



STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

AGENDA

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

**San Joaquin County Public Works
1810 Hazelton Ave Stockton, CA 95205**

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

II. Scheduled Items

A. Discussion/Action Items

1. Review of 2022 budget and program status
2. FSS and Community Outreach and Engagement Work Plan and Next - [Page 4](#)
Steps
3. SGMA Grant Status and Update
 - a. SGMA Round 1
 - b. SGMA Round 2
4. WAF Next Steps and Discussion
5. Committees and Coordination of Activity

III. Staff Reports

1. DWR Report - [Page 14](#)
2. Other Items
3. Communications (Attachment)

IV. Public Comment (non-agendized items) - [Page 19](#)

IV. Director Comments

V. Future Agenda Items

1. Meeting Schedule

VI. Adjournment

EASTERN SAN JOAQUIN GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

Steering Committee Meeting

AGENDA

(Continued)

Next Scheduled Meeting

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

8:30 am to 10:00 am

San Joaquin County Robert J. Cabral Agricultural Center

Deliverable	Due Date ¹	Responsible Party	Goals, Objectives, and Process Steps
C&E Plan Update Kick-Off/Process Initiation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ C&E Inventory ❖ ISP 27.1 Task 4 Work Plan ❖ Stakeholder Interview List 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ January 4, 2023 ❖ February 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stantec ❖ Plan Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise/confirm completeness of C&E Inventory • Review and revise/confirm schedule and milestones of Work Plan. • Identify and confirm objectives of Stakeholder Survey and GSA Manager Survey. • Preliminary identification of individuals and organizations to engage in C&E Plan Update; define and confirm goals and objectives of interviews.
Survey and Data Collection			
Stakeholder Survey	February 3, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and forward survey to PM for review and approval. • Approved survey to be distributed to stakeholders identified by PM. • Survey results to be included within survey findings presentation and C&E Plan Update.
GSA Manager Survey	February 3, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and forward survey to PM for review and approval. • Approved survey to be distributed to GSA Managers identified by PM. • Survey results to be included within survey findings presentation and C&E Plan Update.
Stakeholder Interview Questionnaire	February 3, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire to include list of questions stakeholders will be asked during one-one-one interviews. This item is separate from the surveys.
Approvals Received	February 10, 2023	Plan Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stantec receives approval from PM to proceed with dissemination of survey and scheduling of stakeholder interviews. • PM coordinates with Stantec on stakeholder list for interviews. • Stantec begins contacting stakeholders and scheduling interviews.
Stakeholder Interviews	March 1, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stantec to conduct up to eight (8) one-one-one or small group interviews with stakeholders identified by PM. Findings to be incorporated into C&E Plan Update.
Survey Findings Presentation	March 8, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation encompassing stakeholder and GSA manager survey results to be developed by Stantec and presented to PM.

¹ All dates are tentative and subject to change based on needs, direction from PM, feedback from GSA managers, and internal/external scheduling constraints as they are presented.

Deliverable	Due Date ¹	Responsible Party	Goals, Objectives, and Process Steps
C&E Plan Update			
Draft	March 28, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stantec to develop draft v1 of the C&E Plan Update and forward to PM for review.
PM Review of Draft ²	April 12, 2023	Plan Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM and GSA Managers to review, edit, and provide comments on draft v1 and return reviewed copy to Stantec.
Stantec Finalizes C&E Update	April 21, 2023	Stantec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stantec to finalize C&E Plan Update inclusive of comments/edits from PM.

² Comments provided by the ESJ GSAs compiled and coordinated by Plan Manager.

Instructions

Please provide any comments or edits you have on the draft survey questions below in tracked changes no later than close of business Thursday, February 9.

Background and Overview

Communications and Engagement Plan Update

- Stantec Consulting Services (Stantec) is working on behalf of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Facilitation Support Services Project to provide outreach and communications support for the Eastern San Joaquin (ESJ) Subbasin during Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation in collaboration with the region's Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA).
- Stantec is currently working to update the Subbasin's existing Communications and Engagement (C&E) Plan.
- This update includes the following:
 - Conducting up to eight individual or group interviews with stakeholders,
 - Developing and disseminating one digital survey to stakeholders within the Subbasin as well as one digital survey to GSA managers within the Subbasin,
 - Presenting the findings from the interviews and the results of both surveys to the GSA managers, and
 - Incorporating the findings into an updated C&E Plan and finalizing that update in collaboration with GSA managers.

Communications and Engagement Plan Update: Surveys

- As mentioned above, Stantec is developing a C&E update based on feedback provided by stakeholders and GSA managers through interviews and surveys. The content on the following pages comprises the draft survey questions for both types of respondents.
- The objective of the stakeholder survey is to receive feedback from stakeholders within the Subbasin regarding their understanding the SGMA and documents produced by the ESJ GSAs, their overall experience with C&E efforts conducted during GSP development, and how the ESJ GSAs can better inform and engage them during GSP implementation.
- The objective of the GSA manager survey is to ascertain what actions are currently being taken by their agencies regarding C&E in the region, where they think that action is falling short, why they believe it is falling short, and what support they need to improve C&E in the region.

Stakeholder Survey Objectives, Questions, and Responses

The East San Joaquin Groundwater Authority and its member agencies are updating its 2019 Communication and Engagement Plan to further support outreach to beneficial users and uses of groundwater in the region. Your participation in this survey will help inform outreach actions, prioritize activities, and confirm agency responsibilities. Thank you in advance for your participation!

#	Question	Required? (Y/N)	Response Type	Response
1	In which Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) jurisdiction(s) do you use water? If you are not sure, enter your street address to DWR's GSA Map Viewer . ¹	Y	(Check all that apply)	[List all GSAs]
2	How often do you visit your GSAs' website?	Y		Never, rarely, a few times a year, monthly, weekly
3	What is your level of familiarity with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)?	Y	(Sliding Scale)	1-5
4	What is your level of familiarity with the responsibilities of your GSA?	Y	(Sliding Scale)	1-5
5	Have you read some or all of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) or its Annual Reports?		(Check all that apply)	GSP (2020) Annual Report (2019) Annual Report (2020) Annual Report (2021)
6	Please rank the clarity of the technical information provided in the GSP or the Annual Reports.	Y	(Sliding Scale)	1-5
7	How would you rate your level of concern over the groundwater supplies in your GSA? Please explain your answer in the "other" box.	Y	(Select One)	Low Medium High Other (please specify)

