

# Subbasin

## Draft Communication and Engagement Plan

Date

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*NOTE: In order to ensure an adaptive, responsive approach to stakeholder outreach and engagement, it is intended that the components of this plan be developed in collaboration with the \_\_\_\_\_ Basin stakeholders, beginning with the GSA managers, board members, and staff. This process **has already begun, and this version incorporates the results of that collaboration to date.** The plan will be updated as the collaborative process continues.*

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# Basin Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan

## *Draft for Review and Comment*

**Date**

### Purpose

The purpose of this Communication and Engagement Plan is to assist the \_\_\_\_\_ Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) in its efforts to develop general and strategic communications to engage stakeholders in groundwater management activities.

### Overview and Background

California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 requires broad and diverse stakeholder involvement in GSA activities and the development and implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) for 127 groundwater basins around the state, including the \_\_\_\_\_ Basin (Basin). The intent of SGMA is to ensure successful, sustainable management of groundwater resources at the local level. Success will require cooperation by all stakeholders, and cooperation is far more likely if stakeholders have consistent messaging of valid information and are provided with opportunities to help shape the path forward.

#### \_\_\_\_\_ Basin

Identify basin prioritization, describe groundwater use and conditions, and other relevant background information.

#### Basin Governance

Describe GSA composition, governance structure, advisory committees.

The GSA agreed to hire a professional facilitator from CA State University, Sacramento, to provide third-party facilitation support for GSP development and implementation, particularly to advance the GSA's stakeholder engagement efforts.

### Communication and Engagement Plan

The intention of the Communication and Engagement Plan is as follows:

- To provide the GSA, community leaders, and other beneficial users a roadmap to follow to ensure consistent messaging of SGMA requirements and related Basin information and data.
- To provide a roadmap to the GSA and community leaders to follow to ensure stakeholders have meaningful input into GSA decision-making, including GSP development.
- To ensure the roadmap demonstrates a process that is widely seen by stakeholders as fair and respectful to the range of interested parties.
- To make transparent to stakeholders their opportunities to contribute to the development of

a GSP that can effectively address groundwater management within the Basin.

## Communication Plan Goals

The plan seeks to accomplish the following goals:

1. Educate stakeholders about:
  - a. SGMA and its requirements.
  - b. Potential changes to current groundwater management under SGMA.
  - c. How stakeholders will be represented in their GSA.
2. Communicate important SGMA deadlines and dates.
3. Coordinate outreach and engagement activities between GSA to ensure efficiencies and to support stakeholders in GSP development.
4. Articulate strategies and channels for gaining ongoing stakeholder input and feedback to inform GSP design and development.
5. Encourage stakeholder engagement by communicating dedicated SGMA outreach strategies and channels, including meeting and workshop dates and content, as opportunities for stakeholders to provide input in the GSA decision-making process and GPS planning process.

## Major Audiences

A Basin stakeholder is a “beneficial user” as described by SGMA. Under the requirements of SGMA, all beneficial uses and users of groundwater must be considered in the development of GSPs, and GSAs must encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population. Beneficial users, therefore, are any stakeholder who has an interest in groundwater use and management in the Basin community. Their interest may be GSA activities, GSP development and implementation, and/or water access and management in general.

To assist in determining who the specific SGMA stakeholders and beneficial users are, DWR has issued a Stakeholder Engagement Chart (Table 1) for GSP Development in their 2017 *GSP Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Guidance Document*. This table was modified to fit the circumstances and stakeholders of the \_\_\_\_\_ Basin, and will continue to be updated during the planning process.

