Arroyo Grande Subbasin GSP

Stakeholder Workshop #1 Summary: Basin Setting and Visioning

Held December 15, 2020

Recap:
Workshop Goals

- Share project overview, timeline and alignment with other projects
- Share key requirements of SGMA
- Share basin setting overview
- Document stakeholder's shared vision of what a "sustainable Arroyo Grande subbasin" means

Who Attended the Workshop

Visioning Exercise

Workshop attendees helped populate a virtual white board to answer the question "What is our shared vision of what a 'sustainable Arroyo Grande Subbasin means?" Stakeholders shared their ideas, values, perceptions, and desired outcomes across the following categories:

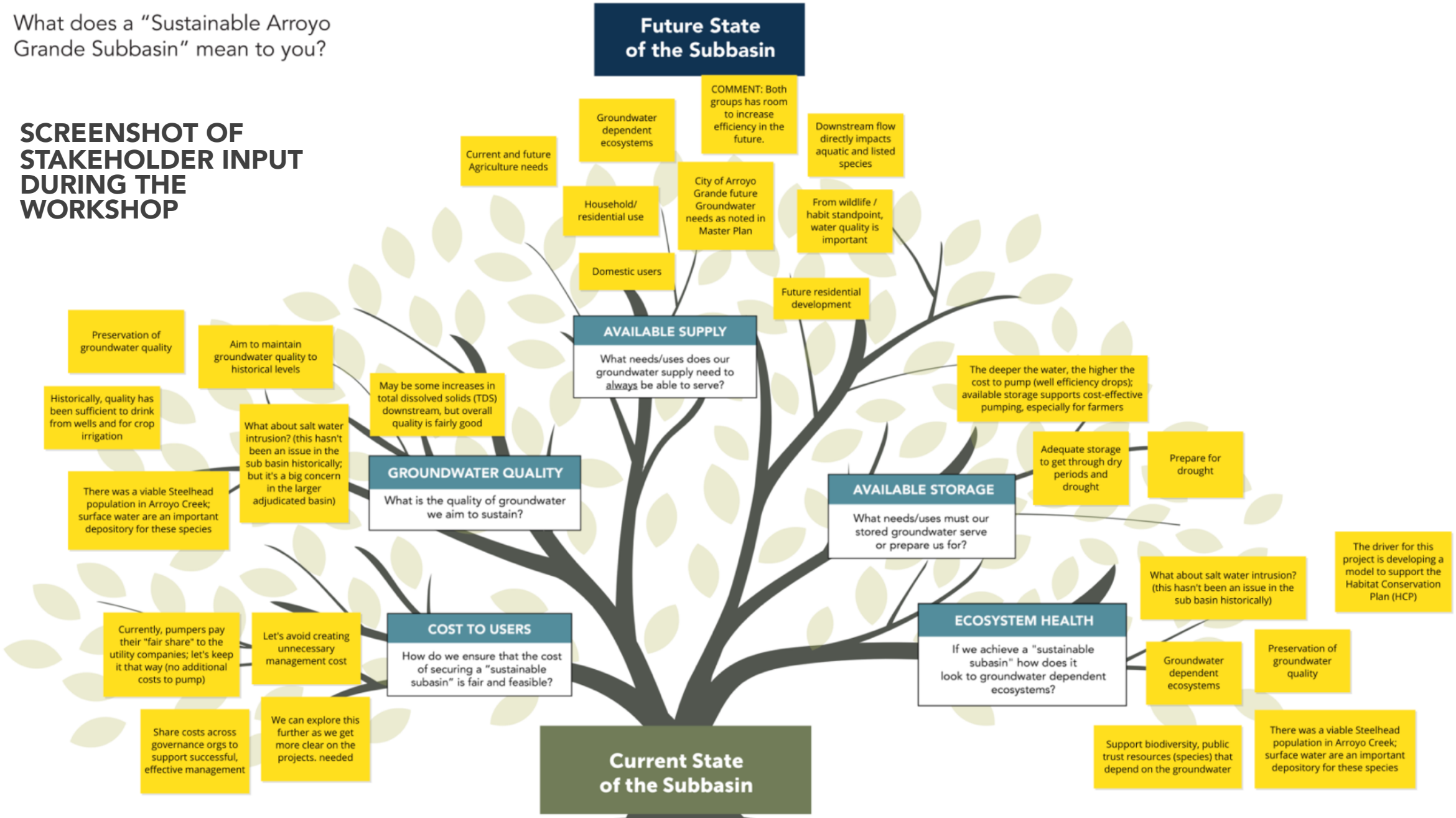
1. **AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER SUPPLY.** What needs/uses does our groundwater supply always need to be able to serve?
2. **AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER STORAGE.** What needs/uses does our stored groundwater need to serve and/or prepare us for?
3. **ECOSYSTEM HEALTH.** If we achieve a "sustainable Basin" how does it look to groundwater-dependent ecosystems?
4. **GROUNDWATER QUALITY.** What is the quality of groundwater we aim to sustain?
5. **COST TO USERS.** How do we ensure that the cost of securing a 'sustainable Basin' is fair and feasible?