¹ <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/index.jsp?jsonfile=https%3a%2f%2fsgma.water.ca.gov%2fportal%2fresources%2fjs%2fmapconfigs%2fGsaMaster.js>

8	Where do you go for information about groundwater resources in the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin?	Y	(Check all that apply)	Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority My GSA My irrigation district(s) Industry associations/organizations My ranch manager My groundwater well Non-profit organizations Family, Friends, or Neighbors (i.e., word of mouth) The internet Government agencies Local newspapers Local civic clubs Other (please specify)
9	What are the best ways to provide you with groundwater-related information?	Y	(Check all that apply)	Email Website updates U.S. Mail Newspaper public notices GSA Meetings Industry association/organization meetings Other (please specify)
10	When you consider approaches that could be implemented to respond to unsustainable groundwater use, which of the following options do feel are most appropriate?	Y	(Check 3)	Per acre pumping allocation <Work with GSA managers to identify list of 8 topics>
11	How should sustainable groundwater management projects and management actions be paid?	Y	(Select One)	All beneficial users of water Only project beneficiaries San Joaquin County My GSA Other from GSA managers
12	Stay informed with news and announcements of East San Joaquin Subbasin groundwater management.	N	(Short Answer)	Name Company/Organization Email

GSA Survey Objectives, Questions, and Responses

This survey supports updates to the East San Joaquin Groundwater Authority GSA's 2019 Communication and Engagement Plan. Information collected here serves to assist, among other things, in identifying current outreach actions and priorities of the subbasin GSAs as well as presumptions of roles and responsibilities of individual GSAs and the ESJGA. Thank you.

#	Question	Required? (Y/N)	Response Type	Response
1	Name and Agency	Y	Self-Completed	
2	How do you keep your rate payers, constituents, and community informed about groundwater resources and SGMA?	Y	(Check all that apply)	Email Website updates U.S. Mail Newspaper public notices GSA Meetings Industry association/organization meetings Other (please specify)
3	How often do you communicate with your rate payers, constituents, and community about groundwater resources and SGMA?	Y	(Check all that apply)	Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly Bi-Monthly Quarterly Annually
4	What types of groundwater-related engagement opportunities do you currently provide your rate payers, constituents, and community?	Y	(Check all that apply)	GSA Meetings One-on-One Calls Workshops Industry association/organization meetings
5	Do you commit resources (staff and budget) for communication in support of your implantation of the GSP.	Y	(Short Answer)	
6	What pressures do you currently face from your rate payers, constituents, and community	Y	(Short Answer)	

	to change or increase your communications and engagement activities?			
7	What communication practices do you believe have been the most effective in responding to these pressures.	Y	(Short Answer)	
8	What areas of support do you feel would best help you in responding to these pressures?	Y	(Short Answer)	
9	In two sentences, how would you define the role of your GSA for communication and engagement activities.	Y	(Short Answer)	
10	In two sentences, how would you define the role of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority for communication and engagement activities?	Y	(Short Answer)	

Situation Report on Hydrologic Conditions (February 1, 2023)

Precipitation

As observed in the attached chart for the 5-station index, these gages have received 33.7 inches of rain to date which is 186% of average.

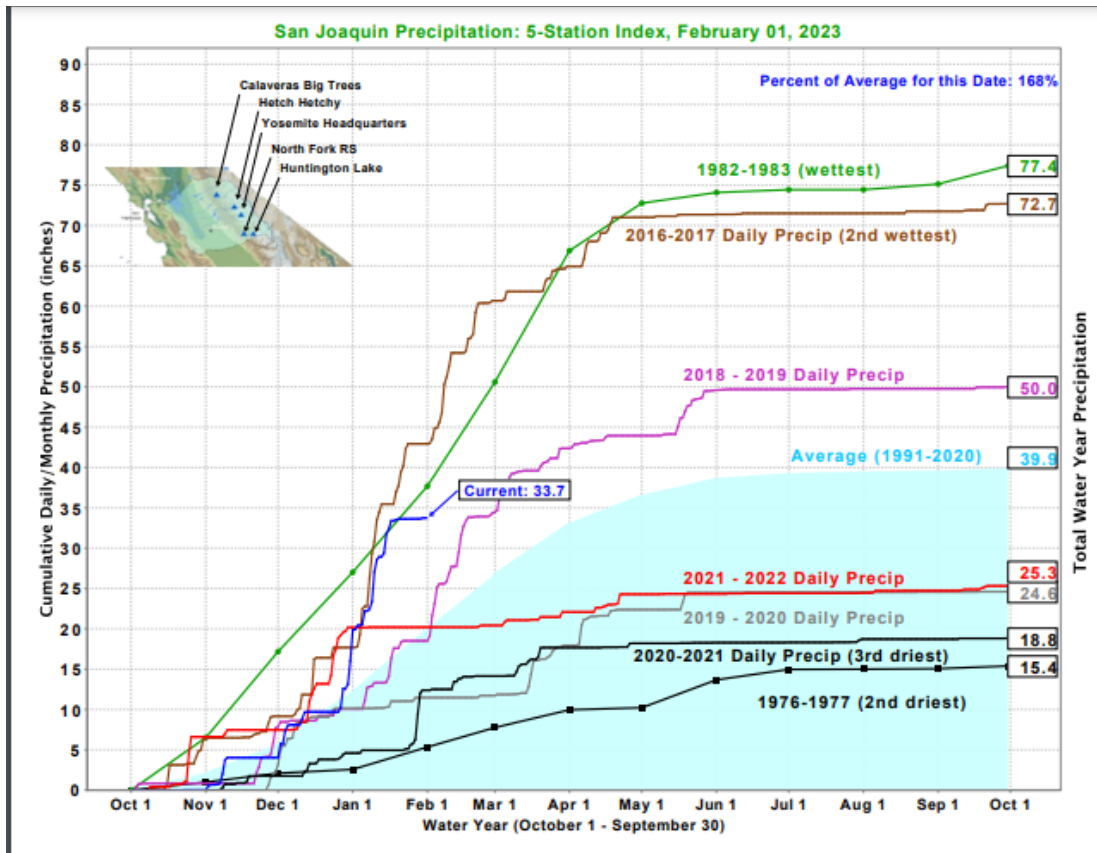


Figure 1 SJ 5- Station Index [San Joaquin 5 station precipitation index water year plot: Current.](#)

December recorded 15.8 inches, with 13.9 inches in January, well above the 6.5 inch and 7.7 inch averages for these months (Figure 2).