**Table 1: Stakeholder Engagement Chart for GSP Development**

Category of Interest	Examples of Stakeholder Groups	Engagement purpose
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens groups</li> <li>• Community leaders</li> </ul>	Inform to improve public awareness of sustainable groundwater management
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities (City, County planning departments)</li> <li>• Regional land use agencies</li> </ul>	Consult and involve to ensure land use policies are supporting the GSP
Private users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private pumpers</li> <li>• Domestic users</li> <li>• School systems</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> </ul>	Inform and involve to avoid negative impact to these users
Urban/ Agriculture users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water agencies</li> <li>• Irrigation districts</li> <li>• Mutual water companies</li> <li>• Resource conservation districts</li> <li>• Farm Bureau</li> </ul>	Collaborate to ensure sustainable management of groundwater
Industrial users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial and industrial self-supplier</li> <li>• Local trade association or group</li> </ul>	Inform and involve to avoid negative impact to these users
Environmental and Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal and State agencies – California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)</li> <li>• Environmental groups</li> </ul>	Inform and involve to sustain a vital ecosystem
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambers of commerce</li> <li>• Business groups/associations</li> <li>• Elected officials (Board of Supervisors, City Council)</li> <li>• State Assembly members</li> <li>• State Senators</li> </ul>	Inform and involve to support a stable economy
Human right to water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disadvantaged Communities</li> <li>• Small community systems</li> <li>• Environmental Justice Groups</li> </ul>	Inform and involve to provide a safe and secure groundwater supplies to all communities reliant on groundwater
Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federally Recognized Tribes and non-federally recognized Tribes with Lands or potential interests in the basin</li> </ul>	Inform, involve, and consult with tribal government
Federal lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military bases. Department of Defense</li> <li>• Forest Service</li> <li>• National Park Service</li> <li>• Bureau of Reclamation</li> <li>• Bureau of Land Management</li> </ul>	Inform, involve, and collaborate to ensure basin sustainability
Integrated Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional water management groups (IRWM regions)</li> <li>• Flood agencies</li> <li>• Recycled water coalition</li> </ul>	Inform, involve, and collaborate to improve regional sustainability

## Key Messages

As the GSA begins the process of reaching out to stakeholders to inform and engage them in groundwater management issues and items, it is critical that it share clear and consistent key messages to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Key messages are as follows:

1. The GSA is committed to proactively and sustainably managing groundwater in the Basin.
2. The GSA shall ensure compliance with SGMA to prevent state intervention.
3. Management elements include GSP decision-making, funding, implementation and enforcement.
4. The GSA seeks to coordinate efforts with \_\_\_\_\_ in managing the Basin to achieve compliance with SGMA.
5. The GSA is committed to proactive and transparent outreach and engagement with stakeholders and Basin community members during the GSP planning process, implementation and beyond.

#### 6. OTHER

### Decision-Making

Describe decision making process and opportunities for stakeholder input as it relates to this process.

### Recommended Communication Strategies and Mechanisms

GSA representatives and staff will engage with Basin stakeholders, and will be responsible to track the needs of their local communities. The GSA will consider stakeholder input gathered from outreach efforts as they move through GSP development and implementation processes. Three sets of strategies are important to consider when planning outreach and engagement activities, included in the following categories:

- SGMA-required: the law requires GSAs to undertake specific types of outreach and engagement activities.
- Essential strategies centrally communicated at the Basin and GSA management area level (if applicable): activities proven to successfully engage stakeholders.
- Secondary strategies locally communicated at the GSA management area and beneficial user level: activities that will enhance engagement efforts on a local and as needed basis.

### SGMA-Required Strategies

SGMA strongly encourages broad stakeholder engagement in development and implementation of GSPs. According to SGMA:

- “The groundwater sustainability agency shall encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin prior to and during the development and implementation of the groundwater sustainability plan.” [CA Water Code Sec. 10727.8(a)]
- “The groundwater sustainability agency shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater.” [CA Water Code Sec. 10723.2]

GSAs are given broad discretion in the methods and processes utilized to meet engagement requirements. SGMA explicitly authorizes GSAs to form Public Advisory Committees if they choose, but does not require them to do so. The decision to form an advisory committee is left to the individual GSA based on need and effectiveness of these processes within their communities.

