

Wyandotte Creek GSA Advisory Committee Meeting

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

Meeting Brief

- **Overview:** The Wyandotte Creek Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Advisory Committee (WAC) met virtually on August 5, 2021 [[Access Recording Here](#)].
- **Projects and Management Actions (PMAs):** The WAC received an overview and provided input on the PMA draft chapter. WAC members provided recommendations to the Wyandotte Creek GSA Board on project ranking and PMAs for inclusion in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The public had an opportunity to provide comment [Access [PMA Draft Chapter Here](#); Access [PMA Presentation](#)].
- **Implementation Chapter:** The WAC discussed the draft Implementation Chapter outline and considered recommendations on implementation components, including inter-basin coordination [Access [Implementation Slides](#); [Inter-basin Coordination Slides](#); and [Inter-basin Coordination Report and Cover Letter](#)]. The public had an opportunity to provide comment.
- **Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee Reports:** The Management Committee provided verbal updates.
- **Next Steps:** The WAC will meet again via video conference on September 2, 2021, from 9:00-12:00.

Action Items

Item	Lead Person(s)	Completion
Upload meeting recording to the website.	Chris Heindell (Thermalito Water and Sewer)	Complete Access Here
Finalize June WAC Meeting Summary and upload to the website.	CBI & Management Committee	Complete Access Here
Communicate WAC recommendations and incorporate suggested changes related to the PMA draft chapter to the GSA Board. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate with Kristen McKillop, David Kehn, and Chris Heindell to modify PMA #12 Hydrant Metering to ensure it accurately characterizes the desire to focus on water loss control ▪ Intra-basin not inter-basin ▪ Change Palermo project to planned not potential ▪ Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only rank the projects planned, retaining the rest in the list without ranking ○ Soften language around the GSA role re: management actions ○ Remove Large Well Moratorium and Groundwater Allocation from Management Action table 	Technical Consulting Team & Management Committee	

Summary

Introductions & Agenda Review

The facilitator, T. Carlone (Consensus Building Institute, CBI) welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

- A member of the public expressed concern with the Sustainable Management Criteria, particularly related to the Minimum Thresholds (MT) set for Lowering Groundwater Levels. This member of the public referred to the three periods of drought reflected in the graphs and shared concerns about having the MT approximately 20 ft below those levels. The participant encouraged the group to consider acting prior to reaching currently set thresholds and shared they had submitted written comments to C. Buck (Butte County) after the Wyandotte Creek GSA board meeting.

Meeting Notes Review & Consideration

WAC members reviewed and approved the July 1, 2021, meeting summary [[Access Here](#)].

Projects and Management Actions (PMAs) Draft Chapter Overview & Recommendations

The WAC received an overview and provided input on the PMA draft chapter. WAC members provided recommendations to the Wyandotte Creek GSA Board on project ranking and PMAs for inclusion in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The public had an opportunity to provide comment [[Access PMA Draft Chapter Here](#); [Access PMA Presentation](#)].

The PMA Chapter first describes the process to identify projects, the expected benefits, how those projects would be measured, how the projects contribute to the Measurable Objectives (MO), existing regulatory processes, proposed timing and schedule, legal authority, costs, and funding availability. The level of detail included in the chapter depends on the amount of information submitted by the project proponents. In addition, A. Hussein (Geosyntec) emphasized the role of the GSA may vary by project; for example, the GSA may be leading a project or just provide coordination and oversight.

The table below outlines the proposed project prioritization, as presented during the meeting. It includes project description, proponent, anticipated acre-feet of annual water gains, and status (planned, potential, or conceptual). The ranking of projects was included due to existing funding requirements; yet, the proposed ranking may change with evolving circumstances, such as funding availability or changing conditions.

