

**COMMENTS/CONCERNS/ISSUES**  
**Petaluma Valley SGMA Workshop**  
**August 17, 2016**  
**Petaluma Community Center**

**GSA – THE GOVERNING BOARD**

The facilitator asked attendees for recommendations on the governing board proposal. Currently, staff is proposing that each Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) eligible entity appoint one of their elected or appointed representatives to serve on the GSA board.



- One speaker said that it's important that the board members be elected officials because elected officials can be held accountable.
- Would eligible agency members have to run for office to be elected to the GSA board? This could strengthen membership and increase level of commitment.  
*Response: No, there wouldn't be a special election for just the GSA. The GSA eligible entities would each appoint a GSA Board member who would be an elected or appointed board member from that GSA eligible entity.*
- Another speaker expressed his concern that Petaluma lacks recharge areas, suggesting that most of the basin is covered with pavement so there is no percolation into the basin. This person would recommend that the board be made up primarily of well users.
- Does the basin include the whole watershed?  
*Response: No. The basin is designated by Department of Water Resources in its Bulletin 118. It primarily includes the valley floor.*
- Will the members of the GSA board or advisory committee be paid?  
*No.*
- One person recommended that board members should live within the basin. This person felt that the Sonoma County Water Agency and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors seemed to have too much weight on the board. This person observed that five entities could potentially sit board members outside the basin (SCWA, County, North Bay Water District, and Sonoma Resource Conservation District).
- Someone echoed that GSA board members should live in basin and be well owners.
- Someone suggested that Petaluma tribes should be involved; they recommend that tribes be included if their lands are in the basin.  
*Response: Staff noted that in Santa Rosa Plain the Graton Rancheria will be involved. No tribe with trust lands has currently been identified in the Petaluma Valley Groundwater Basin.*

- A person reinforced that they think all members of the governing board and advisory body should have their livelihood and life dependent on wells.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The facilitator asked the attendees for recommendations on the advisory body. Currently, staff recommends that members should live in the basin, and that at-large members (appointed by the GSA board) be selected through an application process. Comments included:

- Add a sixth member to represent the watershed outside the DWR-118 basin.
- All should be well owners.
- Members should be from the basin.
- Add a watershed representative.
- People within the watershed but outside the Bulletin 118 basin should be eligible to serve on the advisory committee.
- Tribal members should be included if they are within the basin.
- Members should be willing to do research, be good listeners, represent their group, be open to contact by other well owners, attend the meetings, and be



willing to get information out. They also need to have some understanding of groundwater, geology, input, output, conservation, and recharge.

- Don't make too many qualifications for people to be on the advisory body to make it less intimidating for people to come forward and to encourage a democratic process.
- Will the advisory body members be paid?

*Response: No.*

### **GSA AND ADVISORY BODY GENERAL QUESTIONS**

- What will it cost to implement SGMA in each basin?

*Response: No one is sure; staff from the GSA-eligible entities are currently working on developing rough budgets. In conversations with other entities across the state, people are estimating that the cost of developing Groundwater Sustainability Plans (the first task of the GSA) will range from \$750K to \$2M. Other costs for the GSA will include compliance with the law, managing the agency, and a rate study (to determine how and how much rates could be charged to cover costs). The state has developed very detailed regulations. Where the funding comes from will depend on what the GSA board decides. The GSA has the power to assess fees, impose taxes, penalties, etc.*

- What about creating one GSA to help reduce costs?

*Response: This was reported on last year; it was concluded that a GSA for each basin was more popular because, for example, people didn't want Santa Rosa telling Petaluma Valley what to do.*

*But the GSAs will need to pool resources on technical studies, data management, etc. as well as share staff and resources in order to be cost effective and efficient.*

- What percent of the cost will be borne by well owners?

*Response: That is hard to say; groundwater pumpers will have to bear some of these costs.*

- Someone suggested that the 3 GSA boards (Petaluma Valley, Sonoma Valley and Santa Rosa Plain) share one combined staff that works for all three boards.

