



**City of Greenfield
Arroyo Seco
Groundwater Sustainability Agency**

599 El Camino Real
Greenfield, CA 93927

**Meeting Agenda
March 28, 2023
4:00 P.M.**

The Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency will be meeting on March 28, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers located at 599 El Camino Real, Greenfield, California 93927, and will be open to the public. This meeting will also be accessible online and may be viewed through the following options:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86701198267>

Meeting ID: 867 0119 8267

PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES AND PAGERS

- A. **CALL TO ORDER**
- B. **ROLL CALL**
- C. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- D. **PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

This portion of the Agenda allows an individual the opportunity to address the GSA on any items not on the Closed Session, Consent Calendar, Public Hearings, and City Council Business. Under state regulations, **no action can be taken on non-agenda items, including issues raised under this agenda item.** Members of the public should be aware of this when addressing the GSA regarding items not specifically referenced on this Agenda. Please be further aware that public comments can also be submitted via email to the following email address: cityclerk@ci.greenfield.ca.us.

**Meeting Agenda
March 28, 2023**

E. CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered routine and may be approved by one action of the Agency, unless a request for removal for discussion or explanation is received prior to the time Agency votes on the motion to adopt.

E-1. ADOPTION of Minutes of the February 28, 2022 Arroyo Seco GSA Meeting

F. AGENCY BUSINESS

F-1. RECEIVE Interlake Tunnel Draft Environmental Impact Report Comment Letter
a. Oral Report
b. Public Comments
c. Agency Board - Comments / Review / Action

F-2. RECEIVE Draft Forebay Subbasin Annual Report
a. Oral Report
b. Public Comments
c. Agency Board - Comments / Review / Action

F-3. CONSIDER Adding Alternate Members for Advisory Committee
a. Oral Report
b. Public Comments
c. Agency Board - Comments / Review / Action

F-4. RECEIVE Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency General Manager's Status Report
a. Oral Report
b. Public Comments
c. Agency Board - Comments / Review / Action

G. ADJOURNMENT

.....
In compliance with the American With Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (831) 674-5591. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).
.....

This agenda is duly posted outside City Hall and on the City of Greenfield web site

**CITY OF GREENFIELD ARROYO SECO
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
MINUTES**

AGENCY MEETING OF FEBRUARY 28, 2023

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Thorp, Vice Chair Griva, Board Member Rodriguez and Wood

Absent: None

Staff: Interagency Attorney Thompson, General Manager Weeks, City Clerk Rathbun

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

A MOTION by Board Member Rodriguez, seconded by Vice Chair Griva to approve Minutes of the September 27, 2022 Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency Meeting and Minutes of the December 20, 2022 Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency Meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

AGENCY BUSINESS

SWEARING IN OF ROBERT WHITE, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF GREENFIELD, CITY REPRESENTATIVE

City Clerk Rathbun administered the oath of office to Robert White.

Board Member White took his seat on the dais.

RECEIVE ARROYO SECO GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY GENERAL MANAGER'S STATUS REPORT

General Manager Weeks stated that they were expecting grant funding reimbursement from the Salinas Valley Basin GSA. Board Member Wood stated that a check was received in the amount of \$514,000. General Manager Weeks stated that the Salinas Valley Basin GSA had engaged in another grant opportunity which was fairly large for implementation and for two proposed monitoring wells. He also gave an update on the Implementation Committee and stated that the next meeting was March 10th. Board Member Wood stated that there would be a Forebay Subbasin Implementation Committee special meeting this Friday at noon.

Thomas Virsik confirmed that the meeting was on March 3rd in Greenfield. He stated that the SMC, the technical committee for the metrics, was mentioned in the presentation for Friday and believed that other management actions were nested within that part of the process so it was important for it to be part of the process and not just a technical piece.

General Manager Weeks gave an update on the Watershed Protection Policy. He stated that this GSA had previously approved it and now it goes to the Salinas Valley Basin GSA and would bring it back once it was approved.

General Manager Weeks gave an update on the deep aquifer study and stated that they were trying to figure out what the study would consist of. He explained the levels of the aquifers.

Vice Chair Griva stated that it was not just a technical problem but there were political concerns with it and stated that the sooner it was resolved, the better.

Thomas Virsik announced that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency was doing its tunnel EIR and the due date for that was March 21st. General Manager Weeks stated that he and Gus were looking at the EIR and would be providing comments.

General Manager Weeks stated that he had reviewed the Annual Report and had provided comments and stated that it was data driven and was due on April 1st.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Chair of the Board

City Clerk of the City of Greenfield

ARROYO SECO GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

599 Camino Real Greenfield CA 93927 | 831-647-5591

April 26, 2022

By E-Mail: tunnelEIR@co.monterey.ca.us

Lew Bauman, Interim General Manager
Monterey County Water Resources Agency
1441 Schilling Place, North Building
Salinas, CA 93901

Re: Proposed Interlake Tunnel Draft EIR – ASGSA Review Comments

Dear Mr. Bauman:

This letter serves to transmit review comments from the Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ASGSA) to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) regarding the subject Interlake Tunnel Project (ILT) Draft EIR (DEIR). The majority of our comments are focused on the technical aspects of the proposed project hydrology and modeling work conducted to support the DEIR.