The Snowpack for the Central part of California is 128% of April 1 Average and 203% of Normal through January 2023 (Figure 3).

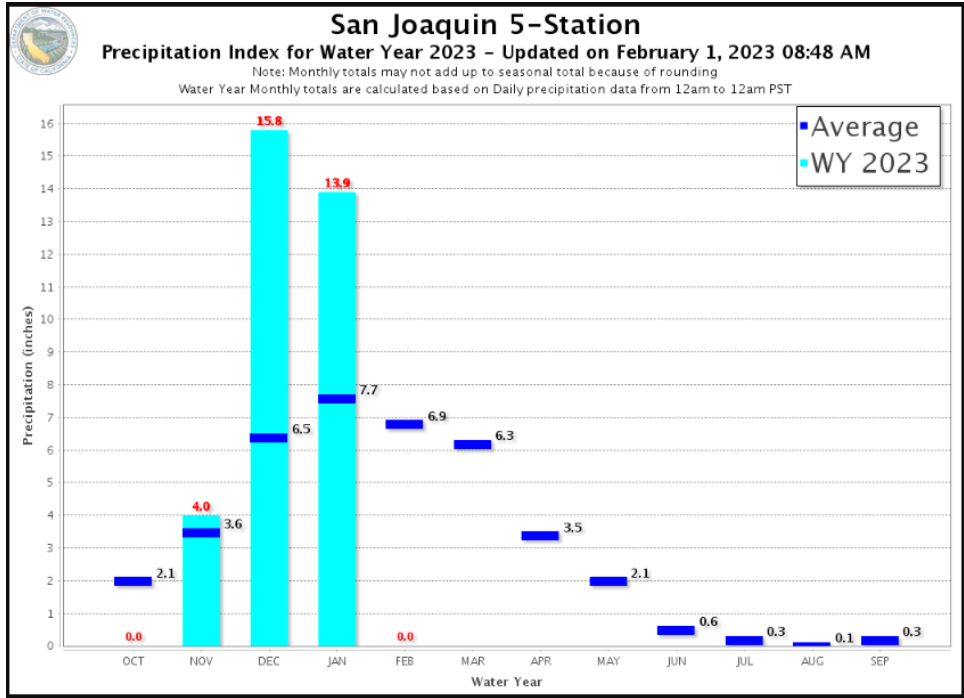


Figure 2 Monthly Precipitation for the 5- Station SJ Index. <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=swccond.pdf>

CURRENT REGIONAL SNOWPACK FROM AUTOMATED SNOW SENSORS

% of April 1 Average / % of Normal for This Date



NORTH	
Data as of February 1, 2023	
Number of Stations Reporting	31
Average snow water equivalent (Inches)	30.7
Percent of April 1 Average (%)	106
Percent of normal for this date (%)	171

CENTRAL	
Data as of February 1, 2023	
Number of Stations Reporting	50
Average snow water equivalent (Inches)	34.6
Percent of April 1 Average (%)	128
Percent of normal for this date (%)	203

SOUTH	
Data as of February 1, 2023	
Number of Stations Reporting	32
Average snow water equivalent (Inches)	35.1
Percent of April 1 Average (%)	155
Percent of normal for this date (%)	249

STATE	
Data as of February 1, 2023	
Number of Stations Reporting	113
Average snow water equivalent (Inches)	33.7
Percent of April 1 Average (%)	128
Percent of normal for this date (%)	205

Statewide Average: 128% / 205%

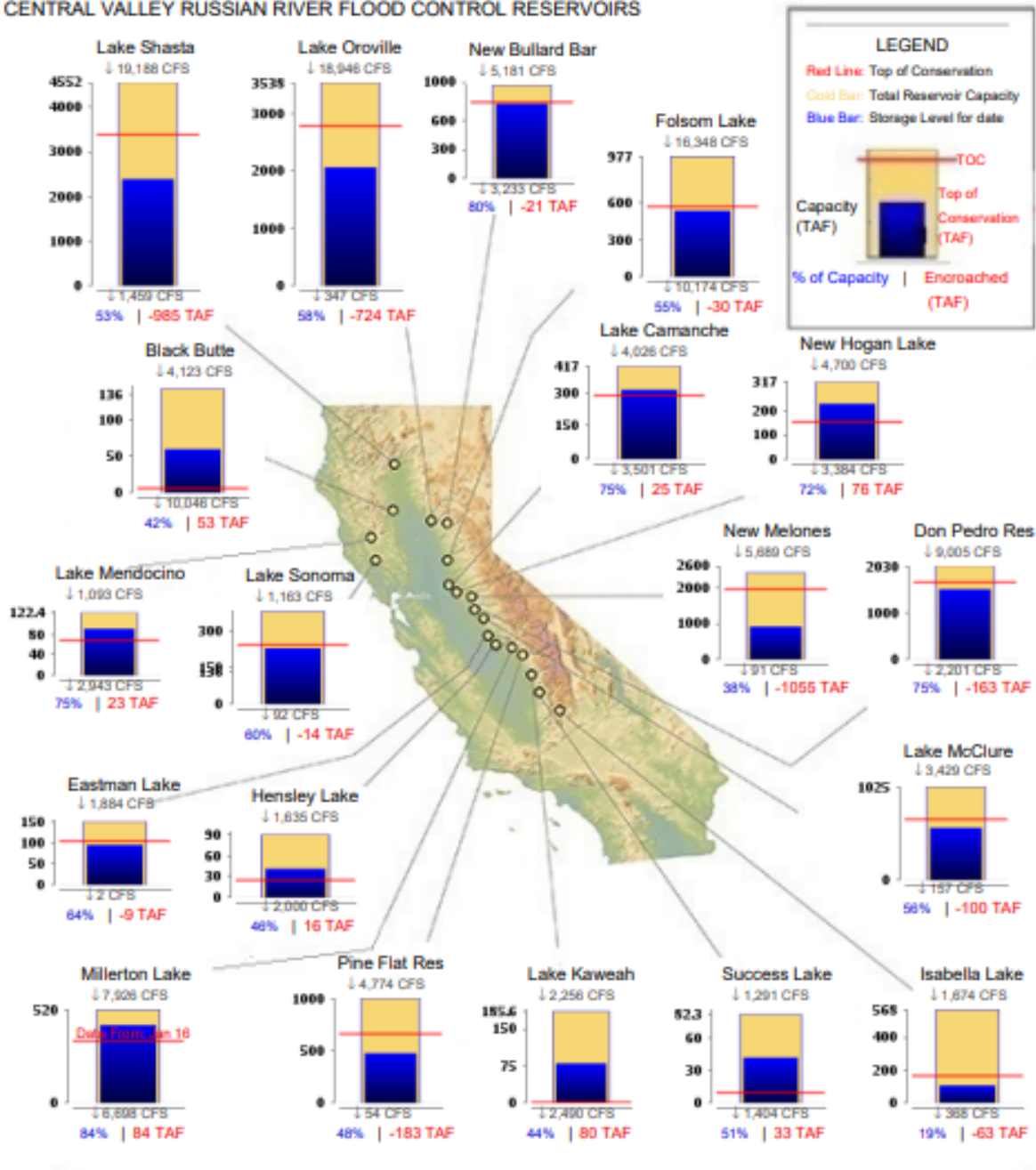
Figure 3 State Snowpack through February 1, 2023. <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=swccond.pdf>