However, SGMA does have several GSA-specific requirements regarding public notice, public hearings, and public meetings. Requirements include:

1. Within 30 days of electing to be (or forming) a GSA, the GSA must inform the State of this development and its intent to manage groundwater sustainably. In doing so, the GSA must:
  - a. Include a list of parties who wish to receive “plan preparation, meeting announcements, and availability of draft plans, maps, and other relevant documents”; and
  - b. Explain how the interested parties’ perspectives will be considered, both during the development and operation of the GSA and during development and implementation of the GSP. This information must also be sent to the legislative bodies of any city and county in the area covered by the plan.

Illuminating the term “interested parties,” SGMA requires that GSAs consider the interests of “all beneficial uses and users of groundwater,” along with entities expected to share responsibilities for implementing GSPs. As a starting point, SGMA specifies a number of types of “interested parties.” The GSA must maintain its list of interested parties on an ongoing basis. Anyone who wishes to be put on this list can do so upon making this request in writing. [CA Water Code Section 10730. (b) (2); 10723.2; 10723.4; and 10723.8. (a)]

2. GSAs planning to develop a GSP must provide notice of their intent to do so to the public and the state before proceeding. The notice must describe opportunities for interested parties to participate in the development and implementation of the GSP. This written notice must be provided to the legislative bodies of any city or county located within the basin to be managed by the GSP. [CA Water Code Section 10727.8. (a)]

## Phase 1: 2015–2017

## Phase 2: 2017–2022

Phase 1 Engagement Requirements	Phase 2 Engagement Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establish and Maintain List of Interested Parties</b> §10723.4</li> <li>• <b>GSA Formation Public Notice</b> §10723(b)</li> <li>• <b>GSA Formation Public Hearing</b> §10723(b)</li> <li>• <b>GSA Formation (due 6/30/17)</b> §10723(b)</li> </ul> <p>Notify DWR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Include list of interested parties</li> <li>› Explain how parties’ interests will be considered</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pre-GSP Development</b> §10727.8</li> </ul> <p>Provide a written statement describing how interested parties may participate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› DWR</li> <li>› Cities within the GSA boundary</li> <li>› Counties within the GSA boundary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GSP Initial Notification</b> §353.6*</li> <li>• <b>GSP Preparation</b> §10727.8 and §10723.2               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Encourage active involvement</li> <li>› Consider beneficial uses and users of groundwater when describing <i>Undesirable Results, Minimum Thresholds, and Projects &amp; Actions</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>GSP Communications Section</b> §354.10*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› GSA decision-making process</li> <li>› Opportunities for engagement and how public input is used</li> <li>› How GSA encourages active involvement</li> <li>› Method of informing the public</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Public Notice of Proposed Adoption</b> §10728.4</li> <li>• <b>GSP Adoption Public Hearing</b> §10728.4</li> <li>• <b>GSP Submittal</b> §354.10*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Include a summary of communications: description of beneficial uses/users, list of public meetings, comments received/responses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

3. A GSA seeking to adopt or amend a GSP must provide notice to cities and counties within

the area encompassed by the proposed plan or amendment, and consider comments provided by the cities and counties. Cities and counties receiving the notice may request consultation with the GSA, in which case the GSA must accommodate that request within 30 days. The GSA also must hold a public hearing prior to adopting or amending a GSP. There must be at least 90 days between the notice issued to cities and counties and the public hearing. [CA Water Code Section 10728.4]

4. If a GSA intends to impose or increase a fee, it must first hold at least one public meeting, at which attendees may make oral or written comments. This public notice must include:
  - a. Information about the time and place of the meeting and a general explanation of the topic to be discussed.
  - b. Public notice must be posted on the GSA’s website and mailed to any interested party who submits a written request for mailed notice of meetings on new or increased fees. (The GSA must establish and maintain a list of interested parties, and the list is subject to renewal by April 1 of each year.)
  - c. The public notice must also be consistent with Section 6066 of the Government Code.
  - d. In addition, the GSA must share with the public the data upon which the proposed fee is based, and this must be done at least ten days before the public meeting takes place. [CA Water Code Section 10730.(b)(1),(2), and (3)]