The MCWRA has elected to conduct their hydrologic modeling of the ITL with the Salinas Valley Operational Model (SVOM), a complex three-dimensional groundwater-surface water hydro-geologic model built using the US Geological Survey's (USGS) MODFLOW-OWHM code. It utilizes an iterative approach with a reservoir operations module (SWO) that determines when the reservoirs will release water and how much, based on conditions both at the reservoirs and within the groundwater-surface water model simulation. The SVOM is a very complex model that continues to be modified and has not been fully vetted with the public. Our first issue with the modeling work relates to the period selected for model performance. The simulation period ends in 2014, which is right before some of the most severe groundwater impacts occurred in the Forebay and Upper Valley areas. The selection of the simulation endpoint does not use the available historic modeling period that ends with 2018 data, and hence is deficient with respect to using the best available information. The DEIR also does not provide the ending reservoir storage amounts for those scenarios, nor does the analyses provide a comparison with the actual reservoir levels. The DEIR needs to confirm whether any conservation or fish passage releases would have been made in 2015 or 2016, and what were the reservoir inflows and elevations.

The treatment of water rights in the SVOM is alarming in two respects. First, where water rights are discussed (e.g. SVOM report Section 4.2.5 and Appendix A), there is no mention of the requirement that MCWRA must pass through any reservoir inflows that would otherwise recharge groundwater along downstream reaches of the Salinas River when that recharge is needed to prevent material injury to those downstream users. How is this requirement incorporated into the operating rules in the SVOM?

Second, the modeling is alarming in that the SVOM analysis abandons water rights considerations altogether due to uncertainty regarding how to apply rights associated with the individual reservoirs to both reservoirs operated jointly. Section 5.2.5 states "water rights limitations are not in place for scenarios including the Interlake Tunnel, because of uncertainty

about how the limitations would be implemented for an interconnected reservoir system and how water passed from Nacimiento Reservoir to San Antonio Reservoir through the Interlake Tunnel would be accounted. However, the water rights accounting still takes place using the same approach as for the Baseline scenario (see Section 3.3 and Appendix A).” Transferring water via the tunnel does not actually complicate water rights. San Luis Obispo County is still entitled to its share of yield, which can only be taken from Nacimiento. Small releases for fisheries immediately downstream of the reservoirs must still be made from each reservoir. The NMFS steelhead flow prescription triggers are based on combined reservoir storage, which still applies with transfers. And the requirement to pass through reservoir inflows needed for downstream groundwater replenishment would still apply to each reservoir. Absent providing those operating rules and constraints in the simulations, MCWRA must re-run those simulations with those rules and constraints included, and provide the public a detailed accounting of how the water rights were managed in the SVOM simulations.

SVOM report Table 8 shows a large shift in reservoir releases from wet years to dry years for the tunnel+spillway alternative. Were there specific operating rules that carried over water from normal and wet years to dry years, or did the reservoirs simply not run out of water quite as often in dry years? For example, in wet years there was a decrease in all types of releases. The decrease in flood control releases is an intuitive result of transferring water from Nacimiento to San Antonio. However, one would expect that to be accompanied by an increase in environmental or conservation releases at times when those downstream flow needs were met by flood control releases. How could all release types decrease without a change in operating rules? These observations suggest the SVOM complexity may dictate reservoir operations that are inconsistent with the MCWRA reservoir operation rules.

We look forward to the continuing development of the ILT and the environmental review process, and are available to discuss our review at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Curtis V. Weeks
General Manager
Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Cc: ASGSA Board of Directors



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFacre-feet
AF/yr.acre-feet per year
ASCMAArroyo Seco Cone Management Area
ASGSA	.....Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency
CBI	.....Consensus Building Institute
CCRWQCB	.....Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
CCWC	.....Clark Colony Water Company
COC	.....Constituent(s) of concern
DAC	.....Disadvantaged Communities
DDW	.....Division of Drinking Water
D-TAC	.....Drought Operations Technical Advisory Committee
DWR	.....California Department of Water Resources
eWRIMS	.....Electronic Water Rights Information Management System
GEMS	.....Groundwater Extraction Management System
GSA	.....Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP or Plan	.....Groundwater Sustainability Plan
InSAR	.....Interferometric Synthetic-Aperture Radar
ILRP	.....Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program
ISW	.....interconnected surface water
JPA	.....Joint Powers Authority
MCL	.....Maximum Contaminant Level
MCWRA	.....Monterey County Water Resources Agency
mg/L	.....milligram/Liter
MOU	.....Memorandum of Understanding
SGMA	.....Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SMC	.....Sustainable Management Criteria/Criterion
SMCL	.....Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level
Subbasin	.....Forebay Aquifer Subbasin
SVBGSA	.....Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
SVIHM	.....Salinas Valley Integrated Hydrologic Model
SWRCB	.....State Water Resources Control Board
WY	.....Water Year

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA), working together with the Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ASGSA), is required to submit an annual report for the Forebay Aquifer Subbasin (Subbasin) to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) by April 1 of each year following the SVBGSA's 2022 adoption and submittal of its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP or Plan). This Annual Report summarizes data collected in Water Year (WY) 2022, from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022.

As described in the GSP, DWR lists the Subbasin as a medium priority subbasin. The goal of the Forebay Subbasin GSP is to balance the needs of all water users in the Subbasin while complying with SGMA.