WYANDOTTE CREEK GSA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAC) MEETING (8/5/2021)

Table 1. Project ranking as presented during the 8/5/21 meeting

#	Project Description	Proponent	Acre-Feet	Planned/Potential	WAC Project-specific Input & Discussion
1	Residential Conservation	California Water Service	100	Planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [From July WAC Meeting] Change proponent to Wyandotte Creek GSA
2	Agricultural Irrigation Efficiency	Wyandotte Creek GSA (WCGSA)	1,000	Planned	
3	Flood-MAR	WCGSA	TBD	Planned	
4	Orville Wildlife Area Robinson's Riffle Project	Sutter FCA, GSSA	TBD	Planned	
5	Inter-basin Water Transfer	TWSD	5,000	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify title to intra-basin not inter-basin transfer.
6	Streamflow Augmentation	WCGSA	TBD	Planned	
7	Agricultural Surface Water Supplies	WCGSA	TBD	Potential	
8	Palermo Clean Water Improvement Project	Butte County	TBD	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [From July WAC Meeting] Add South Feather Water & Power as proponent as well
9	Recharge Well	TWSD	TBD	Conceptual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Williams (ag. water user) asked for specific information and details on project location. He suggested moving this item to the bottom of the list. A. Hussein (Geosyntec) clarified this project would entail capturing floodwater for direct or in-lieu recharge. The location would depend on surface water holders' interest and may change during different wet years. N. Johansson (ag. water user) would like more information about injection wells and the potential for water quality implications and water ownership. D. Sherwood (ag. water user) shared he has heard about positive experiences with recharge wells in the Klamath Basin.
10	Well Upgrades	TWSD	TBD	Potential	
11	TWSD Water Treatment Plan Expansion	TWSD	TBD	Planned	

12	Hydrant Metering	South Feather Water & Power	TBD	Planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D. Sherwood (ag. water user) asked for clarification given existing construction meters across the Oroville area. He found this PMA unclear. • K. McKillop (South Feather Water and Power) highlighted recent change in policies, as the issue related to non-beneficial uses of available domestic water supplies is prevalent across the state. Fire hydrant metering may not be the best solution to the problem of water loss/theft. The issue has various layers and multiple agencies are grappling with the consequences and potential solutions. It may be beyond the GSA’s role to solve. K. McKillop fully supports maintaining the project listed, as it supports water management, particularly as it relates to surface water/groundwater depletion. She would like to clarify this is not exclusive to South Feather Water and Power, but it is interfering with the agency’s conservation efforts. • D. Sherwood (ag. water user) suggested modifying the PMA to include hydrants and other illegal water use, instead of removing it. He has directly witnessed water trucks gathering water from fire hydrants for illegal uses. The PMA could be modified to better reflect the objective. • N. Johansson (ag. water user) has also witnessed similar experiences with water trucks and highlighted these users have permits, which limit law enforcement’s ability to intervene. She wondered what is the GSA’s authority in limiting/managing such uses? • A. Hussein (Geosyntec) suggested refining the language to describe the project proponents’ focus on promoting/encouraging policy solutions that reduce and manage groundwater pumping. The GSA could help find funding sources and other strategies to regulate and manage water use; yet, the GSA would not have the authority without direct input from project proponents. • D. Kehn (CalWater) suggested changing the title to “Water Loss Control” and include metering as a strategy, as it would be difficult to account for water loss in the system without metering.
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					<p>C. Heindell (TWSD) supports changing the name and including the project in the plan to encompass unlawful water use and/or water loss control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Sherwood (ag. water user) suggested looking into the permitting applications. P. Vellines (DWR) echoed that idea and shared there needs to be a way to link a water permit to a cannabis permit. A potential tool (Management Action) could include checking water permits are tied to legal cannabis grows. <p>Next Steps: A. Hussein (Geosyntec) will coordinate with representatives from the three entities (C. Heindell from Thermalito Water and Sewer District, K. McKillop from South Feather Water & Power, and D. Kehn CalWater) to modify this project to ensure it accurately characterizes the desire to focus on water loss control.</p>
13	Fuel Management for Watershed Health	WCGSA, BC Fire Safe Council, BCRC	TBD	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Sherwood (ag. water user) clarified whether this item referred to prescribed burns and additional grazing. A. Hussein (Geosyntec) clarified it relates to the protection of the upper watershed to promote/maintain watershed health across subbasin boundaries.
14	Removal of Invasive Species	WCGSA	TBD	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Sherwood (ag. water user) asked for more information on what specific plant species are being referred to. A. Hussein (Geosyntec) shared the project would entail mapping effort to ID invasive species/native grasses, then tracking invasive to assess impacts to water supply and quality.
15	Extend Orchard Replacement	WCGSA	TBD	Conceptual	
Total			6,100		