### Phase 3: 2018+

#### Phase 3 Engagement Requirements

- **60 Day Comment Period** §353.8\*
  - › Any person may provide comments to DWR regarding a proposed or adopted GSP via the SGMA Portal at <http://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/>
  - › Comments will be posted to DWR’s website

### Phase 4: 2022+

#### Phase 4 Engagement Requirements

- **Public Notices and Meetings** §10730
  - › Before amending a GSP
  - › Prior to imposing or increasing a fee
- **Encourage Active Involvement** §10727.8

#### Engagement Requirements Applicable to ALL PHASES

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Beneficial Uses and Users</b> §10723.2<br/>Consider interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater</li> <li>• <b>Advisory Committee</b> §10727.8<br/>GSA may appoint and consult with an advisory committee</li> <li>• <b>Public Notices and Meetings</b> §10730           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Before electing to be a GSA</li> <li>› Before adopting or amending a GSP</li> <li>› Prior to imposing or increasing a fee</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Encourage Active Involvement</b> §10727.8<br/>Encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin</li> <li>• <b>Native American Tribes</b> §10720.3           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› May voluntarily agree to participate</li> <li>› See Engagement with Tribal Government Guidance Document</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Federal Government</b> §10720.3           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› May voluntarily agree to participate</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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**Basin: Challenges and Opportunities for Outreach and Engagement**  
 Described basin-specific conditions that may present challenges as well as opportunities for engagement.

### Centralized Outreach and Engagement Strategies

The following strategies are meant to ensure successful engagement of Basin stakeholders during the GSP development and implementation process:

1. Integrate and expand on existing SGMA communication and outreach efforts
2. Develop and maintain a list of interested parties
3. Maintain a centralized website
4. Provide regular public notices and updates; ensure Brown Act compliance
5. Provide notices and updates in local newspaper periodicals
6. Institute regular stakeholder outreach and engagement opportunities
7. Strategically engage local, special SGMA identified groups
8. Develop and update Basin outreach and engagement resources table
9. Develop consistent, coordinated messages and talking points

#### 10. Other

##### 1. Integrate and Expand on Existing SGMA Communication and Outreach Efforts

The GSA Board Meetings and are open to the public. Other outreach activities already conducted to date include \_\_\_\_\_.

##### 2. Develop and Maintain a List of Interested Parties

A list of stakeholders and beneficial users is to be developed and updated throughout the GSP planning, implementation and enforcement processes.

Timely notification of opportunities for interested parties to participate in the development and implementation of the GSP should be given via the channels and strategies described in this document.

To assist in determining the topics, types and sequencing of outreach vis-à-vis specific stakeholder interests, DWR has recommended conducting a “Lay of the Land” exercise (Table 2). The table was developed by \_\_\_\_\_(describe methods use to identify basin stakeholders, their interests, etc.).

**Table 2: SGMA GSA/GSP Stakeholder Constituency – “Lay of the Land” Exercise**

Organization/ Individual	Type of Stakeholder	Key Interests	Key Issues	GSP	Rationale
(Name of stakeholder organization or individual)	(Based on Water Code §10723.2)	(Stakeholder’s key interests related to groundwater)	(Documented issues [media coverage, statements, reports, etc.] or specific issues such as past events)	(Which section(s) of the GSP may this interest be)	(Reasons why this is a stakeholder that requires a certain level of engagement)

applicable to?)					

**3. Maintain a Centralized Website**

Allocate staff and resources to maintain a website with information about SGMA and GSP planning efforts and other relevant information.