Reservoir Storage

Statewide Reservoir Summary is in Figure 4, which shows reservoir storage around the state. Comanche, New Hogan and New Melones storage to date, current releases and indicates if the flood pool is encroached and conditions where water must be released under the operating rules.

TOP OF CONSERVATION CONDITIONS (TOC) CENTRAL VALLEY RUSSIAN RIVER FLOOD CONTROL RESERVOIRS

Midnight - January 17, 2023



Updated 01/18/2023 01:45 PM

Figure 4 Top of Conservation Conditions. <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/resapp/RescondTopMain>

February 2023 DWR Updates (from DWR's North Central Region Office)

Grants

California Grants Portal

The California State Library, in partnership with the Department of Water Resources and other state grantmaking agencies, has launched the California Grants Portal – your one destination to find all state grant and loan opportunities provided on a first-come or competitive basis. Visit grants.ca.gov to find funding opportunities for you and your community.

Department of Conservation Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program FINAL guidelines now available

The [Department of Conservation](#) (DOC) is pleased to announce the release of the [Round 2 \(FY 22/23\) Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program \(MLRP\) Guidelines](#). To date, the program has received \$90 million in appropriations. **This current Round (Round 2) includes \$40 million to the Department to fund groundwater sustainability projects that reduce groundwater use, repurpose irrigated agricultural land, and provide wildlife habitat.** An applicant workshop will be held February 22 from 1-2 pm, [registration here](#) and the applications will be due March 29, 2023.

Reclamation makes \$80 million available for watershed health: WaterSmart Program

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is making [approximately \\$80 million](#) in funding available for water management and restoration projects that will result in significant benefits to ecosystem or watershed health. A maximum grant of \$3 million is available for each project; work on projects must be completed within three years. The funding is being made available as part of Reclamation's [WaterSMART program](#). The Bureau of Reclamation will host a webinar on Monday, February 6, 2023, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. MST to discuss eligible applicants and project types, program requirements, and the evaluation criteria for the Environmental Water Resources Projects funding opportunity and the upcoming Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Program. Click [here](#) to join the live event or use the same link to watch a recording after the completion of the live event.

NEW SWRCB: Three workshops set for drinking water grant guidelines

A series of [three public workshops](#) will be held next month to discuss the [draft Expedited Drinking Water Grant Funding Program Guidelines](#) developed by the State Water Resources Control Board. [The program](#) provides an expedited process for public agencies to obtain grants for high-priority projects. The workshops will be held on Feb. 6, in Riverside; on Feb. 7, in Sacramento; and on Feb. 8, in Visalia.

Fish and Wildlife Providing \$200 million for multi-benefit projects

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is making more than [\\$200 million in funding available](#) for multi-benefit projects that promote ecosystem restoration and protection. The funding will be distributed among projects that enhance salmon resiliency, promote [nature-based solutions](#), or address the effect of climate change. Applications can be submitted using [a new online portal](#).

Water tank program for dry wells

DWR in partnership with CalOES, DGS, and Water Boards has a new tank program for domestic wells that have gone dry. Eligible Applicants Include: public agencies, public utilities, special districts, colleges and universities, mutual water companies, nonprofit organizations, federally recognized tribes and state tribes listed on the NAHC's consultation list. Under the program, 2,500 gallon tanks are pre-purchased by DWR. The program includes funding for the tanks to be delivered to residence and connected to their existing plumbing with a small pump, and for water hauling to fill the tanks to meet basic health and sanitation needs. For more information contact: smallcommunitydrought@water.ca.gov or Alena Misaghi at (559) 230-3309.

DWR Division of Multi-Benefit Initiatives Delta Levees Special Flood Control Projects 2022: **Coming Soon**

The intent of this Project Solicitation Package is to provide funding for public benefit in accordance with Section 12311 of the California Water Code for Multi-Benefit projects in the California Delta and parts of the Suisan Marsh. Projects targeted for this grant are those that promote levee improvement, habitat enhancement, seismic

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resiliency, and/or export water supply reliability. **Up to \$37 million will be available and the solicitation is expected to open in Spring of 2023.** [More information here.](#)

Cal FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grants

CAL FIRE announces the solicitation of the FY 2022-2023 Wildfire Prevention Grants Program on December 14, 2022. California's 2022-23 budget allocates up to \$120 million to CAL FIRE's Wildfire Prevention Grants Program. Applications need to be submitted no later than March 15, 2023 by 3:00 PM PST. Please see the [Wildfire Prevention Grants Webpage](#) for a complete overview. Sacramento contact: WPgrants@fire.ca.gov.

Other state & federal grant websites for resources that may be helpful are:

- California Financing Coordinating Committee -- <https://cfcc.ca.gov/>, and
- CalOES grants -- <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/grants-management>
- US EPA -- <https://www.epa.gov/grants/specific-epa-grant-programs>, and
- Economic Development Administration -- <https://eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>

Upcoming conferences, webinars, new reports and data

California's Water Supply Strategy: Adapting to a Hotter, Drier Future

August 11, 2022 Governor Newsom announced a new strategic document to manage water in the face of a projected 10% reduction in supplies over the next 20 years. The strategy calls for investing in new sources of water supply, accelerating projects and modernizing how the state manages water through new technology to increase water supply and adapt to more extreme weather patterns caused by climate change. The [full strategy document](#) can be found here and a [press release here](#).