In WY 2022, groundwater conditions remained similar to conditions in recent years, with slight changes related to specific sustainability indicators. WY 2022 is classified as a dry-normal year.

The groundwater data for WY 2022 are summarized below:

- Groundwater elevations decreased during this dry-normal water year, decreasing on average about 6 feet and ranging from 0.2 to 17 feet. Two Representative Monitoring Site (RMS) wells had groundwater elevations above their measurable objectives, 34 had elevations between their measurable objectives and minimum thresholds, and 2 dropped below their minimum thresholds.
- Groundwater extractions for reporting year 2021 (November 1, 2020, through October 31, 2021) were approximately 150,400 acre-feet (AF). Groundwater extraction reporting is lagged by a year because it is not available until after the annual report submittal.
- Groundwater storage decreased in WY 2022 and was above the minimum threshold and about 105,000 AF below the measurable objective.
- There were 7 groundwater quality constituents of concern (COC) that exceeded their minimum thresholds in WY 2022, none of them due to GSA actions. One new constituent—selenium—was added to the list of COC for the Subbasin because it had an exceedance of the regulatory drinking water standard in WY 2022.
- No subsidence was detected in the Subbasin.
- All shallow wells used to monitor interconnected surface water (ISW) show groundwater elevations between the minimum threshold and the measurable objective.

As a result, the Forebay Subbasin had no undesirable results in WY 2022.

The SVBGSA and ASGSA have taken numerous actions to implement the GSP. These include:

- **Forebay Subbasin Planning and Implementation:** SVBGSA worked with the Forebay Aquifer Subbasin Planning Committee and ASGSA to finish the Forebay Subbasin GSP, submitted to DWR in January 2022. SVBGSA and ASGSA met regularly through the Coordination Committee, and in April 2021 the agencies finalized and approved the Forebay Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation Agreement between the agencies. As the responsibilities of the subbasin planning committees finished with GSP submittal, SVBGSA set up subbasin implementation committees to lead subbasin-specific GSP implementation activities.
- **GSA policies, operations, and engagement:** SVBGSA continued to regularly engage interested parties through its Board of Directors and committees. It developed a 2-year and 5-year work plan and associated budget and continued to strengthen its relationship with partner agencies. SVBGSA conducted outreach to Underrepresented Communities. Finally, SVBGSA and ASGSA developed well permit application review processes to comply with Executive Order N-7-22.
- **Data and monitoring** – SVBGSA undertook several efforts to further increase data collection and monitoring, including identifying existing wells that could potentially fill monitoring network data gaps, engaging in discussions to expand the groundwater extraction monitoring program, continuing support of USGS development of a groundwater-surface water model, and contracting and then receiving the results of the preliminary investigation of the Deep Aquifers Study.
- **Project implementation activities** – SVBGSA and ASGSA developed a sustainability strategy for the Forebay Subbasin that outlines the GSP workstreams underway or planned to maintain sustainability, including the Watershed Protection Policy for the Arroyo Seco River, Forebay SMC Technical Advisory Committee, Multi-benefit Stream Channel Improvements, and Deep Aquifers Management. Management actions and projects are not needed at this time; however, SVBGSA, ASGSA, and MCWRA moved forward with actions that will positively impact groundwater conditions and help maintain sustainability, including:
 - Continuing to convene MCWRA’s Drought Technical Advisory Committee (D-TAC).
 - Developing ASGSA’s Watershed Protection Policy for the Arroyo Seco River.
 - Beginning the Deep Aquifer Study and receiving recommendations from the preliminary investigation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The 2014 California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires that, following adoption of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) annually report on the condition of the basin and show that the GSP is being implemented in a manner that will likely achieve the sustainability goal for the basin. This report fulfills that requirement for the Salinas Valley – Forebay Aquifer Subbasin (Forebay Subbasin or Subbasin) for Water Year (WY) 2022.

The sustainability goal of the Forebay Subbasin is to manage groundwater resources for long-term community, financial, and environmental benefits to the Subbasin’s residents and businesses. The goal of this GSP is to ensure long-term viable water supplies while maintaining the unique cultural, community, and business aspects of the Subbasin. It is the express goal of this GSP to balance the needs of all water users in the Subbasin.

This is the second annual report for the Subbasin and includes monitoring data for WY 2022, which is from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022. This Annual Report includes a description of basin conditions through text, hydrographs, groundwater elevation contour maps, calculated estimates of change in groundwater in storage, and maps of the distribution of groundwater extraction across the Subbasin. It compares WY 2022 data to Sustainability Management Criteria (SMC) as a measure of the Subbasin’s groundwater conditions with respect to the sustainability goal that must be reached by the end of 2042.

1.2 Forebay Aquifer Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan

The Forebay Subbasin falls partially within the jurisdiction of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA) and partially within the jurisdiction of the Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ASGSA). In accordance with the Forebay Implementation Agreement (2021), ASGSA manages the Arroyo Seco Cone Management Area (ASCMA) and SVBGSA manages the remaining area of the Subbasin as shown on Figure 1. Both implementation areas will be managed according to the single GSP for the entire Forebay Subbasin.