1. Provide easily accessible list of upcoming planning activities and opportunities for public involvement.
2. Provide a place where stakeholders can add their name to the interested parties list.
3. Include Resources and Materials:
  - a. Links to external sites (Department of Water Resources and State Water Resources Control Board)
  - b. Links to individual GSA websites, relevant blogs, etc.
  - c. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and/or white papers
  - d. GSA documents (MOUs, bylaws, etc.)
  - e. GSP documents (draft GSP documents, notices and meeting calendars for GSP workshops)

#### 4. Provide Regular Public Notices and Updates; Ensure Brown Act Compliance

Provide consistent messaging and outreach regarding SGMA information and GSP updates.

1. Types of notices include and are not limited to:
  - a. GSP development and planning updates
  - b. GSP implementation and enforcement updates
    - i. GSP workshops
    - ii. GSP work plan and timeline
  - c. General GSA updates, including without limitation:
    - i. GSA Board meetings
    - ii. Advisory Committee meetings
    - iii. Public workshops and/or stakeholder roundtables
    - iv. GSA annual reports
    - v. Other SGMA-related updates
2. Schedule notices to be sent on a regular schedule, for example, bi-monthly, monthly or as needed.
  - a. Meetings subject to the Brown Act, such as GSA Board meetings, Advisory Committee meetings and others, must provide public notice and post an agenda 72 hours in advance of each regularly scheduled meeting (emergency meetings require 24-hour advance notice).
3. Develop content appropriate to the audience and their interests, ensuring information is articulated in a way that is easily understood.
  - a. Notices to community members with less SGMA or technical experience should be easily understood, with streamlined, relatable and repetitive information.
  - b. Updates and messages should be condensed to one page when possible, providing a succinct summary of the issues discussed, and including links for further or additional information.
  - c. As applicable, specific items should have an estimated timeline and a designated point of contact, including the person's position, email and telephone.
  - d. Updates and information are needed in both English and Spanish.
4. Designate responsible staff and appropriate resources for ongoing interagency coordination regarding joint messaging, consistent outreach and communication with stakeholders.
5. Determine appropriate dissemination channels.
  - a. Utilize Constant Contact or similar email marketing platform for management of interested party stakeholder lists.
  - b. Utilize member agency listservs delivered via standard email and/or U.S. Mail.

#### 5. Provide Notices and Updates in Local Newspaper Periodicals

Notices can take the form of public notices, op-ed articles, letters to the editor, advertisements or earned media.

1. Send information and/or media releases to regional and local media outlets and contacts.
  - a. Trusted radio stations in the region, including stations broadcasting in languages other than English.

- b. Organization and community newsletters and periodicals.
  - c. Identify trusted bi-lingual and/or Spanish speaking media outlets.
2. Provide follow-up or wrap-up articles written by staff when appropriate.
  3. Include notices for:
    - a. Public workshops
    - b. Specific stakeholder meetings (targeted or special topic meetings)
    - c. GSA Board meetings
    - d. Advisory Committee meetings
    - e. Other standing meetings of particular interest related to SGMA
    - f. GSP development and planning updates
    - g. GSP implementation and enforcement updates
    - h. General GSA and SGMA related updates

## 6. Institute Regular Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Opportunities

It is critical that stakeholders and beneficial users understand SGMA requirements, as well as GSA and GSP planning and development activities. Stakeholders need to understand when and how their input will be incorporated into GSA governance and decision-making processes, as well as when and how they are able to contribute to the GSP planning and implementation processes.

