

Wyandotte Creek GSA Advisory Committee Meeting

Access meeting materials at: <https://www.wyandottecreekgsa.com/>

Meeting Brief

- **Overview:** This was the first meeting of the Wyandotte Creek Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Advisory Committee (WAC).
- **WAC Charter:** The group reviewed draft WAC Charter and sought agreement on recommended modifications for WC GSA Board consideration [[Access Here](#)].
- **Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Schedule:** P. Gosselin (Butte County) presented an overview of schedule for GSP Completion and WAC members asked clarifying questions [[Access Here](#)].
- **Draft Basin Setting:** The WAC received an overview presentation of draft Basin Setting chapter, which includes the hydrogeologic conceptual model, groundwater conditions, and water budget information for the subbasin [[Access Draft Chapter Here](#)].
- **Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs):** P. Gosselin (Butte County) provided an overview presentation describing GDEs, approach, status of effort & next steps. WAC members asked clarifying questions and provided feedback. The public had an opportunity to comment [[Access Slides Here](#)].
- **Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC):** The WAC received an overview presentation of the SMC key components and offered some preliminary comments and clarifying questions. The WAC will have a more in-depth SMC discussion during the next meeting [[Access Slides Here](#)].
- **Next Steps:** The WAC confirmed its standing meetings for the first Thursday of the month, from 9:00-12:00. The WAC will meet again via video conference on January 7, 2021 from 9:00-12:00.

Action Items

Item	Lead Person(s)	Completion
Share modified WAC Charter with the Board for consideration.	Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee	Upon completion
Follow up with G. Barber regarding quantification of the South Feather Canal system's leakage in the groundwater model.	Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee	Upon completion
Add ideas for public outreach to a future meeting agenda.	CBI & Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee	Upon completion

Summary

Introductions & Agenda Review

The facilitator, T. Carlone (Consensus Building Institute, CBI) welcomed participants to the first WAC meeting and reviewed the meeting agenda. WAC members and Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee representatives introduced themselves.

Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

No comment.

Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee Reports

There were no updates from the Management Committee.

Wyandotte Creek GSA WAC Charter

The WAC reviewed the draft Charter, which describes the purpose, operating principles and ground rules of the WAC. This charter is subject to approval by the Agency Board of Directors.

Discussion | WAC Charter

- **Groundwater Pumpers Advisory Committee (GPAC):** A WAC member asked about the status of the GPAC. P. Gosselin clarified the GPAC was formed to advise on Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) during governance formation. The GPAC became somewhat dormant when the SGMA governance structures were established; however, members wanted to keep it open as a venue to voice groundwater pumpers' interests and recommendations. Butte County is in the process of reappointing members, as the terms have since expired.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** The WAC suggested removing requirement to complete Brown Act trainings, as all member agencies have received these trainings in the past.
- **Membership:** While there are only water purveyor representatives in the WAC at the moment, the WAC remains open for new members of the public interested in joining the committee. The WAC suggested removing specific dates from WAC membership.
- **Decision-making Quorum:** WAC members suggested adding "Management Committee will transmit to the board any discussion and recommendations from the meetings."
- **Relationship to the Public:** A public participant inquired about the committee's relation to the public, asking what the process would be to express public concerns. The commenter expressed concern about water quality issues in a seasonal creek near her residence, which could be impacted by groundwater recharge. P. Gosselin (Butte County) shared that the WAC serves as a public venue to voice concerns and comments related to the development of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). While SGMA does have a component related to Water Quality, it only applies to impacts related to groundwater management and not necessarily to pollutants released into local creeks.

Outcomes & Next Steps | WAC Charter

- The WAC members made recommended changes to the WAC Charter. The Management Committee will share proposed changes with the Board.

Overview of Tasks & Schedule for GSP Completion

P. Gosselin (Butte County) reviewed the GSP development status, components, and timeline. Please refer to the slides and meeting schedule in the meeting agenda for a more detailed schedule [[Access Here](#)].

- **Overall Timeline:** The Wyandotte Creek GSP development is divided into phases: (1) Basin Setting Project (2018-2020), (2) GSP Completion Project (2020-2021), (3) Submission (January 30, 2022),

and (4) Implementation. The GSA is on track to meet the deadline, but the plan implementation will likely require additional resources from either grants or fees.

- **Status:** the draft Basin Setting Project was completed last spring . The GSA is now developing the next chapters (Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC), Representative Monitoring Network, Inter-basin Coordination, Project and Management Actions (PMAs), and Implementation Cost and Funding Options).
- **Technical Support:** The Wyandotte Creek GSA received technical support from Davids Engineering during Phase 1 and is now working with Geosyntec for Phase 2.
- **Facilitation Support:** The GSA received Facilitation Support Services from the Consensus Building Institute (CBI) funded by the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Program.
- **Opportunities for input:** There will be various opportunities for the WAC and the public to provide input. The WAC can make recommendations on draft chapters. The public can submit comments during public comment review periods, GSA Board Workshops, and WAC public meetings.

Discussion | GSP Status

- P. Vellines (DWR) asked if some GSP chapters have already been drafted. P. Gosselin (Butte County) confirmed the Basin Setting Chapter has been drafted and underwent public comment period (Summer 2020).

Draft Basin Setting Overview & Discussion

The WAC reviewed an overview presentation of draft Basin Setting documents and discussed potential recommendations to the Wyandotte Creek GSA Board of Directors [[Access Slides](#) | [Access Staff Memo](#)]. The public had an opportunity to provide comments or ask clarifying questions.