In 2017, local GSA-eligible entities formed the SVBGSA to develop and implement the GSPs for the Salinas Valley. The SVBGSA is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) with membership comprising the County of Monterey, Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA), City of Salinas, City of Soledad, City of Gonzales, City of King, Castroville Community Services District, and Monterey One Water.

The ASGSA was formed through agreement between the City of Greenfield and nearby landowners, consisting of the Clark Colony Water Company (CCWC) and contiguous surrounding lands.

The SVBGSA, in collaboration with ASGSA, developed the GSP for the Forebay Subbasin, identified as California Department of Water Resources (DWR) subbasin 3-004.04. DWR has designated the Forebay Subbasin as a medium priority basin.

The SVBGSA developed the GSP for the Forebay Subbasin in concert with the 5 other Salinas Valley Subbasin GSPs that fall partially or entirely under its jurisdiction: the 180/400-Foot Aquifer Subbasin (DWR subbasin 3-004.01), the Eastside Aquifer Subbasin (DWR subbasin 3-004.02), the Upper Valley Aquifer Subbasin (DWR subbasin 3-004.05), the Langley Area Subbasin (DWR subbasin 3-004.09), and the Monterey Subbasin (DWR subbasin 3-004.10). This Annual Report covers all the 94,000 acres of the Forebay Subbasin, as shown on Figure 1. **Error! Reference source not found..**

1.3 Annual Report Organization

This Annual Report corresponds to the requirements of GSP Regulations § 356.2. The Report first outlines the subbasin conditions, including several components of the Regulations: groundwater elevations, groundwater extractions, surface water use, total water use, and change in groundwater storage. The Report then addresses GSP implementation by reporting on actions taken to implement the Plan and progress toward interim milestones.