[Under this directive DWR is partnering with SWRCB to fast-track efforts to capture flood waters to recharge groundwater basins.](#) The State's efforts reached a milestone January 6 when the State Water Board approved a six-month permit that will enable multiple landowners to divert excess flows from Mariposa creek near the City of Merced to recharge a key groundwater basin. The Merced Project permit, the first approved under a new pilot regulatory assistance program, is expected to pave the way for future projects to allow water from wet-weather storms to be captured and diverted. The permit application authorizes multiple diversions by multiple landowners of up to 10,000 acre-feet of water from the creek during periods of high flows that would otherwise likely flow through the system. Currently there are five applications pending, with two more projected to be approved next week. The remaining three are going through a public noticing process.

[A fact sheet on DWR Regulatory Assistance: Temporary Water Rights for Groundwater Recharge can be found here.](#)

NEW: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Issues Delta Conveyance Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Public Review

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Delta Conveyance Project for public review. The [document is available here](#) and the USACE Draft EIS public review and **comment period lasts until February 14, 2023.** USACE's Draft EIS assesses the exact same proposed Delta Conveyance Project analyzed in the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), available for public review July 27, 2022 - December 16, 2022. USACE's Draft EIS is different from DWR's Draft EIR as follows:

- The Draft EIS complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Draft EIR complies with the California Environmental Policy Act (CEQA).
- NEPA is a federal law and USACE is the federal lead agency for preparation of the Draft EIS, while CEQA is a state law and DWR is the state lead agency for preparation of the Draft EIR.

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Nothing published in USACE's Draft EIS changes what has been published in DWR's Draft EIR. The Draft EIS is not an update to the Draft EIR. They are stand-alone documents.

FREE Leak Detection for Small Water Systems

Protecting California's water supply is more important than ever as we brace for another year of drought conditions. The California Rural Water Association (CRWA), in partnership with the Department of Water Resources, is offering FREE leak detection surveys for small water systems. **If you are a small (including Tribal) water system with 3,000 connections or less, sign up for a free leak detection survey today! Please contact Luis Carmona at: lcarmona@calruralwater.org or 916-283-8509 x109 to get started.**

Executive Order N-7-22

On March 28, 2022 Governor Newsom signed [Executive Order N-7-22](#), which **included new well permitting requirements (Action 9) as well as CEQA exemptions and permit streamlining for FloodMAR projects (Action 13)**. The materials including a fact sheets, recording and presentation materials from the April 13th and a self-certification form for the CEQA waiver are now posted on DWR's Drought Webpage, under the 'Drought Well Permitting Requirements' and the 'CEQA Suspension on Groundwater Recharge Projects' accordion dropdowns: <https://water.ca.gov/water-basics/drought>.

DWR's Climate Change Program Resources

DWR's Climate change program has lots of initiatives including resources for water managers. Check out their [webpage](#) and [factsheet](#) here.

California's Groundwater Live: Up-to-date data on groundwater conditions, well installations and subsidence

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) released the final [California's Groundwater – Update 2020 \(Bulletin-118\)](#), containing information on the condition of the State's groundwater, DWR has also developed a companion web-based application called [California's Groundwater Live](#) (CalGW Live), leveraging the [California Natural Resources Agency Open Data Platform](#) (Open Data) to improve the access and timeliness of statewide groundwater information. The easy-to-use interface will make many of the data sets used in CalGW Update 2020 available in an interactive map format that will be updated regularly for viewing and downloading. For more information, visit the updated [California's Groundwater website](#) Contact: CalGW@water.ca.gov.

OpenET makes tracking water use data easier with satellite data

A space-based tool is ready to help track water in the western U.S. Using data from satellites, [Open Evapotranspiration](#) (OpenET) gives farmers and other water users information on how much of their water loss ends up as evapotranspiration. The OpenET data are available for 17 western states, including the Colorado River basin area.

SGMA & Drought

Update Your GSA and GSP Manager Point of Contact Information in DWR's SGMA Portal

If your GSA and/or GSP Plan Manager Point of Contact (POC) is not current, or you are not sure, please visit the SGMA Portal to ensure that your contact information is up-to-date. When logged in, the Portal allows edits to be made to previously submitted contact information. If you have SGMA Portal questions, please email them to: GSPSubmittal@water.ca.gov.

DWR Launches Interagency Task Force as Part of Advance Planning for Drought

Department of Water Resources (DWR) is officially launching a standing Drought Resilience Interagency and Partners (DRIP) Collaborative, which will include members of the public. Community members and water users are encouraged to apply. The DRIP Collaborative will include a total of 26 members, comprising state agency

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representatives and two appointees from each of the following groups: local governments, community-based organizations, Tribes, nonprofit technical assistance providers, the general public, agriculture, environmental representatives, public water systems, small water suppliers or urban water agencies, and experts in land use planning, water resilience, or water infrastructure. **DWR is accepting Letters of Interest until February 24, 2023**, and DWR will announce selected members of the DRIP Collaborative in spring 2023. Interested parties can visit the [DWR website](#) for more information on how to submit Letters of Interest.

NEW: DWR Releases GSP Determinations

The 1/26/23 release includes the approval of GSPs for the Santa Rosa Plain Subbasin, Petaluma Valley Basin, and Sonoma Valley Subbasin in Sonoma County and the Napa Valley Subbasin in Napa County. The assessments can be viewed here on the DWR SGMA Portal. These plans are approved with recommended corrective actions that the groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) will need to address in their next plan update, due in January 2027.

Groundwater platform announces expanding list of partners

A coalition of organizations and State agencies have announced [expansion in the number of partners](#) in for the [Groundwater Accounting Platform](#). The platform was initially developed in partnership with the Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water District. Now the platform is adding three new pilot project partners from Merced, Santa Cruz, and Yolo counties. Information from the platform is designed to help groundwater agencies with efforts to prevent dry wells and water supply shortages.

SB552: DWR's Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool Demo on Domestic Wells and State Smalls

As part of its technical assistance to support SB 552 implementation, DWR developed the [Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool](#) to provide the foundational data and information statewide to counties for their water shortage risk assessment. DWR will provide an overview of information contained in the Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool, and provide a demonstration for data and tool navigation and potential use by counties for their corresponding water shortage risk assessment. The webinar will be held February 22 from 1-3 pm, [registration required](#).

