



Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Newsletter

Edition 5, April/May 2019

Cuyama Basin Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Available for Public Review & Comment

Notice of Community Workshops and Release of the Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
and Standing Advisory Committee Joint Meeting
and Community Workshops
Wednesday, May 1, 2019 in New Cuyama.

Draft GSP Available April 22
for Public Review and Comment
Public Comments Accepted

Monday, April 22 to Wednesday, May 22

On Wednesday, May 1, 2019, a joint meeting of the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (CBGSA) Board and Standing Advisory Committee will be held at 3:00 pm at the Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center, located at 4689 CA-166, New Cuyama, CA 93254. The agenda and meeting materials for this meeting will be available at <http://cuyamabasin.org> 72 hours before the meeting.

Following the CBGSA Board meeting, the CBGSA will host English and Spanish language community workshops from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the New Cuyama High School Cafeteria (English language) and a nearby classroom (Spanish language), at 4500 CA Highway 166, New Cuyama, CA. The workshops will include a presentation and discussion about the Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Public comments on the Draft GSP are encouraged at the workshops.

Public Comments Accepted Monday, April 22 to Wednesday, May 22

Where can I review a copy of the Draft GSP?

1. Online at www.cuyamabasin.org
2. Spanish language version of the Executive Summary of the draft GSP will be posted online at www.cuyamabasin.org and a reference hardcopy, courtesy of the Family Resource Center (FRC), will be available for review at the FRC, 4689 CA-166 b, New Cuyama, CA 93254. Hours are: Mon-Fri, 9 am to 3:45 pm, phone: 661-766-2369.

How can I comment on the Draft GSP?

1. Written comments, in English and Spanish, by email to tblakslee@hgcpm.com
2. Written comments, in English and Spanish, mailed to Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency, 4900 California Ave, Tower B, 2nd Floor, Bakersfield, CA 93309.
3. Both written and oral comments, in English and in Spanish, will be accepted at the May 1 Community Workshop.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need disability-related modifications or accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, to participate in these workshops, please contact Taylor Blakeslee at (661) 477-3385 by 4:00 p.m. on the Friday prior to the workshops.

Draft Cuyama Basin GSP is Ready for Public Review and Comment

Several years ago, the state enacted the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) to address the groundwater problems across California. There have been concerns about groundwater conditions in the Cuyama Basin over the years, and now there is a plan for the future – the draft Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The draft GSP provides groundwater users in the Cuyama Basin with a roadmap for long-term reliability of groundwater supplies. It includes important technical findings, as well as recommended projects and management actions to improve groundwater management. The Cuyama Basin community has been very active in the development of the draft GSP, asking questions and providing input in the public meetings over the last year. The comments and questions helped shape the draft GSP. Below is a summary of the key highlights contained in the draft plan for your consideration.

Key Highlights of the Draft GSP

1. The draft GSP is a 20-year plan to achieve groundwater sustainability in the Cuyama Basin by 2040. The plan is a roadmap to preserve and protect groundwater supplies in the Cuyama Basin for the long term.
2. Minimum thresholds have been established for representative wells throughout the Cuyama Basin. A minimum threshold is the lowest the groundwater level should go at a given monitoring point over the long term, without triggering a significant and unreasonable result. Minimum thresholds are set for each location in the monitoring network to track and report groundwater levels over time to help the GSA identify when adjustments to the GSP may be needed.
3. Several data gaps were identified during the development of the GSP. As the CBGSA develops the monitoring networks, these data gaps will be revisited and re-evaluated during the five-year update of the GSP.
4. The first few years of GSP implementation will focus on adding additional groundwater monitoring in the Cuyama Basin to better understand groundwater conditions. Monitoring equipment will also be added to track Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) in the Cuyama Basin.
5. The groundwater modeling identifies the Central Area of the Cuyama Basin as the most critically overdrafted area within the Cuyama Basin. To achieve sustainability by 2040, groundwater projects must be implemented and management actions taken (including pumping reductions) in the Central Area (see map on page 3).
6. A portion of the Central Area will be designated as a management area (the lands affecting the groundwater overdraft, not including the Cuyama Community Services District). The GSA will work with landowners in this area to implement projects and reduce pumping to improve groundwater conditions. The CBGSA Board will determine the pumping allocations in the Central Area, with reduced levels of pumping planned to begin in 2023.
7. Groundwater users in other areas of the Cuyama Basin, outside of the Central Area, will not have to reduce pumping unless the groundwater levels worsen. The monitoring plan will provide needed information as the implementation of the GSP moves forward.
8. The draft GSP includes two water supply projects that, if implemented, would help improve groundwater conditions. Projects include creating special areas to divert storm water runoff and percolate it into the groundwater aquifer, and cloud seeding to increase precipitation. An economic analysis will be done to determine project effectiveness and identify the beneficiaries to fund these potential projects.

