
Department of Water and Resource Conservation



Butte County Drought Resilience Plan

Tuscan Water District

August 19, 2026

Kamie Loeser, Director
Water and Resource Conservation

Background: Butte County's Drought Planning History



- 2004 Drought Preparedness and Mitigation Plan
- Established a County Drought Task Force to evaluate conditions and coordinate response during drought
- The Task Force provides regular updates to the Board of Supervisors
- Per new State requirements the County has updated the 2004 Plan into a new Drought Resilience Plan (DRP)

Background: Senate Bill 552



SB 552 (2021) required counties to formally plan for drought and water shortage risk specific to domestic wells and state small water systems (SSWSs)

- Counties must establish a Drought Task Force and
- Prepare a Drought Resilience Plan that considers:
 - Consolidations for existing water systems and domestic wells
 - Domestic well drinking water mitigation programs
 - Provisions of emergency and interim drinking water solutions
 - Plan implementation and analysis of funding sources
- Follows the Department of Water Resources County Drought Resilience Plan Guidebook

Background: How the County DRP Is Organized



Butte County's Drought Resilience Plan (DRP) responds to Senate Bill 552 requirements for addressing domestic well and state small water system (SSWS) vulnerabilities.

- Chapter 1 (Introduction) – provides an overview of the DRP; characteristics of Butte County; water supply, uses and providers; water management efforts and actions; applicable County ordinances and agreements; and other plans and resources.
- Chapter 2 (Drought and Water Shortage Task Force) – discusses the Drought Task Force and Subcommittee, Interagency Coordination Group, and Specialized Working Groups.
 - Different groups engage in drought response depending on Drought Phases/Severity

Background: How the County DRP Is Organized



- Chapter 3 (Risk Assessment) identifies County areas served by domestic wells and SSWSs that are most susceptible to drought and water shortage
- Chapter 4 (Short-Term Response Actions) addresses immediate health and safety needs for events lasting up to 30 days
- Chapter 5 (Long-Term Mitigation Strategies) aims to reduce the vulnerability of domestic wells and SSWSs so that short-term actions are needed less often
 - *Chapters 4 & 5 were developed by the Drought Task Force Subcommittee through an iterative process, building on activities already underway by County, GSAs, and other partner entities*

Why This Matters to the GSAs



- Guidebook encourages coordination with GSAs:
 - Understand how drinking water users are considered in GSPs
 - How GSAs plan to monitor and manage groundwater levels
 - Collaborate the sharing of data regarding domestic wells
 - Coordination of domestic well mitigation program
- The Vina GSA play a direct role in some short- and long-term actions supporting domestic well and SSWS communities within the Vina Subbasin

Short-Term Response Actions: Voluntary Water Conservation (STRA 03)



- County, in coordination with SSWs, NGOs, and GSAs, maintains communication and engagement and encourages voluntary water conservation during water shortage events
 - Lead: Department of Water and Resource Conservation (DWRC)
 - Partners: Butte County Environmental Health (BCEH), NGOs, and the GSAs for the Vina, Wyandotte Creek, and Butte Subbasins
- The Vina GSA may operate voluntary conservation measures to promote sustainable groundwater management that directly support this action

Long-Term Mitigation Strategies: Where GSAs Partner



- Eight Long-Term Mitigation Strategies (LTMSs) in Chapter 5 name GSAs as a partner entity:
 - LTMS 04 – Regional Groundwater Level Monitoring and Communication
 - LTMS 06 – Increased Recharge
 - LTMS 07 – Enhanced SSWS and Domestic Well Vulnerabilities Assessment
 - LTMS 10 – Domestic Well Monitoring
 - LTMS 13 – Well Destruction
 - LTMS 21 – Improve Domestic Well Inventory
 - LTMS 22 – High-Risk Groundwater Contamination Regional Identification

Regional Planning Integration & the Vina Subbasin GSP Timeline



- Vina Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan intersects with the County DRP on:
 - Well inventory and drinking water well mitigation programs
 - Monitoring groundwater level trends
 - Mitigation strategies i.e., voluntary water conservation
- The County reviews the status of relevant planning efforts at annual Drought Task Force meetings to identify opportunities for integration and assign coordination responsibilities

Partnering with the Vina Subbasin GSA & Other Partners



How the County looks to continue working with the Vina GSA

- Continue sharing groundwater level and domestic well monitoring data through GSP Annual Report coordination
- Collaborate on the development of a domestic well mitigation program
- Support implementation of the Recharge Action Plan within the Vina Subbasin
- Maintain coordination through annual Drought Task Force meetings

Other Drought-Related Resources



Water and Resource Conservation Department Website

<https://www.buttecounty.net/1195/Well-Owners>

- Well Owner Resources – dry well reporting, how to request a well log
- Current Water Conditions – precipitation data
- Water Conservation – tips to save water
- State Drought Information

Other Drought-Related Resources



County's Well and Septic Ordinances and Manuals

Butte County Environmental Health Division

<https://www.buttecounty.net/2273/Well-Septic-Ordinance-Updates>

Public Comment Period



Available for Public Review
through August 28, 2026

[https://www.buttecounty.net/2281/
Drought-Resilience-Plan](https://www.buttecounty.net/2281/Drought-Resilience-Plan)



Thank You!



Questions & Answers