Dry Well Susceptibility Map

The DWR, in coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board, has developed an interactive mapping tool, called the Dry Well Susceptibility Tool. This tool identifies areas within groundwater basins that may be prone to water supply shortages in drinking water wells. State and local agencies and well owners can use this tool to anticipate where wells may go dry based on historical conditions to inform drought preparedness decision-making. To use this tool, navigate to [California's Groundwater Live website](#) and click the [Dry Domestic Well Susceptibility tab](#). A fact sheet on this tool, as well as DWR's Dry Well Reporting System, [is available here](#).

Dry Well Reporting Site

There is a website available to [report private wells going dry](#). Information reported to this site is intended to inform state and local agencies on drought impacts on household water supplies. The data reported on this site (excluding personal identifiable information) can be viewed on the [SGMA data viewer](#) or downloaded on the [CNRA Atlas](#). Individuals or local agencies can report water shortages and [a list of resources are included on the webpage](#). The reporting forms are available in both English and Spanish. Local agencies can now sign up to receive notifications of any dry wells reported in their area. To sign up please email sgmps@water.ca.gov.

DWR is developing eight Proposition 68-funded technical projects

These projects include airborne electromagnetic surveys, improving groundwater elevation and quality monitoring networks, Statewide land use data collection, improved subsidence monitoring network, installing and maintaining stream gauges, maintaining and enhancing statewide well completion reports, managing and

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reporting sustainable groundwater information, and enhancing and maintaining DWR's modeling tools. Fact sheets on each project can be viewed under the "Prop 68" tab [here](#).

- [AEM webpage](#) contains information on the how the process works, safety, schedule, data submission by GSAs, TAC, pilot study data and more. Public webinar was held **June 8th 12:00 – 1:00**, a [recording can be viewed here](#) and [handouts can be downloaded here](#). Draft Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) resistivity **data for the entire Central Valley have been published** on the [California Natural Resources Agency Open Data Portal](#). The dataset can also be viewed online on the [AEM Data Viewer](#). DWR's AEM surveys will continue this Spring. Visit the AEM Survey Schedule webpage for more information on the tentative data publication dates.
- [2019 Statewide Crop Mapping data](#) was released in July of 2022 and includes multi-cropping information. The 2019 dataset includes agricultural land use and urban boundaries for all 58 counties in California.
- **InSAR subsidence data is now available through October 1 of 2022** and can now be viewed on the [SGMA data viewer](#). The updated GIS services and data reports are also available [online](#). Future data will be released on a quarterly basis.

Facilitation Support Services (FSS): [Funding still available](#)

- GSA's developing GSPs are eligible to receive funding for identification and engagement of interested parties, meeting facilitation, interest-based negotiation/consensus building, and public outreach facilitation
- More information [can be found here](#). [Written translation services available in 8 languages for outreach materials \(5,000 word maximum\)](#).

1.10.2023

Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
P. O. Box 1810
Stockton, CA 95201
via email: ESJgroundwater@sjgov.org

Re: Response to Agenda Materials for the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Board of Directors Wednesday 1.11.2023 Meeting

We have reviewed the 1.11.2023 Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (GWA) Board of Directors Meeting Agenda Packet¹ which included the 11.9.2022 Board Meeting Minutes and have compiled our comments for the record, as representatives of the Delta-Sierra Group of the Sierra Club or Restore the Delta may not be available to attend.

11.9.2022 GWA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

On multiple occasions, we have requested that a permanent and complete record of Groundwater Authority meetings be made available to the public in the form of audio and/or video recordings, most recently requested on 10.12.2022.

The 11.9.2022 meeting minutes provide an example of why such a record is important for governmental transparency and trust building. The minutes made frequent reference to budget line items which were not included in the minutes whereas a video could have shown the budget as was shown during the Board meeting. Additionally, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Report consisted of the following statement: “Dominic Johnson shared the draft Environmental Report is posted to the website and comments are welcome.” Likely there was some other information that would identify what draft Environmental Report was referred to and to what website the report was posted. Without more context, a member of the public would not know of the topic or where to find the information, and it is likely since the minutes are provided two months following the meeting that the comment period has closed.

The 11.9.2022 minutes state that the Groundwater Authority Board approved the San Joaquin County Auditor-Controller’s establishment of a non-interest-bearing fund for the 7.6 million dollar grant proceeds (DWR/GWA Agreement 460001643) obtained from the Department of Water Resources to fund the selected SGMA Round 1 projects. We are wondering why, in these times of high interest rates, the 7.6 million dollars administered by the County was not placed in an interest-bearing account. No reason was provided in the minutes why an interest-bearing account was not used to hold money until used for project implementation.

The 11.9.2022 minutes included approval of a reallocation of \$60,000 from reserve into the task associated with response to the DWR finding of incomplete regarding the 2020 Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Instead of spending \$40,000, the consultant Woodward and Curran spent \$100,000 on a response that was submitted to the DWR July 27, 2022, without a public draft whereby stakeholders that were not members of the ad hoc committees: Technical Advisory Committee and Legal/Policy Committee could provide

¹ <http://www.esjgroundwater.org/Portals/0/Board%20Package%20FINAL.pdf>

comments that could be considered and responded to before DWR submittal. The Technical Advisory Committee may be called an ad hoc committee but based on its serial tasks annual report, model update, annual report, GSP DWR response, annual report, an argument could be made the Technical Advisory Committee is a de facto standing committee and subject to the Brown Act and should be open to members of the public.

Adoption of 2023 Calendar and Committees

The Bylaws reference a specific Advisory Committee separate from ad hoc committees². Another standing committee which the GWA Board of Directors formed was called the Steering Committee which generally meets immediately prior to a GWA Board of Directors meeting and are stated to have a purpose of coordinating activities between the meetings of the full Board. All meetings of the GWA Board of Directors are scheduled during the day at 10:30 AM quarterly: 1.11.2023, 4.12.2023, 7.12.2023, and 10.11.2023. Multiple requests have been made that periodically evening meetings are held so that stakeholders working during the day can participate in the implementation of the GSP.

Page 10 of the Meeting Agenda Material

The appointments to and formation of ad hoc committees are the duties of the Chairman of the GWA Board of Directors. An ad hoc committee serves a limited or single purpose, are temporary, and are dissolved once their specific task is completed and thus not subject to Brown Act requirements. Ad hoc committees per say do not exclude the public only exempt the committee from Brown Act requirements. The Eastern San Joaquin GWA has elected to preclude the public or any “uninvited” stakeholder or consultant. This same page 10 includes the statement that “the Board formed an Advisory Committee according (Article VI, Section 1) whose purpose was to obtain of stakeholder input and more widely inform the community potentially affected by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and with interest in the GSP. This became inactive after the GSP was adopted.”