General WAC Comments & Input

- D. Kehn suggested including an additional column highlighting project participants or partners, in addition to proponents.
- K. McKillop (South Feather Water and Power) suggested categorizing the PMAs differently to illustrate PMA benefits and contributions to specific SMC and to better communicate the information to the public. It would be most important to communicate clearly, what each PMA intends to do or support, as well as how it ties to the previous GSP components.

WAC Recommendations to the GSA Board

WAC Recommendations	WAC Member Support
1. Only rank planned projects (not potential or conceptual)	Yes: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, N. Johansson

Public Comments

- A member of the public offered various suggestions related to the table above.
 - Move #1 Residential Conservation lower down the list. Grant money should not be sought to support for-profit companies (e.g., CalWater), certainly not as the top priority.
 - Modify the priority list based on highest anticipated impact. Specifically, set Agricultural Irrigation Efficiency as the top priority; set Hydrant Metering (once modified) as #2, and residential conservation as #3.
 - Address concerns related to water theft/loss and prioritize reconciling water permitting process to distinguish legal water use from water theft immediately.
 - Consider including projects focusing on reclaiming/recycling water.
 - Include additional information in the table to ensure the reader can accurately understand what the project is about. For example, rename #13 above to Management for Overall Watershed Health, and #14 to “mapping of invasive species” rather than removal of.

Management Actions

The table below shows the proposed management actions as presented during the 8/5/21 WAC meeting.

#	Action	Lead Agency	WAC Project-specific Input & Discussion
1	Update Butte County & City of Oroville General Plan	Butte County and City of Oroville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N. Johansson (ag. water user) asked whether specific components of the General Plan have implications for the GSP. A. Hussein (Geosyntec) highlighted Chapter 1 will describe specific items in the General Plan applicable to the GSA. • D. Williams (ag. water user) would like greater specificity and more information. • N. Johansson (ag. water user) asked how this management action would move forward and who would be responsible. C. Buck (Butte County) shared there would be staff cross-over. Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation staff has participated in the General Plan’s Water Element update discussions. The GSP would establish a direct link and require greater understanding of policy implications and clear lines of communication.
2	Domestic Well Mitigation	Wyandotte Creek GSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D. Williams (ag. water user) would like greater specificity and more information. • N. Johansson (ag. water user) asked about the reported number of domestic wells that have gone dry in Wyandotte Creek. C. Buck (Butte

WYANDOTTE CREEK GSA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAC) MEETING (8/5/2021)