The following is a report out of this workshop exercise.

BASIN VISIONING EXERCISE

What does a "Sustainable Arroyo Grande Subbasin" mean to you?

SCREENSHOT OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT DURING THE WORKSHOP



We incorporated the input provided by stakeholders into the draft **5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES INFORMING THE ARROYO GRANDE SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (GSP),** described on the pages that follow.

A synthesis of all ideas and suggestions shared by the workshop attendees are listed beneath one or more of these principles.

These **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** will be used by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency to inform the development of the Basin sustainability goals; and the projects and management actions.

Guiding Principles Informing the Arroyo Grande Subbasin GSP

1

Available groundwater supply **reliably supports current and evolving water needs.**

2

Stored groundwater supports **cost-effective pumping and drought preparedness.**

3

Groundwater levels and quality **support other regional initiatives** including the Habitat Conservation Plan.

4

Groundwater quality **safely and reliably supports human, agriculture, ecosystem, and wildlife needs.**

5

Cost of maintaining a sustainable basin is **cost-effective and fair for all users.**

1. Available groundwater supply **reliably supports current and evolving water needs.**

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- Downstream flow directly impacts aquatic and listed species
- Current and future agriculture needs
- Household/residential use
- City of Arroyo Grande future Groundwater needs as noted in Master Plan
- From wildlife / habit standpoint, water quality is important
- Future residential development
- Understand stored and available groundwater supply in the context of conjunctive use management and the interconnections between surface water and groundwater supplies.
- COMMENT: Both groups have room to increase efficiency in the future.

2. Stored groundwater supports **cost-effective pumping and drought preparedness.**

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- The deeper the water, the higher the cost to pump (well efficiency drops); available storage supports cost-effective pumping, especially for farmers
- Adequate storage to get through dry periods and drought
- Prepare for drought
- Provide what the current sustainable yield is in acre feet/year based on current pumping and downstream releases With this we can determine storage for droughts and impacts when agricultural land is converted to commercial/residential in the coming years.
- Understand stored and available groundwater supply in the context of conjunctive use management and the interconnections between surface water and groundwater supplies.

3. Groundwater levels and quality **support other regional initiatives,** including the Habitat Conservation Plan.

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- The driver for this project is developing a model to support the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)
- Preservation of groundwater quality
- Support biodiversity, public trust resources (listed species) that depend on the groundwater
- There was a viable Steelhead population in Arroyo Creek; surface water are an important depository for these species
- What about saltwater intrusion? (this hasn't been an issue in the sub basin historically)

4. Groundwater quality **safely and reliably supports human, ecosystem, and wildlife needs.**

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- Preservation of groundwater quality
- Aim to maintain groundwater quality at historical levels
- Historically, quality has been sufficient to drink from wells and for crop irrigation
- There was a viable Steelhead population in Arroyo Creek; surface water are an important depository for these species
- May be some increases in total dissolved solids (TDS) downstream, but overall quality is fairly good

5. Cost of maintaining a sustainable basin is **cost-effective and fair for all users.**

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- Currently, pumpers pay their "fair share" to the utility companies; let's keep it that way (no additional costs to pump)
- Let's avoid creating unnecessary management costs
- Share costs across governance orgs to support successful, effective management
- We can explore this further as we get more clear on the projects.

To stay informed on this project, go to

www.SLOCounty.ca.gov/AGBasin