There seems to be some confusion between the Advisory Committee as stated in the Bylaws and the Groundwater Sustainability Workgroup. The Bylaws state the following regarding the Advisory Committee:

Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Bylaws: ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

Section 1. Advisory Committee.

- A. The Board may establish an Advisory Committee which contains no more than 8 representatives from the Board of the Authority.
- B. The members of the Advisory Committee shall elect one (1) of their members to serve as Chairperson.
- C. A majority of the Advisory Committee members attending a meeting of the Committee, given notice in writing not less than 72 hours in advance, shall constitute a quorum for discussion and action delegated to the Committee.
- D. The Advisory Committee shall conduct the preliminary review of all Federal and State mandates. In conducting such reviews, the Advisory Committee will draw upon the expertise and assistance of any persons, committees, groups, or agencies it deems appropriate.
- E. The Advisory Committee shall ensure maximum inter-agency coordination and consistence with adopted comprehensive plans.
- F. The Advisory Committee shall carry out any duties as assigned by the Authority Board.

The Advisory Committee described in the Bylaws above did not serve the purpose stated in the 1.11.2023 meeting material. Instead the Groundwater Sustainability Workgroup is the entity that served the 1.11.2023 meeting material described purpose, “to obtain of stakeholder input and more widely inform the community potentially affected by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and with interest in the GSP.”

² http://www.esjgroundwater.org/Portals/0/assets/docs/Eastern_San_Joaquin_Groundwater_Authority_Bylaws_FINAL.pdf

The Groundwater Sustainability Workgroup was formed as part of a facilitation grant task and was dissolved without any direct GWA Board action. The Groundwater Sustainability Workgroup met 12 times between June 2018 and June 2019 as documented on the ESJGWA website³. According to the Draft Stakeholder and Public Outreach Plan which was included in the 2020 GSP and the 2022 Revised GSP, the Stakeholder Workgroup's purpose is still very much needed relating to annual work plans and reports including the 5-year milestone reports, community outreach, amendment of the GSP, fee proposals, interbasin coordination activities, local regulations to implement SGMA within the Subbasin, modeling scenarios, projects and managements actions to achieve sustainability.

The Advisory Committee outlined in the referenced Bylaws appears in composition and function identical to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Steering Committee, not the Stakeholder Workgroup as described in the 1.11.2023 meeting materials.

Policy Questions for Discussion:

Unless there is some legal confidential work product, all meetings of all committees formed by the Chair of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority should be public. The Stakeholder and Public Outreach Plan should have been followed for these 3.5 years (June 2019-January 2023).

Annual Report of Progress towards sustainability due 4.1.2023

The proposed flow of this Annual Report work product does not allow for meaningful stakeholder engagement as the "ad hoc" Technical Advisory Committee will review the draft report, recommend any changes, and make a recommendation to the Steering Committee for consideration at the 3.8.2023 meeting. No review opportunity is made available for stakeholders not on the Technical Advisory Committee as a final draft will be accepted and submitted to DWR after consideration by the Steering Committee. A draft annual report must be available for the public to review and to provide questions or comments prior to a final report being forwarded to the Steering Committee for acceptance and DWR submittal. This is another example of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority's practice of not providing a means by which stakeholders can engage in the development and implementation of the GSP.

Department of Water Resources Facilitation Support Services

According to DWR Contract #4600013267, AM-01 SGMA ISP No 27 dated 9.7.2021 a maximum of 613 labor hours can be invoiced and tasks must be completed by June 2022, unless amended. The scope of this facilitation services grant included many diverse tasks, but the key facilitation task was the development of the ESJGWA Water Accounting Framework Strategy Document/Strategy Document. A public information request was made, and information obtained in October 2022 showed that the last invoiced work was submitted April 2022 and no Strategy Document was prepared although there was an update of Task 1 in February 2022. The Water Accounting Framework scope of work did not include public participation considerations but merely interactions between GSAs and as we have previously stated, water accounting was an important topic within the Stakeholder Workgroup.

At some point an amendment to the DWR Contract #4600013267, AM-01 SGMA ISP No 27 dated 9.7.2021 occurred, and a new scope included in the 1.11.2023 Agenda meeting material proposes to prepare a Communications and Engagement Plan.

There is no information as to how many hours are left of the 613 hours or if additional hours were granted. Besides no disclosure of resources available to update the Stakeholder and Public Outreach

³ <http://www.esjgroundwater.org/Agendas> Accessed 1.8.2023

Plan/Communications and Engagement Plan, the ISP No.27.1 Task 4.1 Communication and Engagement Plan Update Work Plan will depend on whom is selected to be on the Stakeholder Interview List by the Plan Manager. The questions to be asked of 8 one-on-one or small group interviews will be incorporated into the Communication and Engagement Plan Update. A PowerPoint presentation will be prepared. There will possibly be one Public Workshop before the Communication and Engagement Plan Update is finalized and two factsheets prepared. This is probably a scope acceptable for the Groundwater Authority but not for stakeholders who have been shut-out from meaningful engagement for over 3.5 years.

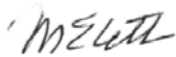
Items not on the 1.11.2023 Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Board of Directors Agenda

The Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin is critically overdrafted with new domestic wells reported dry monthly on the DWR dry well website. Thankfully, December 2022 did not have reported dry wells though there have been 48 in the last 365 days⁴. Every meeting of the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority should include an update on dry wells as well as well installations that have been permitted since the last meeting.

The Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin Revised 2022 GSP did not include a well mitigation program. Dry well investigation and support is being provided by the State Water Resources Control Board SAFER Program funds via payment to Self-Help Enterprises. A request for information has been submitted to the SAFER Program for information regarding activities and funds expended in San Joaquin County related to wells reported dry and should be available shortly. We have received information from the SWRCB that there are currently two applications submitted for consideration to fund domestic well repairs/replacements. All Self-Help Enterprises' work on contaminated and dry wells should be a topic for every GWA meeting.

DWR has developed the DRAFT County Drought Resilience Plan Guidebook Task Force Formulation, Plan Development, and Implementation Considerations for Implementing Senate Bill 552 (Hertzberg) December 2022⁵ that outlines what are the required characteristics of a standing county drought and water shortage task force (subject to Brown Act requirements) and functioning by 1.1.2022. DWR has developed data to assess domestic well and state small vulnerabilities (attached). San Joaquin County Agricultural Drought Task Force as currently in existence does not fulfill the requirements as described in California Water Code Section 10609.70. Minutes of the meeting or information as to how residents can participate are not available for a county drought and water shortage task force according to San Joaquin County Council records as of 1.9.2023. Based on available information there is still SWRCB County implementation money available, and San Joaquin County has not taken advantage of this opportunity to plan for drought responses that include state small water systems and domestic wells. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to a response from the GWA.

