

TO: Water Resources Advisory Committee

FROM: Brendan Clark, Supervising Water Resources Engineer

DATE: March 1, 2023

SUBJECT: Ongoing Updates

Recommendation

Receive updates on various ongoing efforts.

Discussion

- a) **Rain & Reservoir Report.** See attached report.
- b) **Drought Updates.**
 - County of SLO Office of Emergency Services went to the Board on December 13, 2022.
 - The Staff report can be found here: <https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/agendaitem/details/15621>
 - The Board extended the Drought Declaration for 60 days.
 - For more drought information, please visit <https://www.emergencyslo.org/en/slo-county-drought-information.aspx>
- c) **Groundwater Management Efforts**

On December 18, 2019, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) released the Final Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) 2019 Prioritization¹ that designates each groundwater basin and subbasin (collectively, basins) as high, medium, low or very low priority. Groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) are required to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) for each high or medium priority basin.

BASIN UPDATES:

Basin	Update:
Los Osos Basin	<p>Los Osos Area Subbasin (adjudicated area) is designated as a very low priority basin subject to critical conditions of overdraft. SGMA does not apply to the portions of Los Osos Basin that are adjudicated provided that certain requirements are met (Water Code §10720.8). The fringe areas of the Los Osos Area Subbasin are not subject to the requirements of SGMA due to the DWR prioritization. The Los Osos Basin Management Committee (BMC) oversees implementation of the Los Osos Basin Plan for the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Draft Fall 2022 Los Osos Basin Lower Aquifer Water Quality Monitoring Results and Updated Chloride Metric was distributed to basin stakeholders

¹ <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Basin-Prioritization>

	<p>on January 26, 2023. The Draft Fall 2022 Los Osos Basin Lower Aquifer Water Quality Monitoring Results and Updated Chloride Metric were reviewed at the February 15, 2023 BMC Meeting and final results, including water levels and results from the first water and upper aquifer monitoring, will be included in the 2022 Annual Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next BMC meeting is scheduled March 15, 2023. <p>Warden Creek Subbasin is designated as a very low priority and is not subject to the requirements of SGMA due to the DWR prioritization.</p> <p>For more information, please visit: www.slocounty.ca.gov/losososbasin</p>
<p>Atascadero Basin</p>	<p>Atascadero Basin is designated as a very low priority basin and is not subject to the requirements of SGMA due to the DWR prioritization; however, the Atascadero Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Executive Committee (EC) elected to develop, and submit to DWR, a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) by January 31, 2022. The GSP was submitted on January 30, 2022 and is currently under review by DWR. The 2021 Annual Report was submitted March 9, 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next EC meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2023 to review draft reports (modeling, HCM, Annual Report). • A follow-up meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 22, 2023 to wrap-up the Annual Report and additional work on the GSP grant. <p>For more information or to view meeting material, visit: www.AtascaderoBasin.com</p>
<p>Santa Maria Basin</p>	<p>Santa Maria Area Subbasin (adjudicated area) is designated as a very low priority basin. The adjudicated areas of the Santa Maria Basin are managed by the Northern Cities Management Area, Nipomo Mesa Management Area, and Santa Maria Valley Management Area. The Santa Maria Basin Fringe Areas – County of San Luis Obispo GSA is the GSA for the non-adjudicated fringe areas of the basin within the County. This subbasin consists of an adjudicated area and other non-adjudicated fringe areas. However, only the priority of the non-adjudicated fringe areas was assessed, which include the Ziegler Canyon Fringe Area in San Luis Obispo County and other fringe areas in Santa Barbara County.</p> <p>Arroyo Grande Subbasin is designated as a very low priority basin and is not subject to the requirements of SGMA due to the DWR prioritization; however, the County and City of Arroyo Grande as GSAs in the basin have prepared a GSP. DWR is planning on conducting Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) Surveys over the subbasin in Spring 2023.</p> <p>For more information, please visit: www.slocounty.ca.gov/santamariabasin or www.slocounty.ca.gov/agbasin</p>
<p>Paso Basin</p>	<p>Paso Basin is designated as a high priority basin subject to critical conditions of overdraft. The Paso Basin – County of San Luis Obispo GSA and three other GSAs</p>

