
- Any local public agencies with water supply, management, or land use authorities are eligible to become GSAs
 - County, cities, water agencies, CSDs, RDs, etc., can be members
 - GSA may include one or more public agencies
 - Private water companies can be invited to join
 - Other interests can be incorporated into GSA governance

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Key Implementation Milestones

- June 30, 2017 – GSAs must be formed
- July 1, 2017 – State affirms GSA status
- January 31, 2020 – GSPs complete for critically over-drafted basins
- January 31, 2022 – All other GSPs complete

Beginning the Process

In April, 2016, the Mendocino County Executive Office and Water Agency received Department of Water Resources grant funding for facilitation services from the Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP).

SGMA in Ukiah Valley Basin – Stakeholder Interests

Initial Assessment– Spring 2016

- Common Perspectives / Conditions:
 - High level of understanding of SGMA
 - People wanted to make sure their particular interests were protected
 - Wanted to keep the process as simple as possible
 - Concern that time was passing quickly and GSA deadlines coming up

SGMA in Ukiah Valley Basin – Stakeholder Interests

Initial Assessment, cont'd

- Common Perspectives / Conditions (cont.):
 - Feeling that this area has plenty of water
 - Concern about lack of credible data – particularly the surface water/groundwater interaction – need to study this carefully
 - Interest in basin members working together
 - Support of facilitated, inclusive approach

SGMA in Ukiah Valley Basin – Stakeholder Interests

Initial Assessment, cont'd

- Some Concerns
 - Another layer of monitoring/regulation
 - Taking time and resources
 - Questions about role and influence of Sonoma County in process

SGMA in Ukiah Valley Basin – Stakeholder Interests

Initial Assessment, cont'd

- Relating to GSA Formation:
 - Support for County taking a lead role
 - Interest in including agricultural reps in discussions

GSA for Ukiah Valley Basin

Formation Process

- SGMA Educational Meeting in June, 2017
- GSA Formation Workgroup – 9 (monthly) open meetings
- In-between: as-needed, subcommittees, individual/small-group conversations to offer/vet proposals
- *Interested Parties List* receiving meeting notices, agendas and meeting summaries

GSA for Ukiah Valley Basin

Governance Approaches Considered

- Single/Centralized GSA
- Distributed/Multiple GSA
- Mix and Match

GSA for Ukiah Valley Basin

Process Steps

1. Determined Rules of Engagement/How the Governance Workgroup Will Work
 - Membership
 - Decision-Making Process
 - Meeting Schedule
2. Created GSA Proposals
 - Specific GSA Roles and Responsibilities
 - Specific Governance Options

GSA for Ukiah Valley Basin

Process Steps, cont'd

4. Solidified GSA Proposals
 - Began Drafting Joint Powers Agreement
5. Finalized GSA Proposal
 - Finalized Joint Powers Agreement

GSA for Ukiah Valley Basin

Topics Discussed

- ✓ Agency Powers
- ✓ Agency Membership and Appointment Process
- ✓ Voting Rules
- ✓ Technical Advisory Committee
- ✓ Agency Funding and Contribution Structure

GSA for Ukiah Valley Basin

Final Steps

- ☐ JPA Approved by Member Agencies
- ☐ Members Join GSA
- ☐ Representatives and Alternates Chosen
- ☐ First Meeting of GSA May 10: Public Hearing
- ☐ Second Meeting of GSA June 15: Finalize DWR Notification Packet

THANK YOU

Malka Kopell

mkopell@ccp.csus.edu