9. The areas near Ventucopa will also be designated as a management area. This management area will be monitored and further evaluated to determine if any pumping restrictions are warranted.
10. The GSP also identifies the need for new wells in the communities of Cuyama, New Cuyama, and Ventucopa to improve water supply reliability. Grant funding will be pursued for these wells.
11. The GSP also includes monitoring of salinity to evaluate how to avoid causing water quality problems as groundwater pumping changes and projects are implemented.
12. The CBGSA Board will be determining how to pay for the actions and projects in the plan. Fees for basin-wide costs, such as improving the monitoring network across the basin, will be assigned to all groundwater users in the basin. Costs for pumping allocation plans and projects will be allocated to those who are responsible for reductions or benefit from the projects.

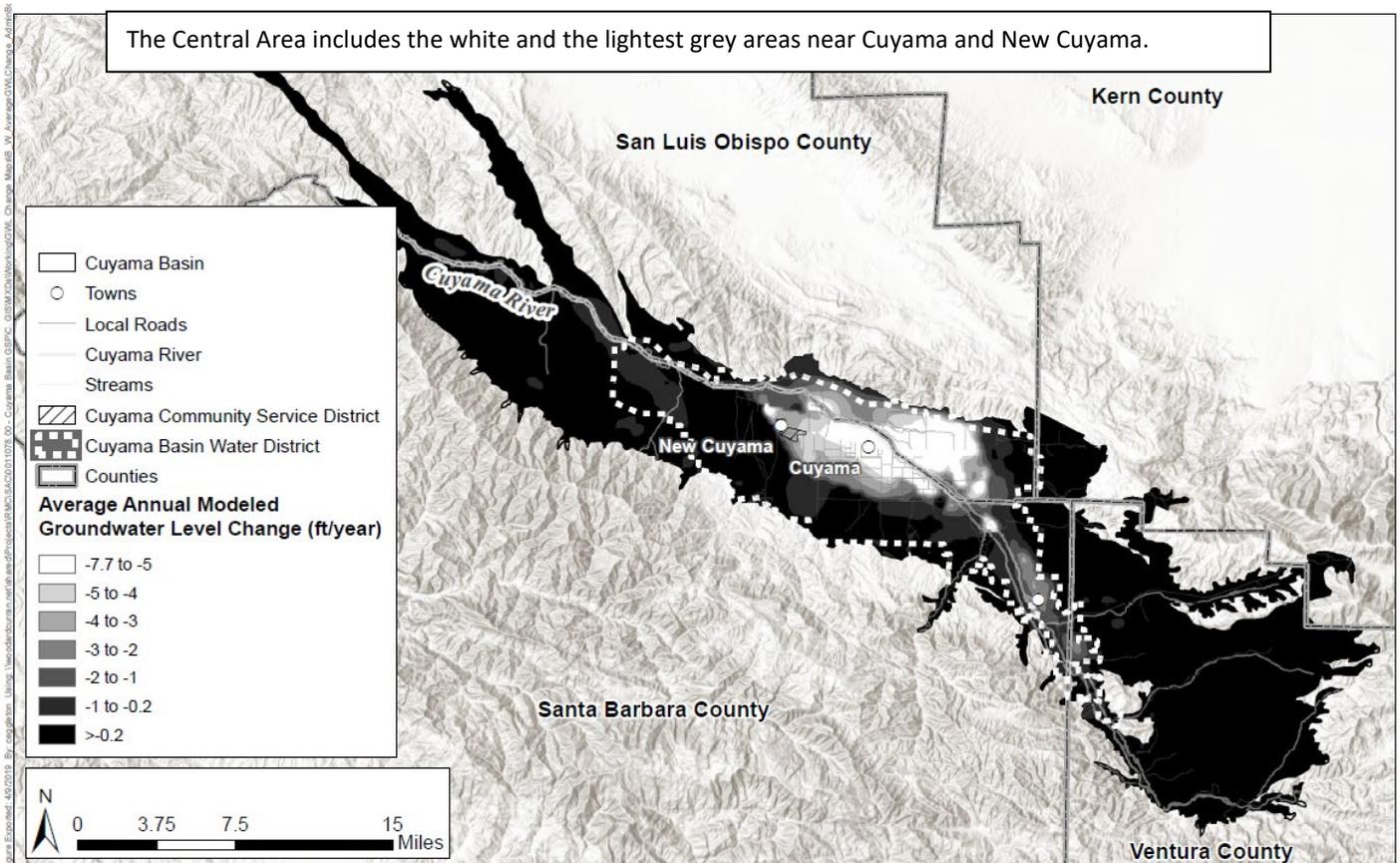
Message from the GSA Executive Director

I want to encourage everyone to review the draft GSP at www.cuyamabasin.org.

The GSA will receive public comments from April 22, 2019 through May 22, 2019. After receiving public comments, the draft GSP will be updated as needed. Then, the four counties (Kern, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura) having jurisdiction in the Cuyama Basin will have time to review the final GSP. After receiving and incorporating any additional comments from the counties, the CBGSA will hold a public hearing in New Cuyama to adopt the final GSP. We expect this hearing to occur in the fall of 2019. The date and time of the hearing will be provided to the community once it is scheduled.

I want to thank everyone in the Cuyama Basin that has participated in the development of the GSP. Your questions, ideas, and comments were very helpful in guiding the development of the GSP. We look forward to seeing you at the May 1, 2019 workshops (details are on page 1).

Jim Beck, GSA Executive Director



Message from Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) Chair Jaffe

