

General Manager Report

- Vina GSA Stakeholder Committee Meeting with Ag stakeholders
- Upcoming Meetings and Topics

Vina GSA Ag Stakeholder Meeting

- Thursday, November 13, 1-3pm
- Attendance:
 - Attended (~16):
 - Stantec facilitators, Christina Buck, LWA consultants, Vina GSA staff, City of Chico
 - Supervisor Kimmelshue, Cheetah Tchudi, Steve Koehnen, Darren Rice, James Strong, Kyle Burns, John Fio, Rich McGowan
 - Other invited but did not attend (~4):
 - Vina GSA SHAC ag reps (3)
 - Vina GSA Board ag rep (1)

Vina GSA Ag Stakeholder Meeting

- What was discussed:
 - SGMA requires periodic evaluations every 5 years, with next submission in January 2027
 - DWR approved the Vina GSP in 2023 but issued several Recommended Corrective Actions.
 - To respond to the RCAs, Vina GSA consultants are recommending:
 - Better documentation and justification of RMS well
 - Deeper analysis of domestic well vulnerability
 - Establishing a network and approach for Interconnected Surface Water (ISW)
 - Improved narrative supporting minimum thresholds (MTs) and measurable objectives (MOs)

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- Domestic Well & Data Gap Work
 - DWR requires a clearer, more defensible accounting of active domestic wells
 - Stakeholders raised concerns about:
 - Accuracy of well logs, especially older ones
 - Condition and construction quality of older wells
 - Responsibility boundaries for failing wells (maintenance vs basin management)
 - Whether the new inventory will meaningfully improve precision
 - Next Steps:
 - GSA Consultants will complete well inventory and produce risk assessments showing:
 - How many domestic wells are at risk at the current MT
 - How that number changes using different assumptions
 - Results will be brought back for more discussion before proposing MT changes

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- Groundwater Level RMS Network
 - 2022 GSP used 17 RMS wells, but
 - Some wells were later found unsuitable
 - Some geographic gaps exist
 - Proposed network
 - Keeps usable wells from existing set
 - Removes wells that fail screening
 - Adds 3-5 existing wells with >5 years of data to fill data gaps
 - Next Steps – consultants will provide:
 - Narrative / table justification for each proposed RMS well
 - Analysis showing how the new network better captures conditions

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- Minimum Threshold (MT) approaches for Groundwater levels
 - 2 conceptual options were presented:
 - Option 1 – Update existing approach (essentially keep existing, but updated with new well network)
 - Option 2 – Set MTs based on the historical lowest groundwater level recorded at each well minus an agreed upon buffer
 - Stakeholder Input:
 - Strong interest in maximum operational flexibility
 - Context – driest 25 year period in last 1200 years, with limited undesirable results
 - Discussion re: cost implications – higher MTs may lower domestic well mitigation program but could reduce flexibility
 - Next Steps:
 - No preference chosen – group asked for
 - Side-by-side comparison showing wells impacted under each MT method; cost implications

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- Domestic Well Mitigation Program
 - Current GSP states that a program will be developed, but timing and triggers are not yet defined
 - Discussion:
 - Responsibility (is the basin liable for poorly constructed or aging wells?)
 - Cost sharing (how would this be handled?)
 - Approaches used in other basins (well registration, shallow-well criteria, etc)
 - Fairness concerns for both ag and domestic users
 - Next Steps:
 - Staff will compile examples from other GSAs and define potential eligibility, triggers, and cost-share models
 - Bring options back for further review

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- Interconnected Surface Water (New RMS Network & SMC Approach)
 - 2022 GSP did not contain an ISW RMS network, which DWR flagged in RCA
 - A new network is proposed, but the shallow network has not yet been installed
 - Model simulations from 2000-2018 show Sac River is consistently gaining (supported by ~110,000 AF/year from groundwater)
 - Stakeholders urged caution – models are imperfect, limited data exist, monitoring wells may not represent true conditions, etc
 - Next Steps – staff will refine maps to better distinguish between
 - True ISW-connected reaches
 - Perched systems
 - Non-connected foothills streams
 - Bring information back for further review and discussion

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- Key Themes - Stakeholders
 - Desire for more narrative and technical transparency on why changes are needed
 - Concern about overcorrecting or reducing operational flexibility when the basin appears to be performing well
 - Data first, decisions later – strong theme, especially re: ISW
 - Broad support for:
 - Improving RMS networks
 - Completing the domestic well inventory
 - Moving carefully and collaboratively

General Manager Report

- Upcoming Meeting Topics:
 - Money market account...options, policy
 - Division Map – 2026 elections update & next steps
 - 2026 Q1-2 Budget Review
 - Office Space
 - SWAG
 - Vina GSA issues – recharge, surface water, upcoming topic meetings