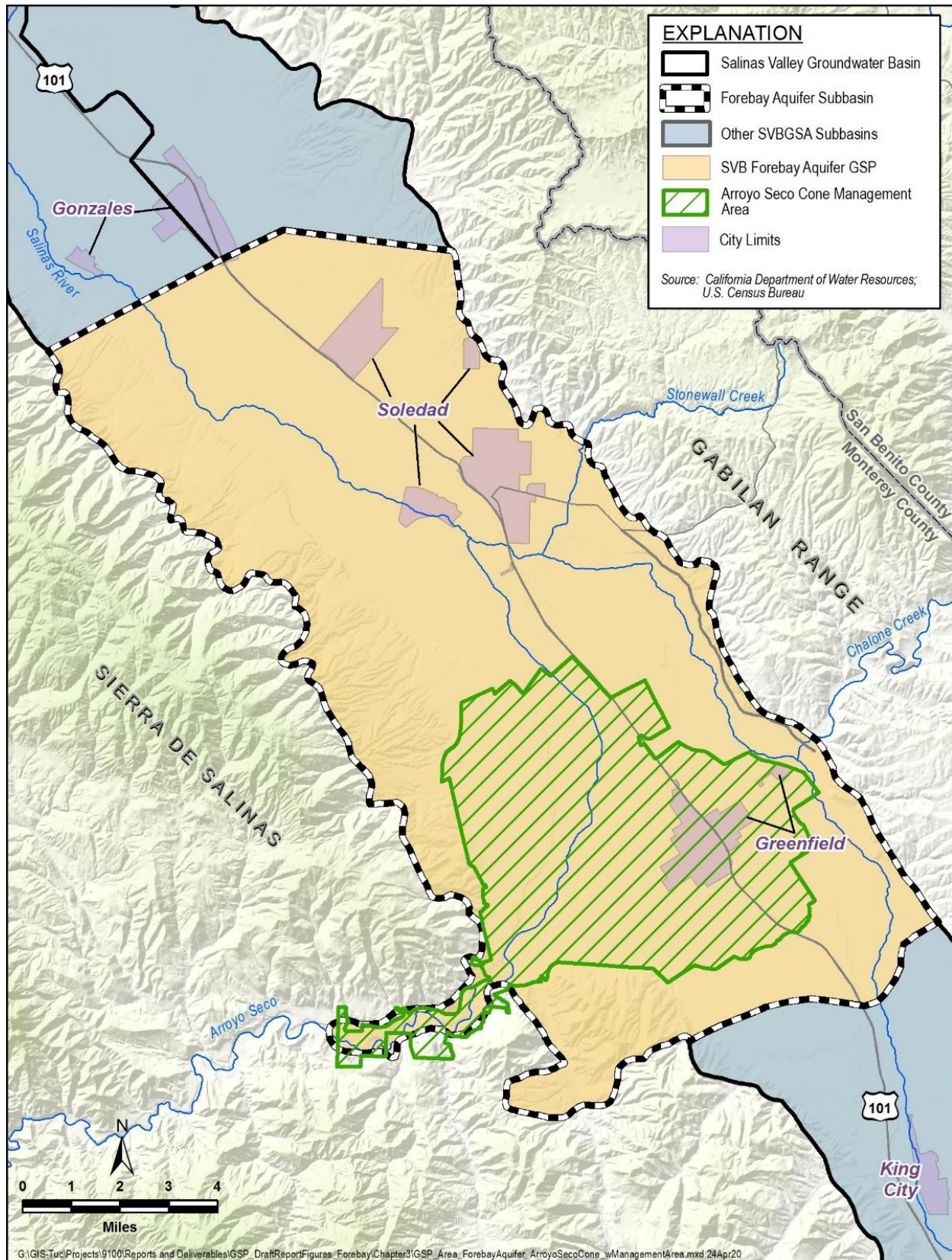


Figure 1. Forebay Aquifer Subbasin

2 SUBBASIN SETTING

The Forebay Subbasin is located in the middle of Monterey County. The Salinas River runs through the Forebay Subbasin and its main tributary, the Arroyo Seco, joins it in the middle of the Subbasin. Historical flows in the Arroyo Seco formed a significant alluvial fan in the Subbasin, known as the Arroyo Seco Cone. The Subbasin contains portions of the municipalities of Greenfield and Soledad. The geology of the Forebay Subbasin is characterized by the intersection of the fluvial and marine dominated deposits of the main Salinas Valley and the Arroyo Seco alluvial fan originating in the Sierra de Salinas on the west side of the Subbasin. The western boundary of the Forebay Subbasin is the contact with the metamorphic and sedimentary rocks of the Sierra de Salinas. The eastern boundary of the Subbasin is the contact between the unconsolidated alluvial fan deposits and the mostly granitic rocks of the Gabilan Range. Most groundwater recharge in the Forebay Subbasin occurs from the Arroyo Seco and Salinas River. The northwestern boundary with the adjacent 180/400-Foot and Eastside Aquifer Subbasins generally coincides with the southeastern limit of confining conditions. The Salinas Valley Aquitard is not found in the Forebay Subbasin, but many of the sediments that define the 180/400-Foot Aquifers can be found there. There is no reported hydraulic barrier between the Forebay and the 180/400-Foot or Eastside Aquifer Subbasins. The southeastern boundary with the adjacent Upper Valley Aquifer Subbasin is located south of Greenfield and coincides with the narrowing of the Valley floor and shallowing of the base of the groundwater basin (DWR, 2004).

2.1 Principal Aquifers and Aquitards

The Basin Fill Aquifer is the Forebay Subbasin's sole principal aquifer, increasing in thickness from the east to west, from Greenfield northward. Its sandy water-bearing layers roughly correlate and are hydraulically connected to the 180-Foot, 400-Foot, and Deep Aquifers in the neighboring 180/400-Foot Aquifer Subbasin (Kennedy/Jenks, 2004), and the shallow and deep aquifer zones in the neighboring Eastside Aquifer Subbasin. The Basin Fill Aquifer also includes the Arroyo Seco Cone sediments that cross almost the entire width of the Salinas Valley in the Forebay Subbasin and are interfingered with the greater Basin sediments. The primary water-bearing sediments of the Arroyo Seco Cone consist of relatively uniform and highly permeable coarse alluvial fill that are generally more coarse-grained than those found in the main valley's fluvial and marine deposits.

2.2 Natural Groundwater Recharge and Discharge

Groundwater can discharge from aquifers where surface water and groundwater are interconnected and gaining streamflow conditions occur. There are potential locations of interconnected surface water mainly along the Salinas River and partially along the Arroyo Seco. In these areas groundwater dependent ecosystems may depend on groundwater emerging from

aquifers or on groundwater occurring near the ground surface and may discharge groundwater through evapotranspiration. Natural groundwater recharge occurs through deep percolation of surface water, excess applied irrigation water, and precipitation.

2.3 Precipitation and Water Year Type

Precipitation that falls within the Subbasin contributes to runoff and percolation components of the water budget. The precipitation gage at the Salinas Airport (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Station USW00023233) recorded 7.38 inches of rainfall in WY 2022. For comparison, the average rainfall from WY 1980 to WY 2022 at this gage is 11.87 inches of precipitation.

SVBGSA adopts the methodology used by MCWRA for determining the Subbasin's water year type. MCWRA assigns a water year type of either dry, dry-normal, normal, wet-normal, or wet based on an indexing of annual mean flows at the USGS stream gage on the Arroyo Seco near Soledad (USGS Gage 11152000) (MCWRA, 2005). Using the MCWRA method, WY 2022 was a dry-normal year.

3 2022 DATA AND SUBBASIN CONDITIONS

This section details the Subbasin conditions and WY 2022 data. Where WY 2022 data are not available, it includes the most recent data available. SVBGSA stores monitoring data in a data management system. Monitoring data are included in this Annual Report and are submitted to DWR.

The Forebay Subbasin includes the ASCMA that is managed by ASGSA. As in the chapter on Groundwater Conditions in the GSP (Chapter 5), groundwater conditions here do not separate ASCMA from the greater Forebay Subbasin. Instead, groundwater conditions are discussed for the entire Subbasin to reflect the single sustainability goal for the Subbasin.

3.1 Water Supply and Use

3.1.1 Groundwater Extraction

3.1.2 Surface Water Supply

3.1.3 Total Water Use

3.2 Groundwater Elevations

3.2.1 Groundwater Elevation Contours

3.2.2 Groundwater Elevation Hydrographs

3.3 Subsidence

3.4 Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water

4 ANNUAL PROGRESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GSP

4.1 WY 2022 Groundwater Management Activities

This section details groundwater management activities that have occurred in WY 2022. These include activities of SVBGSA, ASGSA, and MCWRA that promote groundwater sustainability and are important for maintaining the GSP sustainability goals. This section begins with an overview of SVBGSA and ASGSA's sustainability strategy for the Forebay Subbasin, which builds on and further details the Road Map included in the GSP.

