

Proposed Revisions to the Stanislaus County Groundwater Ordinance

- The term “mining” will be replaced with the phrase “Unsustainable Groundwater Extraction.”
- “Unsustainable Groundwater Extraction” means the use of groundwater in such manner that has not been demonstrated to represent Sustainable Groundwater Management, as defined in this Ordinance, and as demonstrated through the development, adoption and implementation of a Groundwater Management Plan pursuant to prevailing law and/or California Water Code.
- “Sustainable Groundwater Management” means the management of a groundwater basin(s) to provide for multiple long-term benefits without resulting in or aggravating conditions that cause significant economic, social or environmental impacts such as long-term overdraft, land subsidence, ecosystem degradation, depletions from surface water bodies, and water quality degradation, in order to protect the resource for future generations.

Stanislaus County Groundwater Monitoring Network Program
Draft May 2, 2014

1. Purpose: To establish a program to monitor and collect groundwater information from all areas overlying useable groundwater within Stanislaus County, to encourage the reporting of groundwater elevations by private well owners while maintaining the privacy of that data to the extent requested and authorized by law, and to report monitoring data by sub-area to the public.

2. Establishment of Groundwater Monitoring Sub-areas within the county.

2.1. The WAC, based upon the recommendation of the TAC, shall establish no less than five (5) groundwater monitoring sub-areas within the county.

2.2. Possible sub-areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Eastern Modesto sub-area: North of the Tuolumne River and South of the Stanislaus River, from the eastern county line, west to _____.
Also North of the Stanislaus River encompassing all of the north eastern portions of Stanislaus County.

b. Western Modesto sub-area: From the western boundary of the Eastern Modesto sub-area, west to the San Joaquin River.

c. Eastern Turlock sub-area: South of the Tuolumne River and North of the Merced River, from the eastern county line, west to _____.

d. Western Turlock sub-area: From the western boundary of the Eastern Turlock sub-area, west to the San Joaquin River.

e. Westside sub-area: All that portion of the county from the San Joaquin River, west to the Santa Clara County line, but excluding that portion of the sub-area, which does not overly useable groundwater.

f.

2.3. Each sub-area shall be entitled to at least one representative on both the WAC and the TAC.

3. Monitoring Network.

3.1. The TAC shall develop a monitoring network designed to detect changes in groundwater elevations within each sub-area.

3.2. The monitoring network may include as many of the following as are feasible: dedicated monitoring wells and selected domestic, irrigation, and drainage wells owned by water

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districts, private owners, and municipal and industrial water purveyors. [Note: The locations of wells owned by public water purveyors cannot be disclosed because of Homeland Security regulations.]

3.2a. Type of well: Domestic, Agriculture, Industrial and Municipal

3.2b. Use of the well: seasonal or continuous

3.2c. Mandatory well information

1. total well depth
2. depth to top perforations
3. well casing diameter
4. Well casing material
5. elevation above sea level
6. year well was constructed

3.2d. Location of well.

1. What five areas does it fall in?
2. GPS location

3.3. Participation in monitoring activities by private well owners shall be on a voluntary basis. If requested by a private well owner and to the extent authorized by law, the county shall treat the groundwater elevation information from a private well as confidential and exempt from release to the public under the California Public Records Act. The county understands and agrees that, unless otherwise authorized by the private well owner, the private well owner is only allowing the collection of groundwater elevation information from the owner's well on the condition that all such information and the location of the well shall remain confidential.

3.4. The selection of the wells to be monitor within each sub-area shall be made by the WAC in consultation with the TAC and the applicable sub-area representative.

4. Monitoring Frequency for Groundwater Elevations.

4.1. At a minimum, groundwater water elevations within each sub-area shall be monitored two (2) times during the year: one (1) measurement prior to the irrigation season in March and one (1) measurement following the irrigation season in November.

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4.2. If the WAC determines based upon the TAC's evaluation of the groundwater elevation data that monitoring needs to occur on a more frequent basis, then the county may make changes to the monitoring schedule as then available resources allow.

5. Monitoring Protocol and Review of Technical Data.

5.1. All data shall be collected and recorded through methods generally accepted in the applicable scientific field.

5.2. The TAC shall establish methods for data collection, storage, and dissemination. Methods for collecting groundwater elevations shall follow established quality assurance and quality control guidelines.

5.3. Standard methods for review and analysis of the collected data shall be established by the TAC.

5.4. The TAC shall review, analyze, and evaluate the data collected at least annually after the November measurements are collected and that analysis shall consider all available pertinent hydrologic and precipitation data and any additional information provided by the sub-area representatives.

6. Reporting.

6.1. The county shall disseminate information on the monitoring network, data collected, and TAC reports to the public and through a county website.

6.2. The WAC shall report to the Board of Supervisors on the Groundwater Monitoring Network Program during February of each year.

7. We recommend that Stanislaus County Adopt the Integrated Regional GW Plan Final Draft and amend it so that the whole county can be included and participate.

8. We recommend that Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors lobby the Water Board in order to protect all of Stanislaus County's Surface Water Rights that are held by both public Irrigation Districts and Private Entities within the Stanislaus County.

Stanislaus County should speak with one voice on all Water Issues both Groundwater and Surface Water Issues.

[end of draft program]