	<p>within the basin entered into an agreement to develop a single GSP for the basin and coordinate via the Paso Basin Cooperative Committee (PBCC).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PBCC and Paso Basin GSAs submitted the amended GSP to DWR by the July 20, 2022 deadline which addresses deficiencies identified in DWR’s initial assessment of the Paso Basin GSP. DWR is expected to provide a final determination of the GSP during the first quarter of 2023. • The DRAFT Annual Report for Water Year 2022 draft will be available for review and comment ahead of the next PBCC meeting. • Technical Advisory Committees being developed to provide guidance and feedback on implementation of grand-funded projects and programs (i.e. expanded monitoring network, addressing data gaps, etc.). • Spring groundwater levels are to be measured during April 2023. • The next PBCC meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2023. <p>For more information, please visit: www.slocounty.ca.gov/pasobasin</p>
<p>Cuyama Basin</p>	<p>Cuyama Basin is designated as a high priority basin subject to critical conditions of overdraft. The Cuyama Basin GSA was formed through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) and is an independent agency governed by a Board of Directors for Cuyama Basin. An amended GSP was submitted to DWR on July 20, 2022. DWR is expected to provide a final determination of the GSP during the first quarter of 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GSA is finalizing policies to implement pumping reductions for 2023 and 2024 in the Central Management Area. • New well permit policies have been approved by the Board and are available on the GSA’s website. • The next Cuyama Basin GSA Advisory and Board meetings are scheduled for March 23, 2023 and March 29, 2023, respectively. <p>For more information, please visit: www.cuyamabasin.org</p>
<p>San Luis Obispo Basin</p>	<p>San Luis Obispo Basin is designated as a high priority basin. The County and City of San Luis Obispo GSAs, in coordination with other basin partners through the Groundwater Sustainability Commission (GSC) developed and submitted a GSP for the SLO Basin to DWR by the January 31, 2022 statutory deadline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A \$7.6 million application for grant funds was successfully submitted to the California Department of Water Resources for grant implementation round 2; draft award announcements expected in April/May 2023. • The DRAFT GSP Annual Report for Water Year 2022 draft will be available for review and comment ahead of the next GSC meeting. • Spring groundwater levels will be measured during April 2023. • The next GSC meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2023. <p>Interested parties are encouraged to participate in the basin specific efforts by attending workshops and meetings of the GSC for the San Luis Obispo Basin.</p>

	For more information, please visit: https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/slobasin
Adelaida Area	<p>The Adelaida Area is not a DWR designated groundwater basin; however, the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District is coordinating with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resources Conservation District (RCD) to conduct a hydrogeologic study within the Adelaida area. The goal of the study is to provide a better understanding of the of the groundwater conditions in the Adelaida area so that informed decisions can be made about managing local water resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USGS has established the initial groundwater level monitoring network, installed a stream gage along the Paso Robles Creek, reactivated a stream gage in the Santa Rita Creek, and is currently conducting groundwater level measurements and water quality sampling. <p>For more information, please visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/adelaidastudy • https://www.usgs.gov/centers/ca-water/science/evaluation-groundwater-resources-adelaida-area-san-luis-obispo-county?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects

County SGMA website – The County has a SGMA website with an interactive mapping tool available for each medium and high priority basin in the county. Residents can verify whether a specific parcel is within a priority basin boundary and, therefore, whether the parcel is subject to SGMA requirements. The following websites include other informative materials, such as SGMA fact sheets and recent presentation materials. Visit the websites and basin-specific page links to learn more and to sign up for the County’s SGMA email list.

WRAC members and interested stakeholders are encouraged to join the various mailing lists for groundwater basin management efforts:

San Luis Obispo County’s SGMA Website and Mailing List Sign-up

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/sgma>

California Department of Water Resources (DWR) SGMA Website and Mailing List

<https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management>

d) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM)

The RWMG recommended and WRAC supported Prop. 1 Round 2 IRWM Implementation Grant Application was approved by the Board of Supervisors for submittal at the November 1st, 2022 meeting. The recommended suite of projects is shown below:

Project Sponsor	Project Name	Total Project Cost	Grant Funding Recommendation
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City of Morro Bay	Indirect Potable Reuse	\$8,709,715	\$1,200,000
City of Pismo Beach	Central Coast Blue, Phase 1	\$54,469,000	\$1,000,000
Oceano CSD	Water Resource Reliability Projects	\$1,160,530	\$600,000
SLOCFC&WCD	Master Water Report Information System	\$1,645,729	\$549,755
San Miguel CSD	Water Reliability Projects	\$4,497,000	\$300,000*
SLOCFC&WCD	Grant Admin	\$ 132,374	\$ 132,374
Total		\$70,614,348	\$3,782,129

* San Miguel's project had 3 components; this covers the entire estimated cost of one specific component.