In WY 2022, SVBGSA, ASGSA, and MCWRA undertook 4 main categories of activities to begin GSP implementation and further groundwater sustainability goals: GSA policies, operations, and engagement; data and monitoring; planning; and sustainability strategy and activities.

4.1.1 GSA Policies, Operations, and Engagement

SVBGSA focused much of its effort during WY 2022 on developing GSA policies, standardizing GSA operations, and strengthening engagement to provide a strong base for GSP implementation.

Subbasin-level: SVBGSA continued robust stakeholder engagement and strengthened collaboration with key agencies and partners. SVBGSA worked throughout the year with the Forebay Subbasin Planning Committee and the ASGSA to develop the Forebay Subbasin GSP and submit it to DWR in January 2022. SVBGSA and ASGSA met regularly through the Coordination Committee that consists of 2 Board members from each agency. SVBGSA held 2 meetings of the Forebay Subbasin Planning Committee during WY 2022 prior to submitting the GSP. As the responsibilities of the subbasin planning committees finished with GSP submittal, SVBGSA set up subbasin implementation committees to lead subbasin-specific GSP implementation activities. The Forebay Subbasin Implementation Committee was formed with 11 subbasin committee members. SVBGSA held 2 meetings of the Forebay Subbasin Implementation Committee during WY 2022 to begin implementation of the GSP.

SVBGSA Agency-level: During WY 2022, SVBGSA streamlined its committee structure. The SVBGSA Board of Directors transitioned the responsibilities of the Seawater Intrusion Working Group (SWIG) and Integrated Implementation Committee to the existing Advisory Committee, and the responsibilities of the SWIG Technical Advisory Committee to a new, broader Groundwater Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC). SVBGSA continued its engagement across all Salinas Valley subbasins through its Board of Directors and Advisory Committee, holding 12 Board meetings and 9 Advisory Committee meetings over the course of WY 2022.

SVBGSA Work Plan, Budget, and Operating Fee: SVBGSA developed a 2-year and 5-year work plan and associated budget, which set the basis for the annual operating fee. The Board of Directors passed a portion of the fee increase. During the budget discussions, the Board directed staff to determine whether the regulatory fee needed to be applied for some projects and management actions at the specific subbasin level. As a result of the partial funding, some workstreams moved forward while others remained unfunded, slowing implementation of certain activities.

Well Permitting: Governor Gavin Newsom released Executive Order N-7-22 on March 28, 2022. The Executive Order creates a role for GSAs in the groundwater well permitting process during droughts. Specifically, a well permitting agency shall not “approve a permit for a new groundwater well or for alteration of an existing well in a basin subject to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and classified as medium- or high-priority without first obtaining written verification from a Groundwater Sustainability Agency managing the basin or area of the basin where the well is proposed to be located that groundwater extraction by the proposed well would not be inconsistent with any sustainable groundwater management program established in any applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan adopted by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency and would not decrease the likelihood of achieving a sustainability goal for the basin covered by such a plan.” In addition, a proposed well cannot cause subsidence that would adversely impact or damage nearby infrastructure. SVBGSA and ASGSA worked with County agencies involved in well permitting, interested parties, and its Board of Directors to develop processes to comply with the Executive Order.

Coordination with Partner Agencies: SVBGSA and MCWRA increased coordination and collaboration through weekly meetings between agency leads and consultants. This resulted in increased awareness of each other’s activities, objectives, and challenges. MCWRA and SVBGSA finalized the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the roles of the 2 agencies and how they will coordinate through the implementation of the GSPs.

SVBGSA conducted meetings throughout the year to reach out to additional agencies and stakeholders to coordinate. These included meetings with:

- Monterey County Health Department on data and the existing well permitting and water quality monitoring programs
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to discuss the Water Quality Coordination Group
- Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, including coordinating with the Central Coast Wetlands Group on the watershed coordinator grant

Outreach: Underrepresented Communities are an important stakeholder for the SVBGSA to develop meaningful and long-term relationships with regard to groundwater sustainability.

Outreach to Underrepresented Communities includes 2 different methods of communication for making workshop materials more accessible. For the first in-person workshop since GSP implementation, SVBGSA offered Spanish interpretation services for attendees both in person and online. In addition, SVBGSA informational workshops are archived on a YouTube channel which is easily accessible to interested parties. A workshop on demand management was also translated and presented in Spanish with the video archived for accessible viewing.

SVBGSA worked very closely with the Watershed Coordinator for the Lower Salinas/Gabilan watershed. SVBGSA intends to learn from and apply lessons learned and outreach tools from the Lower Salinas/Gabilan watershed to the rest of the Salinas Basin. The Watershed Coordinator is collaborating with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and developing materials to reach residents to increase their general understanding of water resources. A “Water 101” will help residents build a foundation for better voicing their needs regarding particular projects and management actions. In addition, the Watershed Coordinator is working with the School District in hopes of scheduling future groundwater related educational programs, co-funded by the SVBGSA.