Sincerely,



Mary Elizabeth M.S., R.E.H.S.
Delta-Sierra Group Conservation Chair, Sierra Club



Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla
Executive Director, Restore the Delta

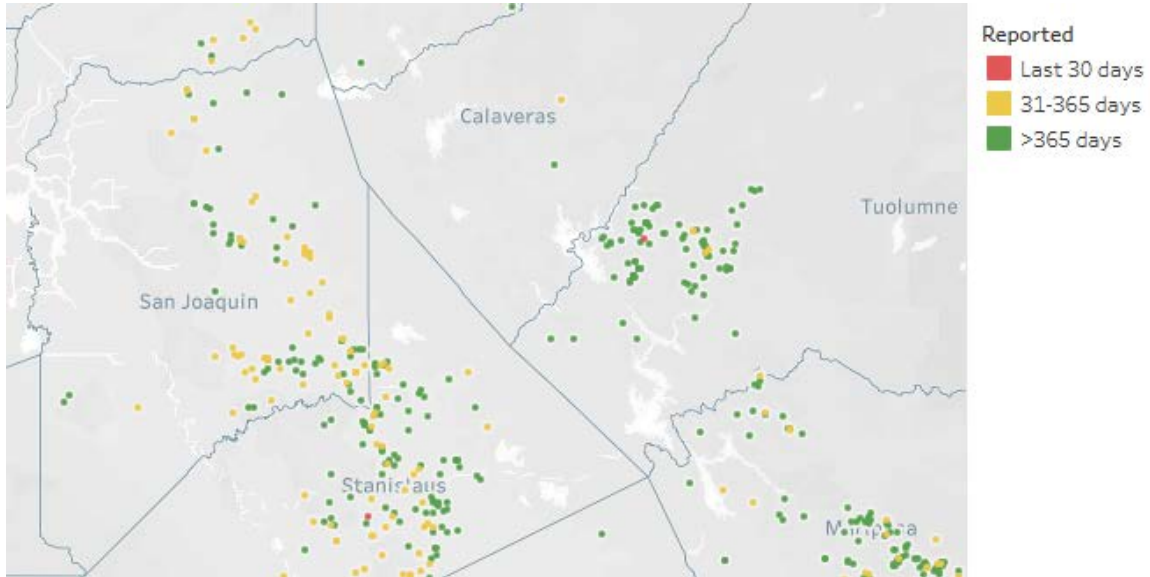
Attachments:

- Dry Wells in San Joaquin County as of 1.9.2023
- San Joaquin County Well Vulnerability Data as of 1.10.2023 for use during the development of SB552 County Drought and Water Shortage Response Plan

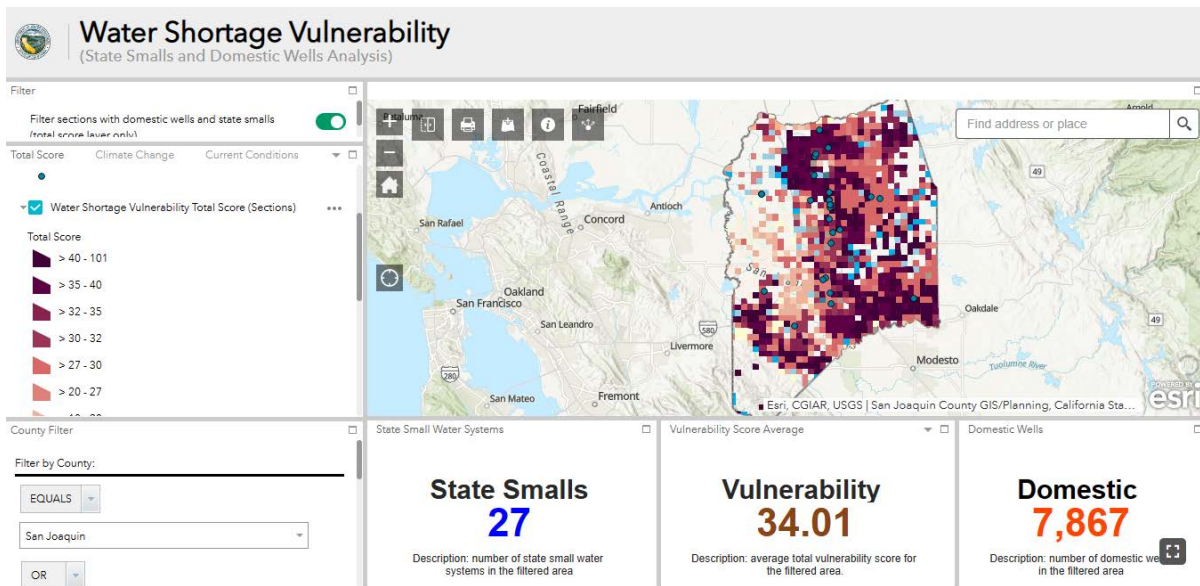
⁴ <https://mydrywell.water.ca.gov/report/publicpage>

⁵ https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Water-Use-And-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Use-Efficiency/SB-552/DRAFT_CountyGuidebk_20221213.pdf

Dry Wells in San Joaquin County as of 1.9.2023⁶



San Joaquin County Well Vulnerability Data as of 1.10.2023 for use during the development of SB552 County Drought and Water Shortage Response Plan⁷



CWC Section 10609.70 enacted by SB 552 requires counties to establish a standing Task Force or an alternative process that facilitates drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within each county’s jurisdiction:

(a)(1) A county shall establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county’s jurisdiction, and shall invite representatives from the state and other local governments, including groundwater sustainability agencies, and community-based organizations, local water suppliers, and **local residents, to participate in the task force.**

(3) A county that establishes a drought task force on or before January 1, 2022, shall be deemed in compliance with this subdivision as long as the task force continues to exist.

⁶ <https://mydrywell.water.ca.gov/report/publicpage>

⁷ <https://dwr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b20d1b8b751c42f9a067a915544e512c&extent=-13960048.223%2C4383164.2643%2C-13040357.8986%2C4846678.4038%2C102100>