Stakeholder engagement opportunities include but are not limited to:

1. Standing Operations Meetings
  - a. GSA Board meetings
  - b. Advisory Committee meetings (if applicable)
  - c. GSP Technical Workshops
2. Public Workshops and Roundtables
  - a. Scheduled workshops and roundtables
    - i. Scheduled in evenings and/or near community areas as feasible.
  - b. Provide translation and facilitation services in English and Spanish
  - c. Public workshop or roundtable content includes but is not limited to:
    - i. Updates on GSA activities
    - ii. SGMA 101 workshops
    - iii. Updates on GSP development and planning activities
    - iv. Opportunities for interested parties to participate in the development and implementation of the GSP (i.e., technical workshops on specific GSP components)
    - v. Notice of GSA intent to adopt or amend a GSP
    - vi. Updates on groundwater management activities in the Basin
    - vii. Notice to impose fees

## 7. Strategically Engage Local, Special SGMA Identified Groups

Develop a targeted communication strategy to engage difficult to reach communities and community members that will be impacted by SGMA. This may include development of a targeted communication strategy or coordination with existing advisory groups or non-profit organizations as part of roundtable discussions.

## 8. Develop and Update Basin Outreach and Engagement Resources Table

Assess and define GSA outreach tools and resources available for Subbasin-wide outreach and engagement activities.

## 9. Develop Consistent, Coordinated Messages and Talking Points

Define the key messages needed to effectively convey SGMA related information to various audiences and ensure consistency in a coordinated outreach effort to all stakeholders.

1. Develop a set of talking points that can be used by GSA members when speaking to specific stakeholder groups or audiences. Talking points and messaging may be customized to specific stakeholder groups as appropriate.
2. Develop tools, such as a Q&A document and a SGMA 101 document, that contain easy to understand information as well as likely questions and responses you anticipate from stakeholder groups.
3. Identify and communicate opportunities for public engagement and/or public comment during meetings on GSP development.
4. Provide clear messaging that the GSA retains legal responsibility for final GSA and GSP related decisions.

## Localized Outreach and Engagement Strategies

The GSA will utilize local agencies' standing meetings, utilize local agencies' existing resources, and build on strategies to engage local, special SGMA identified groups.

### 1. Utilize Local Agencies with Standing Meetings

The most effective way to inform and engage many stakeholders and beneficial users regarding SGMA requirements and soliciting feedback is through trusted local agencies and community organizations with standing meetings and communication channels.

1. Support local agencies and community organizations in disseminating information and engaging stakeholders in the following ways:
  - a. During standing board and/or community meetings
  - b. Through monthly information pieces in newsletters or included in bills
  - c. Disseminating information in both English and Spanish
2. Local trusted agencies and community organizations include but are not limited to:
  - a. Farm Bureaus - \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Mutual water companies - \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. DAC community meetings and leaders - \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Growers associations and industry organizations - \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Resource conservation groups - \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Local and regional environmental justice groups - \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. Local hospitals and schools - \_\_\_\_\_
3. Leverage local, trusted resources for community meetings, such as schools, churches, and community centers.
4. Organize public meetings around concrete impacts to specific stakeholders, including:
  - a. SGMA 101 workshop to inform stakeholders of important changes in groundwater

- management and how it will impact them.
  - b. Meetings that detail when and how opportunities to provide input to the GSA decision making and GSP development processes will occur.
  - c. Public meetings regarding fee structures to help people understand how to interpret the impacts on them.
5. Make information and meetings accessible to various stakeholder groups.
    - a. Provide information in easy to understand and streamlined terms.
    - b. Provide information and facilitation in both English and Spanish.
    - c. Hold meetings during hours that do not impede with regular work schedules (i.e., nights and weekends).

## 2. Utilize Existing Local Agency Resources

Effectively inform and engage diverse beneficial users in SGMA through trusted local agencies and community organizations with existing communication channels such as newsletters, websites and social media.

1. Disseminate consistent, coordinated messages and talking points through existing local newsletters, websites and social media.
2. Tailor messages to audiences, providing easy to understand updates.
3. Provide information in both English and Spanish (most websites and social media allow users to set preferred translation).

## 3. Build on Strategies to Engage Local, Special SGMA Identified Groups

Develop a locally targeted communication strategy to engage difficult to reach communities and community members that will be impacted by SGMA. Groups include: DACs, underrepresented communities, Latino communities, and remote private pumpers.