4.1.2 Data and Monitoring

SVBGSA also undertook several efforts to further increase data collection and monitoring. During WY 2022:

- SVBGSA reviewed MCWRA and DWR databases to identify any potential existing wells that could fill data gaps, and reviewed the data gaps with interested parties.
- SVBGSA and MCWRA began discussions on expanding and enhancing the GEMS program. This effort will primarily take place in 2022 and 2023. These early discussions focused on understanding the challenges to changing the program and steps involved.
- SVBGSA continued to partner with the USGS through the Cooperative Agreement for the development of the SVIHM.
- SVBGSA received bids for the Deep Aquifers Study and selected Montgomery & Associates. During WY 2022, M&A conducted the preliminary investigation, through which it reviewed existing data and found that the Deep Aquifers extends into the Forebay Subbasin. The boundary of the Deep Aquifers will be refined with additional data during the remainder of the Study.

4.1.3 Planning

SVBGSA and ASGSA began WY 2022 by finalizing the Forebay Subbasin GSP, working together with the 10 members of the Forebay Planning Committee. Final stages included responding to and addressing comments on the draft GSP, reviewing changes with the Forebay

Planning Committee, and presenting to the SVBGSA and ASGSA Boards of Directors for final approval. SVBGSA submitted the GSP in January 2022.

SVBGSA will work on filling data gaps, modeling, and communicating results to interested parties during WY 2023.

4.1.4 Sustainability Strategy and Activities

The Forebay GSP included a high-level Road Map for Refining and Implementing Management Actions and Projects. The Road Map organizes management actions and projects identified in Chapter 9 of the GSP into a general priority order for implementation. These include implementation actions that contribute to groundwater management and GSP implementation but do not directly help the Subbasin maintain sustainability, such as enhancing groundwater extraction monitoring. Activities in the implementation strategy build on GSA policies, operations, and engagement; data and monitoring; and planning activities.

The management actions and projects identified in the GSP are sufficient for maintaining sustainability in the Forebay Subbasin over the 50-year planning horizon. They will be integrated with projects for the other Salinas Valley subbasins as appropriate during GSP implementation. The management actions and projects described in this GSP have been identified as beneficial for the Forebay Subbasin. The impacts of management actions and projects on other subbasins will be analyzed and taken into consideration as part of the project selection process. Prior to implementation, they will be evaluated in the context of this Subbasin and the entire Valley.

Management actions and projects are not needed to maintain sustainability at this time; however, SVBGSA, ASGSA, and MCWRA are moving forward with some actions that will positively impact groundwater conditions. In particular, MCWRA continues to convene the Drought Technical Advisory Committee when triggered, and ASGSA began drafting a Watershed Protection Policy for the Arroyo Seco, and SVBGSA held Agency-wide discussions on agricultural BMPs and initiated the Deep Aquifers Study.

Figure 2 builds on the general Road Map in the GSP to show SVBGSA and ASGSA's sustainability strategy for the Forebay Subbasin. SVBGSA plans to support the Resource Conservation District's efforts, in partnership with the RMU association, on the Multi-benefit Stream Channel Improvements Project, which has broad support and potential groundwater benefit. In WY 2023, SVBGSA also plans to move forward with implementation actions and establish the SMC TAC. Since the Forebay Subbasin is currently not experiencing undesirable results, SVBGSA will establish the SMC TAC to review conditions annually and recommend to the Forebay Subbasin Implementation Committee whether additional management actions and projects are needed to maintain sustainability.