- **The Basin Setting Project** (2018-2020) produced draft chapters for two main sections of the GSP: Basin Setting and Monitoring Network. The draft Basin Setting chapter includes the Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM), Groundwater Conditions, and Water Budgets for the subbasin. Significant portions of the draft Monitoring Network chapter are also available.
- **Public Input:** The Management Committee hosted a webinar on June 23, 2020 to present preliminary findings and solicit public comments. Approximately 30 people participated in the webinar. Public review drafts of these chapters were released for a 30-day comment period August 10-September 8, 2020. No public comments were received. These chapters will not be considered final until they are combined with the rest of the draft GSP for review and public comment in mid-2021.
- **Water Budget Scenario Takeaways:**
 - Increased urbanization will replace undeveloped lands.
 - A comment was received during the webinar that there may be an increase in agricultural production east of Highway 70.
 - Climate change may result in an overall increase in precipitation and Evapotranspiration (ET) demands and increased surface water flows.
 - Modest decrease in net stream accretions (i.e., gains) compared to historical period.
 - Variability in groundwater storage of approximately 120 thousand acre-feet over a 50-year planning horizon, with similar conditions across scenarios.

- Limited reduction in groundwater storage anticipated, on average.
- **Summary**
 - Groundwater storage is largely driven by drought cycles; drought planning will be important to prevent undesirable results.
 - Reductions in storage add up over time. Projects and management actions targeting recharge in wet years need to consider how often reductions are likely to occur.
 - Monitoring will be important to better understand how changes in water budgets translate to groundwater conditions over time.

The complete Basin Setting Chapter can be found at: <https://www.wyandotecreekgsa.com/gw-sustainability-plan>

Discussion | Basin Setting

- A WAC member suggested there needs to be more representation from agricultural users on the WAC, as 79% of water supplies in the subbasin derive from agricultural pumping.
- A WAC member asked if the model used for the Basin Setting quantified leakage from the South Feather Canal system. Staff replied they would have to talk with the consultant team about this.

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs)

P. Gosselin (Butte County) provided an overview presentation describing GDEs, their importance, and SGMA requirements associated with GDEs [[Access slides](#)]. GDEs are communities or species that depend on groundwater emerging from aquifers or on groundwater occurring near the surface. GDEs are considered beneficial users of groundwater and can be affected by chronic lowering of groundwater levels and by surface water depletion. SGMA requires GSAs to identify GDEs within the basin and assess the impacts to those GDEs, as specified in Section 353.2 [§ 354.16. Groundwater Conditions], utilizing DWR data or the best available information. In addition, P. Gosselin outlined the approach used to identify GDEs in the Wyandotte Creek Subbasin, the status of the effort and an overview of next steps. WAC members asked clarifying questions and provided feedback. The public had an opportunity to comment.

Discussion | GDEs

- **GDEs:** A member of the public asked whether wetland delineation reports, related to riparian areas, are part of GDEs. P. Gosselin replied he would need to go back to the Nature Conservancy Resource Hub ([Access here](#)) to identify data sources.

Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) Overview & Preliminary Discussion

The WAC received an overview presentation and held preliminary discussion of SMC key components in preparation for a more in-depth SMC discussion at the January WAC meeting [[access presentation slides](#) | [Best Management Practices report](#)]. The SMC is the umbrella that includes: Sustainability Goal (qualitative), Undesirable Results (quantitative), Minimum Thresholds (quantitative), and Measurable Objectives (quantitative). Overall, sustainability is demonstrated by the avoidance of Undesirable Results for the six sustainability indicators below. What is considered “significant and unreasonable” is determined by local GSAs and stakeholders.



Lowering of Groundwater Levels



Reduction of Groundwater Storage



Land Subsidence



Surface Water Depletion



Water Quality Degradation



Sea Water Intrusion

Discussion | SMC

- A WAC member asked if there is a plan to monitor and make adjustments along the way. P. Gosselin (Butte County) replied that the GSP will be revised every 5 years.
- P. Vellines, DWR representative, shared that an updated Best Management Practices for SMCs will be coming out soon.
- A member of the public asked whether the Wyandotte Creek subbasin falls into a specific watershed. P Gosselin replied he believes it is within the Feather River Watershed.
- Another WAC member suggested given that the subbasin looks in balance, the GSA could consider A light touch on the PMAs,
- The facilitation team encouraged WAC members to share ideas or suggestions on how to engage the broader public and make technical information accessible. Some ideas include sending postcard invitations to every parcel served by water agencies to participate in public workshops, sharing the meeting recordings via interested parties lists and the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation’s Water Solutions newsletters, online surveys, outreach to water and conservation grassroot groups, and other forms of targeted outreach to water users.

Outcomes & Next Steps | SMC

- The facilitation team will add ideas for public outreach to a future meeting agenda.

Next Steps

The WAC confirmed its standing meetings to be the first Thursday of the month, from 9:00-12:00. The WAC will meet again via video conference on January 7, 2021 from 9:00-12:00.

Meeting Participants

Participant	Representation/Affiliation	Present
Wyandotte Creek GSA Advisory Committee (WAC) Members		
George Barber	California Water Service	Y
Kristin McKillop	South Feather Water and Power	Y
Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Member Agency Staff		
Paul Gosselin	Butte County	Y
Chris Heindell	Thermalito Water and Sewer	Y
Matt Thompson	City of Chico	Y
Other Representatives		
Pat Vellines	Department of Water Resources (DWR)	
Facilitator		
Tania Carlone	Consensus Building Institute	Y
Mariana Rivera-Torres	Consensus Building Institute	Y

In addition, 1 member of the public attended the meeting.

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