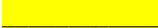
1. Some groups may need to be engaged through channels that do not include the need for internet access, via door-to-door and other opportunities for face-to face engagement.

## Recommended Milestones for Engaging Stakeholders

To employ the Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan effectively, the GSA will need to develop a schedule for outreach and engagement activities. The below table (Table 3) identifies milestones required by SGMA, as well as centralized and localized engagement strategies. This schedule shall be updated into a Task oriented work plan and timeline as communication and engagement tasks are allocated.

*Table 3: Summary of Engagement Opportunities and Milestones*

Timeframe	Milestone or Stage	Required Community Engagement Under SGMA	Centralized & Localized Communication Strategies
After GSA formation, before GSP development activities	After identification of outreach responsibilities among GSA member agencies		•

Timeframe	Milestone or Stage	Required Community Engagement Under SGMA	Centralized & Localized Communication Strategies
After GSA formation, before GSP planning activities	Prior to beginning GSP development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide to the public and State notice of intent to begin GSP planning and description of opportunities for interested parties to participate in GSP development and implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• </li> </ul>
Between Notice of GSP Planning and August 30, 2021	During GSP Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Workshops and other opportunities providing stakeholder avenues to participate in GSP development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• </li> </ul>
Between Notice of GSP Planning and August 30, 2021	During GSP development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the Basin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• </li> </ul>
GSP adoption no later than August 30, 2021	Prior to GSP adoption or amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide notice to cities and counties within area encompassed by the proposed plan or amendment</li> <li>• Consider comments provided by the cities and counties</li> <li>• Accommodate requests for consultation received from the cities and counties within 30 days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• </li> </ul>
GSP adoption no later than August 30, 2021	Prior to GSP adoption or amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No sooner than 90 days following public notice, hold public hearing/ Public Workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• </li> </ul>
Prior to GSA imposing fee or increasing fee	If GSA intends to impose or increase a fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide public with access to the data serving as the basis for the proposed fee, the time and place of explanatory public meeting, and general explanation of topic to be discussed. Post on project website and mail to any interested party who submits written request for mailed notice of meetings on new or increased fees.</li> <li>• No sooner than 10 days following public notice, hold a public meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• </li> </ul>

## Evaluation and Assessment

Any communication strategy should include opportunities to check in at various points during implementation to ensure that it is meeting the communication and engagement goals and complying with SGMA law. These check-ins can include:

- ✓ What worked well?
- ✓ What didn't work as planned?
- ✓ Meeting recaps with next steps
- ✓ Listing lessons learned ... and developing mid-course corrections
- ✓ (As relevant) communications budget analysis

## Educational Materials

DWR has developed various educational materials about SGMA and GSA/GSP development. In addition to DWR materials, academic institutions and foundations have published useful reports about SGMA implementation. While not comprehensive, Table 4 lists some essential SGMA educational and reference materials.

*Table 4. Educational and Reference Documents for SGMA Implementation*

Educational/Reference Document Titles	Publishing Entity	Date
Groundwater Sustainability Agency Frequently Asked Questions <a href="http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/DWR_GSA_FAQ_2016-01-07.pdf">http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/DWR_GSA_FAQ_2016-01-07.pdf</a>	DWR	January 2016
Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Emergency Regulations Guide <a href="http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/GSP_Final_Regs_Guidebook.pdf">http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/GSP_Final_Regs_Guidebook.pdf</a>	DWR	July 2016
Collaborating for Success: Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation <a href="http://waterfoundation.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/SGMA_Stakeholder_Engagement_White_Paper.pdf">http://waterfoundation.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/SGMA_Stakeholder_Engagement_White_Paper.pdf</a>	Community Water Center Clean Water Fund Union of Concerned Scientist	July 2015
The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: A Handbook to Understanding and Implementing the Law <a href="http://www.watereducation.org/sites/main/files/file_attachments/groundwatermgthandbook_oct2015.pdf">http://www.watereducation.org/sites/main/files/file_attachments/groundwatermgthandbook_oct2015.pdf</a>	Water Education Foundation	October 2015
SGMA Engagement With Tribal Governments <a href="https://www.water.ca.gov/LegacyFiles/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/GD_Tribal_Final_2017-06-28.pdf">https://www.water.ca.gov/LegacyFiles/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/GD_Tribal_Final_2017-06-28.pdf</a>	DWR	June 2017