The application was submitted on 1/31/2023.

At this time, additional IRWM-related grant opportunities are not anticipated. To be notified of the upcoming meetings or any project-related documents, visit www.slocounty.ca.gov/irwm.

A summary of open and pending IRWM grants is below:

Prop 1E Stormwater Flood Mgmt Grant (2011)	\$2,797,000	Close-out	
Flood Control Zone 1/1A – Modified 3a Project	\$2,797,000	Close-out	Flood Control District
Prop 84 Implementation Grant (2011)	\$10,401,000	Complete	
Los Osos Wastewater Project	\$5,945,444	Complete	County of SLO
Flood Control Zone 1/1A – Modified 3c Project	\$2,200,000	Complete	Flood Control District
Nipomo Supplemental Water Project	\$2,200,000	Complete	Nipomo CSD
Grant Administration	\$55,556	Complete	Flood Control District
Prop 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement 2017	\$877,563	Complete	
FCD Funding Administration	\$20,700	Complete	Flood Control District
Disadvantaged Community Needs Assessment	\$67,738	Complete	Flood Control District
Water Resource Reliability Program, Phase 2	\$177,750	Complete	Oceano CSD
Turnout Pump Station Design & Water Master Plan Update	\$177,750	Complete	City of Grover Beach
Water Res. Recovery Facility, SLO Value Engineering at 60% Design	\$78,125	Complete	City of SLO
Reservoir Expansion Project & Water Master Plan Update	\$177,750	Complete	San Simeon CSD
Wastewater Plant Upgrade Study and Recharge Basin Study	\$177,750	Complete	San Miguel CSD
Prop 1 Implementation Grant, Round 1	\$2,782,130	In Progress	
Grant Administration	\$155,000	In Progress	Flood Control District
One Water SLO, MBR/UV Component	\$1,314,530	In Progress	City of SLO
8th Street Well Construction	\$238,100	In Progress	Los Osos CSD
Supplemental Water Project, Final Phase	\$800,000	Close-out	Nipomo CSD
Water Resource Reliability Program,	\$274,500	Close-out	Oceano CSD

Projects #1-1, #1-9			
Prop 1 Implementation Grant, Round 2 (est. award date: mid 2023)	\$3,782,129		
TBD	TBD	TBD	Project Sponsors

For questions, contact:
 Brendan Clark, IRWM Program Manager
 Email: bclark@co.slo.ca.us
 Phone: (805) 788-2316

e) Master Water Report (MWR) Update

Last summer, the District Board of Supervisors approved a contract with Carollo Engineers, Inc. to develop the Master Water Report Update and Information System. This occurred on June 7, 2022: <https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/agendaitem/details/14655>

Compilation of data sources and analysis is mostly complete. Internal stakeholder outreach has continued as it relates to water data and the County's requirements for hosting the completed software solution. This outreach has included County IT/GIS, County Planning & Building, County Groundwater Sustainability, SLOCOG and LAFCO.

f) State Water Project (SWP)

The next State Water Subcontractors Advisory Committee (SWSAC) meeting will be held on March 3, 2023, at 10:00 AM at the County Government Center, Room D361, San Luis Obispo, CA.