			<p>County) shared, so far there are about 3-4 reports of dry wells located mainly in the Palermo area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WAC members suggested greater clarity about the connection between SMC and the PMAs. C. Buck (Butte County) shared the SMC set the framework for groundwater conditions in the basin. The goal for the PMAs would be to avoid reaching the MT. Yet, the GSA needs to recognize the MT is set up lower than the levels of some existing domestic wells, so it will be key to set up programs to address and mitigate the impacts to domestic wells. In terms of tracking, WAC members wondered if a voluntary well registration program should be part of the implementation portion of the plan.
3	Amend the Well Permitting Ordinance	Butte County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Williams (ag. water user) would like greater specificity and more information. C. Buck (Butte County) shared more details would be developed if the GSA decides to engage and pursue this management action during GSP implementation.
4	Landscape Ordinance	Butte County & City of Oroville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N. Johansson (ag. water user) shared she worked on a plan focused on sustainable landscaping strategies (e.g., native plants, etc.) and can add additional ideas. D. Sherwood (ag. water user) did not support this management action. He suggested softening the language to indicate drought resilience planning, and expressed concern with limiting the size of grass turf. D. Kehn (CalWater) supported keeping this management action separate from the General Plan update. He would like to change the language to be less restrictive and encourage reporting. This item can target new large developments in the area. K. Peterson (Butte County) shared that while the City of Oroville and Butte County would have the jurisdiction to enact this action, the GSA could make a request to the city and County to act and focus on new development. K. McKillop (South Feather Water and Power) shared water agencies are in the process of reviewing data for a state-wide landscape area estimate to look at domestic irrigable acreage and will provide refined data when available (in the next 2 years).
5	Promote expansion of service area of water purveyors	Wyandotte Creek GSA	
6	Large Well Moratorium	Butte County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Kehn (CalWater) shared Glenn County implemented a similar moratorium, which did not necessarily minimize water use. Instead, users were drilling more small wells, instead of single large wells. D. Kehn suggested instead looking into a well-drilling mitigation program, or some sort of mitigation requirement after a new well is drilled.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K. McKillop (South Feather Water and Power) shared the County has already established a well-spacing requirement. She suggested exploring existing policies and acknowledging all the great work underway led by Butte County. • N. Johansson (ag. water user) echoed concerns and acknowledged the policies in place that protect local groundwater. • D. Williams (ag. water user) shared his concern with this management action, particularly related to the challenges of restoring collapsed wells.
7	Groundwater Allocation	Wyandotte Creek GSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D. Kehn shared this Management Action should be considered as a worst-case scenario strategy. • K. McKillop (South Feather Water and Power) is not supportive of this action.

General Questions/Recommendations:

- K. McKillop (South Feather Water and Power) expressed concern with the lack of a solid data foundation and proper understanding to pursue some of the management actions delineated above. Particularly, she expressed concern with indicating in the plan the GSA would take an active role, beyond monitoring, communicating, and coordinating as needed to strengthen a foundational understanding of groundwater management. C. Buck (Butte County) suggested modifying the language to address this concern by softening and broadening the language on the GSA role on, for example, pursuing an update to the well permitting ordinance.

WAC Recommendations	WAC Member Support
1. Soften the language around the GSA role to indicate the GSA intends to monitor, participate, and coordinate with respective agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson
2. Remove #4 landscape ordinance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove: NA • Keep: D. Kehn • Neutral: K. McKillop, N. Johansson, D. Sherwood, D. Williams; these WAC members suggested including additional language to indicate decisions and recommendations would be driven by data and improved understanding.
3. Remove management action #6 Large Well Moratorium from the list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson
4. Remove management action #7 Groundwater Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson

Public Comment

- A member of the public shared some well owners are reluctant to report dry wells, as this might invite the government intervening. People would like to stay on land and figure out ways to get

enough water when conditions improve, so they do not lose their investments. This public participant suggested finding a way to address and mitigate these concerns. Further, they shared current drought conditions have pushed the needle towards more action. It is important to communicate sustainable groundwater management will be key to transcend drought and fire conditions.

Outcome & Next Steps:

- A. Hussein (Geosyntec) will coordinate with representatives from the three water entities (C. Heindell from Thermalito Water & Sewer District, K. McKillop from South Feather Water & Power, and D. Kehn CalWater) to modify project #12 Hydrant Metering to ensure it accurately characterizes the focus on water loss control.
- The Management Committee will present the WAC recommendations and the compilation of public comments to the GSA Board for consideration at the next Wyandotte Creek Board Meeting.

Implementation Chapter

The WAC discussed the draft Implementation Chapter outline and considered recommendations on implementation components, including inter-basin coordination [Access [Implementation Slides](#); [Inter-basin Coordination Slides](#); and [Inter-basin Coordination Report and Cover Letter](#)]. The public had an opportunity to provide comment.