## Appendix: Tribal Engagement

### Relevant DWR Information

**SGMA Section 10720.3.** ...any federally recognized Indian Tribe, appreciating the shared interest in assuring the sustainability of groundwater resources, may voluntarily agree to participate in the preparation or administration of a groundwater sustainability plan or groundwater management plan under this part through a joint powers authority or other agreement with local agencies in the basin. A participating Tribe shall be eligible to participate fully in planning, financing, and management under this part, including eligibility for grants and technical assistance, if any exercise of regulatory authority, enforcement, or imposition and collection of fees is pursuant to the Tribe's independent authority and not pursuant to authority granted to a groundwater sustainability agency under this part.

#### **Draft Discussion Paper Tribal Participation with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies**

[http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/SGMA\\_Tribal\\_GSAs.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/SGMA_Tribal_GSAs.pdf)

#### **Must a local agency exclude federal and tribal lands from its service area when forming a GSA?**

No, federal lands and tribal lands need not be excluded from a local agency's GSA area if a local agency has jurisdiction in those areas; however, those areas are not subject to SGMA. But, a local agency in its GSA formation notice shall explain how it will consider the interests of the federal government and California Native American tribes when forming a GSA and developing a GSP. DWR strongly recommends that local agencies communicate with federal and tribal representatives prior to deciding to become a GSA. As stated in Water Code §10720.3, the federal government or any federally recognized Indian tribe, appreciating the shared interest in assuring the sustainability of groundwater resources, may voluntarily agree to participate in the preparation or administration of a GSP or groundwater management plan through a JPA or other agreement with local agencies in the basin. Water Code References: §10720.3, §10723.2, §10723.8

### Tribal Outreach Resources

The follow are links to agency tribal outreach resources and considerations, each of which captures important principles and resources for tribal outreach. A short summary of key outreach principles can be found below.

- ◆ [Draft Discussion Paper Tribal Participation with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies](#)
- ◆ [CalEPA Tribal Consultation Policy Memo \(August 2015\)](#)
- ◆ [DWR Tribal Engagement Policy \(May 2016\)](#)
- ◆ [CA Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy \(November 2012\)](#)
- ◆ [SWRCB Proposed Tribal Beneficial Uses](#)
- ◆ [Butte County Associate of Governments: Policy For Government-To-Government Consultation With Federally Recognized Native American Tribal Governments \(a model from the transportation sector\)](#)
- ◆ [CA Court Tribal Outreach and Engagement Strategies](#)
- ◆ [Traditional Ecological Knowledge resources](#)
- ◆ [Water Education Foundation Tribal Water Issues](#)

### *Key Outreach Principles*

- ◆ *Engage early and often*
- ◆ *Consider tribal beneficial uses in decision-making (identified by region [here](#)); identify and seek to protect tribal cultural resources*
- ◆ *Share relevant documentation with tribal officials*
- ◆ *Conduct meetings at times convenient for tribal participation with ample notifications*
- ◆ *Request relevant process input/data/information from tribes*
- ◆ *Empower tribes to act as tribal cultural resources caretakers*
- ◆ *Designate a tribal liaison(s) where appropriate*
- ◆ *Share resources for tribal involvement as is feasible*
- ◆ *Develop MOUs where relevant*

Be mindful of the traditions and cultural norms of tribes in your area.

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