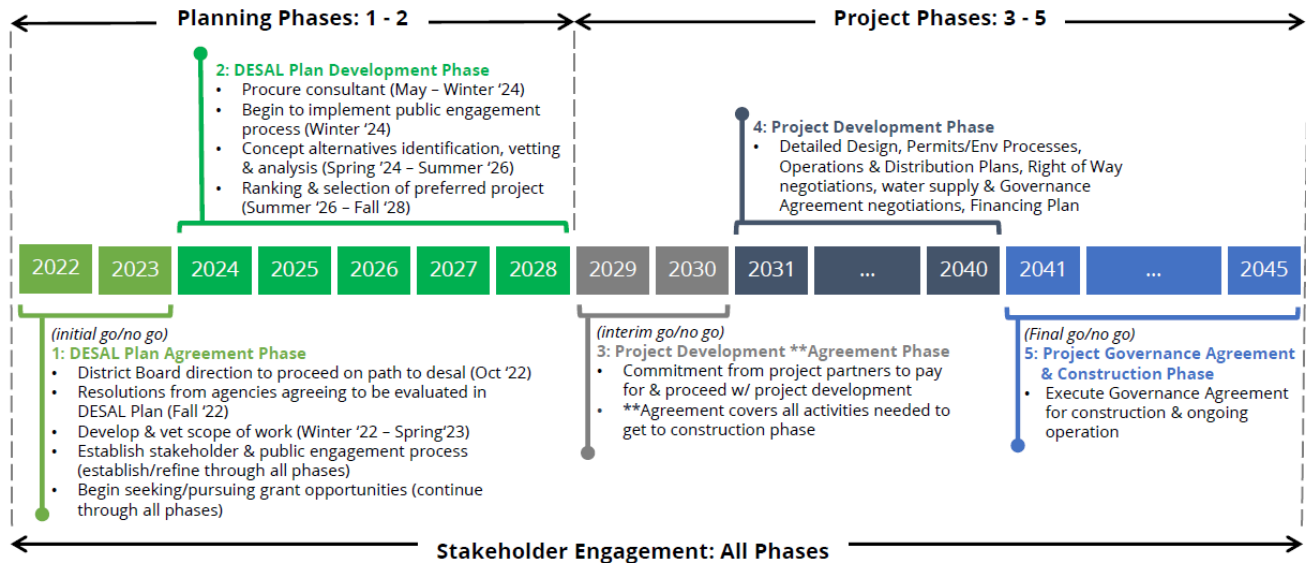
g) Desalination Executable Solution and Logistics Plan (DESAL Plan)

Desalination, the process of removing salt from seawater and/or brackish water to create freshwater, can provide a safe, long term, drought-proof and resilient water supply. On October 18, 2022, the District Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution authorizing staff to proceed with developing a DESAL Plan in coordination with other Desalination, the process of removing salt from seawater and/or brackish water to create freshwater, can provide a safe, long term, drought-proof and resilient water supply. On October 18, 2022, the District Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution authorizing staff to proceed with developing a DESAL Plan in coordination with other participating water-purveying agencies and stakeholders. Since then, District staff has taken steps to pursue grant funding to help offset project costs. Additionally, partner agencies have adopted resolutions and/or submitted letters agreeing to be considered in the DESAL Plan. Agencies agreeing to participate in the plan include the Cities of San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, the Community Services Districts (CSDs) of Avila Beach, Cambria, Los Osos, Nipomo, San Miguel, Templeton, and other water companies, such as Atascadero Mutual and Golden State.

The next step in the effort to identify and implement a desalination project in San Luis Obispo County is for District staff, together with the participating agencies, to develop and vet a DESAL Plan scope of work to bring back to the District Board in Summer 2023.

Originally introduced at the May 2022 WRAC meeting, the following graphic lays out a potential timeline and phase descriptions for a desalination project. For more information, please visit the County's new DESAL Plan webpage at <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/DESAL>.

Desalination Executable Solution And Logistics Plan **DESAL Plan***



h) Various County Water Programs, Policies, and Ordinances

The County Department of Planning & Building's website for the water conservation programs in Nipomo Mesa, Paso Basin, and Los Osos: <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Department-Divisions/Agriculture,-Water,-and-Energy/Water-Programs/Countywide-Water-Conservation-Program.aspx>

Nipomo Mesa

Offset Programs. The County is continuing to process building permits subject to the County's water offset fees at a 1:1 ratio to fund the Cash for Grass, Washer Rebate, and Plumbing Retrofit Programs, available for both residential and commercial uses. Funding is currently limited for the rebate programs and applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants in the Nipomo CSD service area may pay the CSD's supplemental water fee to meet the County's offset requirement. For more information, visit: [https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Department-Divisions/Agriculture,-Water,-and-Energy/Water-Programs/Programs-and-Services/Nipomo-Mesa-Water-Conservation-Area-\(NMWCA\).aspx](https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Department-Divisions/Agriculture,-Water,-and-Energy/Water-Programs/Programs-and-Services/Nipomo-Mesa-Water-Conservation-Area-(NMWCA).aspx)

Paso Basin

Offset Programs. In the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin, there are limited funds available for the Cash for Grass, Washer Rebate, and Plumbing Retrofit Programs, available to both residential and commercial property owners. A well meter is required for compliance with Title 19.