Over the next month please join the SAC and the CBGSA Board in the review of the full public draft of the GSP. The GSP will be our guide for groundwater use and management and shape the Cuyama Valley's future. This is the time for each of us to review the GSP and provide comments. (See page 1 for ways to provide comments.) We all use groundwater and by participating in this process, you are participating in planning for generations to come. We hope to see you at the May 1 workshops. Please feel free to contact SAC members with any questions. The next SAC meeting is Thursday, April 25th at 4:00 pm at the Family Resource Center.

Robbie Jaffe

Conceptual Implementation Timeline

2020

Set up and Initiate Monitoring and Pumping Allocation Programs

- Establish monitoring network and initiate monitoring and reporting
- Evaluate/refine thresholds and monitoring network
- Install new monitoring wells and equipment
- Develop pumping monitoring program
- Set up and initiate pumping allocation program
- Perform project analysis and feasibility study
- Continue public outreach

2030

Project Implementation and GSP Evaluation/Update

- **GSA conducts 5-year evaluation/update**
- Continue monitoring and reporting
- Evaluate/refine thresholds and monitoring network
- Refine water budget
- Continue pumping monitoring program
- Continue implementation of pumping allocation program
- Plan/design/construct larger projects
- Continue public outreach

2025

Project Implementation and GSP Evaluation/Update

- **GSA conducts 5-year evaluation/update**
- Continue monitoring and reporting
- Evaluate/refine thresholds and monitoring network
- Refine water budget
- Continue pumping monitoring program
- Continue implementation of pumping allocation program
- Plan/design/construct small- to medium-sized projects
- Continue public outreach

2035

Achieve Groundwater Basin Sustainability

- **GSA conducts 5-year evaluation/update**
- Continue monitoring and reporting
- Evaluate/refine thresholds and monitoring network
- Refine water budget
- Continue pumping monitoring program
- Pumping allocation program fully implemented
- Project implementation completed
- Continue public outreach