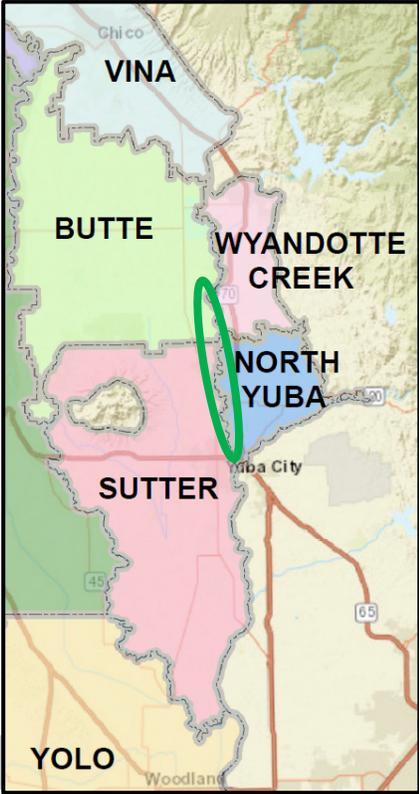
Inter-basin Coordination

C. Buck led a presentation focused on the Northern Sacramento Valley Inter-basin Coordination Framework and received recommendations on inter-basin coordination priorities for the Wyandotte Creek Subbasin. WAC members provided input/recommendations on which pillars should be included or emphasized in the draft GSP description of intended inter-basin coordination as part of plan implementation. WAC members discussed the proposed “Pillars” from the Northern Sacramento Valley Inter-Basin Coordination Report in relation to the Wyandotte Creek Subbasin and its neighbors. The full report is available [here](#).

Draft Implementation Outline

- **Estimate of GSP Implementation Costs**
- **Identify Funding Alternatives**
- **Schedule for Implementation**
 - Schedule for Project Implementation
 - Schedule to Address Data Gaps
- **Annual Reporting**
- **Inter-basin Coordination**
- **Periodic Evaluations**

As shown in the map to the right, the Wyandotte Creek Subbasin neighbors include the Butte Subbasin, Sutter Subbasin, and North Yuba Subbasin. Coordination could also focus on the Feather River Corridor (Butte, Wyandotte Creek, North Yuba, Sutter).



Pillars – North Sacramento Valley Report	WAC Input & Recommendation
<p>1. Information-sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inform each other on changing conditions (i.e., surface water cutbacks, land use changes, policy changes that inform groundwater management) b. Share annual reports and interim progress reports c. Share data and technical information and work towards building shared data across and/or along basin boundaries (e.g., monitoring data, water budgets, modeling inputs and outputs, and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most relevant to direct neighbors: Butte and North Yuba Subbasins • N. Johansson (ag. water user) suggested clearly indicating how often the information would be exchanged and through what avenues/channels. <p>Recommendation: Wyandotte Creek Subbasin will work with GSA staff of Butte and North Yuba subbasins to identify lines of communication and methods for information sharing In support: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson</p>
<p>2. Joint analysis & evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate and compare contents of GSPs with a focus on establishing a common understanding of basin conditions at boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope: Feather River Corridor Group • Recommendation: Wyandotte Creek Subbasin intends to pursue funding and collaboratively work with subbasins in the Feather River Corridor group to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Contract with a consultant to conduct this work