The Ag Offset ordinance requires property owners to verify that new and expanded irrigated commercial crops are not increasing their existing water use on-site, based on a 5 year look back period, with a 5 AFY exemption for sites that do not have existing irrigation and are outside of the area of severe decline. For more information, visit:

[https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Department-Divisions/Agriculture,-Water,-and-Energy/Water-Programs/Programs-and-Services/Paso-Robles-Groundwater-Basin-\(PRGWB\).aspx](https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Department-Divisions/Agriculture,-Water,-and-Energy/Water-Programs/Programs-and-Services/Paso-Robles-Groundwater-Basin-(PRGWB).aspx).

The recent Executive Order N-7-22 does not inhibit the agricultural offset clearance program, with the exception that new well applications must be reviewed by Environmental Health (EHS) and the relevant GSA, per the requirements of the EO.

Paso Basin Land Use Management Area Planting Ordinance (LRP2021-00001). On February 7, 2023, the County Board of Supervisors (Board) rescinded the Paso Basin Land Use Management Area Planting Ordinance and re-enacted and extended until January 1, 2028 the Agricultural Offset Requirements. The Board also decertified the Planting Ordinance Final Program Environmental Impact Report and associated CEQA Findings, directed staff to not process applications for the Planting Ordinance, and directed staff to bring back at an appropriate time for Board discussion opportunities to amend the Agricultural Offset Requirements to account for off-site offsets and voluntary fallowing related to the Groundwater Sustainability Agency Multi-Benefit Irrigated Lands Repurposing (MILR) program. The enacted ordinance and resolutions are available on the project website:

Paso Basin Land Use Planting Ordinance - County of San Luis Obispo (ca.gov)

Existing agricultural offset clearances will be automatically extended with planting required to be completed before the ordinance terminates on January 1, 2028. No extension requests or other actions are required from landowners aside from completing the final planting approved under their offset clearances.

Los Osos

Updated Guide to Planning Information for Development in Los Osos. This website is currently the best resource for FAQ concerning what type of development is currently allowed within Los Osos:

<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Grid-Items/Community-Engagement/Communities-Villages/Los-Osos.aspx>. Topics covered include but are not limited to:

- Which types of permit applications are currently being accepted for processing;
- Status of the building moratorium and waitlist for undeveloped parcels in the sewer service area (still in place); and
- Status of the Communitywide Habitat Conservation Plan.

Offset Requirement. The retrofit-to-build program within the community of Los Osos is allowing property owners to retrofit washers and/or hot water recirculation pumps within and outside the prohibition zone to acquire retrofit credits to offset water use for new development at a 2:1 ratio. Program information is available at: <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning->

[Building/Department-Divisions/Agriculture,-Water,-and-Energy/Water-Programs/Programs-and-Services/Los-Osos-Groundwater-Basin-Plumbing-Retrofit-to-Bu.aspx](https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Grid-Items/Community-Engagement/Active-Planning-Projects/Los-Osos-Water-Offset-Study.aspx)

Water Offset Study. The County has hired [Maddaus Water Management Inc.](#) to prepare a study to update water usage estimates for urban and rural residences sourcing water from the Los Osos Groundwater Basin, propose new water conservation measures for the retrofit-to-build program, and estimate remaining water savings potential for the community. The project timeline was extended to secure usable results and facilitate a thorough exploration of potential water conservation measures. Updates are posted at:

<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Grid-Items/Community-Engagement/Active-Planning-Projects/Los-Osos-Water-Offset-Study.aspx>

Los Osos Community Plan. The Los Osos Community Plan ("LOCP") is being reviewed by the California Coastal Commission and a hearing date has not yet been scheduled. On December 15, 2020, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the Los Osos Community Plan ("LOCP") update and Final Environmental Impact Report ("FEIR"). The LOCP policies are still subject to change based on California Coastal Commission review. The LOCP and FEIR considered by the Board on December 15 are available at: <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/LosOsosPlan-1.aspx>.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). On February 11, 2022, the California Coastal Commission voted to approve the County's Coastal ADU Ordinance with staff suggested modifications, including not allowing ADUs in Los Osos and Cambria, outlined in the staff report available at: <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/meetings/agenda/#/2022/2> (agenda item #16d).

On March 21, 2023, the County BOS will review Coastal Commission's suggested modifications. Please use the following link to access the agenda when it is published:

<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Home/Meetings-Calendar.aspx> Meetings-Calendar - County of San Luis Obispo

Please contact waterprograms@co.slo.ca.us for further information or questions.