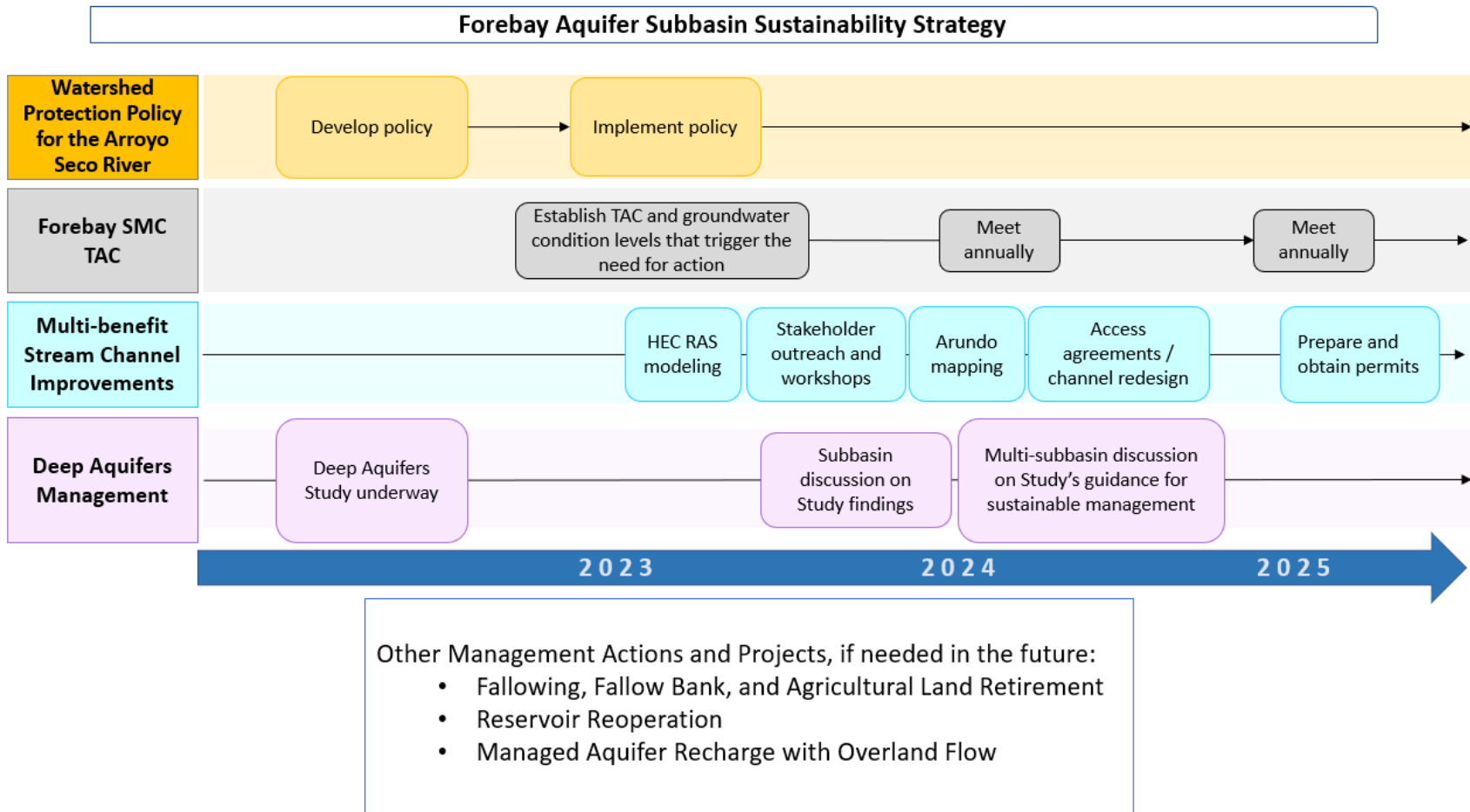


Figure 2. Forebay Sustainability Strategy

More specifically, actions undertaken in WY 2022 that contributed to groundwater sustainability include:

Drought Technical Advisory Committee: MCWRA formed a Drought Operations Technical Advisory Committee (D-TAC) to provide technical input and advice regarding the operations of Nacimiento and San Antonio Reservoirs when drought triggers occur. During WY 2022, MCWRA convened the Drought Operations Technical Advisory Committee (DTAC) to develop a proposed reservoir release schedule for the April to December period. The DTAC also worked on formulating a Dry Winter Scenario Narrative (DWSN) for the January – March period following the release schedule period with the purpose of recommending release actions in the event of continuation of dry conditions in the following winter. The DWSN was finalized in April 2022. The DTAC will be activated in future years when 2 reservoir storage depletion triggers are met and winter inflow fails to replenish reservoir storage above either of those triggers.

Watershed Protection Policy for the Arroyo Seco River: During 2022 the ASGSA developed the Arroyo Seco River Watershed Protection Policy (ASWPP) as a Management Action consistent with the Forebay Subbasin GSP and intended to protect the Arroyo Seco River’s unique steelhead habitat and its unregulated native flows into the Forebay Subbasin. The Arroyo Seco’s unregulated natural flow provides approximately 33% of the total flow in the Salinas River at their confluence and is the key hydrologic element generating recharge into the Arroyo Seco Cone Management Area in the Forebay Subbasin. The ASWPP purpose is to safeguard the river’s unregulated flow into the Forebay Subbasin and hence protect the river’s natural riparian and steelhead habitats. Relying on the GSP authorities of the ASGSA and the SVBGSA, the ASWPP commits the ASGSA and SVBGSA to protecting the river’s current unregulated nature. The ASGSA Board of Directors conditionally approved the ASWPP in 2022 and is working with the SVBGSA to move the ASWPP to Board approval in 2023.

Deep Aquifers Study: SVBGSA and cooperative funding partners contracted Montgomery & Associates to undertake a scientific study to better understand the extent, groundwater conditions, and water budget of the Deep Aquifers of the Salinas Valley. The Deep Aquifers Study includes a preliminary investigation that assessed existing data, additional data collection, and development of a final report. In August 2022, SVBGSA received the preliminary investigation results, which included recommended interim monitoring and management actions.

4.2 Sustainable Management Criteria

4.2.1 Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels SMC

4.2.1.1 Minimum Thresholds

4.2.1.2 Measurable Objectives and Interim Milestones

4.2.1.3 Undesirable Result

4.2.2 Reduction in Groundwater Storage SMC

4.2.2.1 Minimum Threshold

4.2.2.2 Measurable Objective and Interim Milestones

4.2.2.3 Undesirable Result

4.2.3 Degraded Groundwater Quality SMC

4.2.3.1 Minimum Thresholds

4.2.3.2 Measurable Objectives and Interim Milestones

4.2.3.3 Undesirable Result

4.2.4 Land Subsidence SMC

4.2.4.1 Minimum Thresholds

4.2.4.2 Measurable Objectives and Interim Milestones

4.2.4.3 Undesirable Result

4.2.5 Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water SMC

4.2.5.1 Minimum Thresholds

4.2.5.2 Measurable Objectives and Interim Milestones

4.2.5.3 Undesirable Result

5 CONCLUSION

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