<p>b. Identify significant differences, uncertainties, and potential issues of concern related to groundwater interaction at the boundaries</p> <p>c. Engage in analysis and evaluation of SMCs between GSPs to assess impacts and identify significant differences and possible impacts between subbasins that could potentially lead to undesirable results</p>	<p>b. Evaluate and compare contents of GSPs with a focus on establishing a common understanding of basin conditions at boundaries</p> <p>c. Identify significant differences, uncertainties, and potential issues of concern related to groundwater interaction at the boundaries</p> <p>d. Engage in analysis and evaluation of SMCs between GSPs to assess impacts and identify significant differences and possible impacts between subbasins that could potentially lead to undesirable results</p> <p><u>Suggestions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify intent to pursue grant funding • In support: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson
<p>3. Coordination on mutually beneficial activities</p> <p>a. Communicate, coordinate, and collaborate on mutually beneficial activities, which could include joint monitoring, joint reporting, regional modeling, and other efforts to address data gaps at subbasin boundaries</p> <p>b. Collectively pursue funding and collaborate on mutually agreed upon projects and management actions that provide benefits across boundaries</p> <p>c. Leverage existing collaboratives (NSV IRWM, NCWA etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope: Feather River Corridor Group • Recommendation: Work collaboratively with Feather River Corridor subbasins to identify items in our GSPs that are ripe for a coordinated project and pursuit of funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Projects and Management Actions ○ Data Gaps → new monitoring wells, stream gaging etc. • Wyandotte Creek will pursue grant funding to support a consultant to conduct this work • Wyandotte Creek will work collaboratively with the Northern California Water Association (NCWA) in their efforts to pursue funding and support local and state agency activities to identify and fill regional data gaps <p><u>Suggestions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add “and other” after NCWA. Some stakeholders in the County expressed distrust with some agencies represented in NCWA that would like to promote water transfers. • Specify intent to collaborate on monitoring beyond filling data gaps. • Use language that indicates proactive approach, beyond monitoring. • In support: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson
<p>4. Coordinated communication and outreach</p> <p>a. Coordinate and collaborate on regional-scale public engagement and communication strategies that promote awareness on groundwater sustainability, enhance public trust, and maintain institutional knowledge</p> <p>b. Maintain list of GSP/subbasin staff contacts and websites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope: Regional: subbasins in the Northern Sac Valley, Feather River Corridor group • Recommendation: Wyandotte Creek GSA staff will continue to participate in regional public engagement activities and efforts related to implementation of SGMA in the Northern Sacramento Valley. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In support: D. Kehn, D. Sherwood, D. Williams, K. McKillop, N. Johansson

<p>5. Issue-resolution process</p> <p>a. Establish and follow an agreed-upon process for identifying and resolving conflicts between GSAs by the first five-year update [Refer to Appendix D for more details and discussion prompts on issue resolution processes]</p>	<p>WAC Comments & Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N. Johannsen (ag representative): Consider resources needed to support third-party support. Learn from current experiences with emergency management and the fire safe council; counties have been coordinating well and establishing shared budgets. She suggested having a plan in place, as it would be more expensive to resolve after the conflicts emerge. She encouraged a proactive approach. • D. Kehn (CalWater): supports a layered approach, starting with a gentle approach to resolve conflicts. He supports establishing the process before conflicts emerge but suggested the GSA Board should make the decision related to this pillar. • D. Williams (ag. water user) would like to have a plan in place that is flexible and outlines various options. • D. Sherwood (ag. water user) believes it is premature to develop an issue resolution process and would like to wait.
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Wyandotte Creek GSA Management Committee Reports

The Management Committee provided quick verbal updates. The Wyandotte Creek GSA Board will meet on August 26th and will receive the WAC’s comments and recommendations. Further, the Board will receive comments on the Implementation Chapter. More information available at: <https://www.wyandottecreekgsa.com/>

Next Meeting

The WAC will meet again via video conference on September 2, 2021, from 9:00-12:00.

Meeting Participants

Participant	Representation/Affiliation	Present
Wyandotte Creek GSA Advisory Committee (WAC) Members		
David Kehn	California Water Service	Y
Darin Williams	Agricultural Water User	Y
Duke Sherwood	Agricultural Water User	Y
Kristen McKillop	South Feather Water and Power	Y
Nicole Johansson	Agricultural Water User	Y
Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Member Agency Staff		
Christina Buck	Butte County	Y
Kelly Peterson	Butte County	Y
Matt Thompson	City of Oroville	Y
Chris Heindell	Thermalito Water and Sewer	Y
Technical Consultants		
Joe Turner	Geosyntec	Y
Amer Hussein	Geosyntec	Y
State Agencies		
Pat Vellines	Department of Water Resources (DWR) Northern Region Office	Y
Facilitator		
Tania Carlone	Consensus Building Institute	Y
Mariana Rivera-Torres	Consensus Building Institute	Y

Approximately 1 member of the public participated.