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Summary of Watershed Related Committees

DROUGHT AND WATER SHORTAGE TASK FORCE

History and Background

The Drought and Water Shortage Task Force (DWSTF) was formed by resolution of the Napa County Board of Supervisors on December 13, 2021 to comply with California SB 552, requiring the county to develop a Drought Response Plan (DRP) to respond to dry domestic wells or state small water systems. The DWSTF consists of the Watershed Information and Conservation Council (WICC) plus 6 additional members representing the California Department of Water Resources, County Environmental Health, Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and 3 public at-large members representing local water suppliers and/or residents who rely on individual domestic wells for drinking water bringing the total membership to 23. The first meeting of the DWSTF was held on April 28, 2022. During a special meeting held on May 20, 2022, the DWSTF members elected to create a smaller "Ad Hoc" committee consisting of 9 members who would continue to meet and represent the full DWSTF moving forward through the development of the DRP. The Ad Hoc committee has continued to meet on a quarterly basis.

Recent Activities

The DWSTF Ad Hoc utilized funding from the California Department of Water Resources through a Direct Technical Assistance grant to enlist Stantec Inc. to assist Napa County to draft a Drought Response Plan. Since late July 2023, Stantec reviewed efforts to date including meeting minutes, discussions, and the approach to the risk assessment. Stantec validated the County's risk assessment approach, presented a series of short-term and long-term mitigation actions to the Ad Hoc task force and facilitated discussions on each item. In order to make the best use of time in meetings, Stantec conducted two email surveys among the DWSTF Ad Hoc members to garner input on specific mitigation actions, perceived feasibility, and agreement/disagreement among the proposed topics prior to discussing the actions during committee meetings. The results of the 2 surveys were analyzed and presented to the Ad Hoc for deliberation and acceptance during their October 26, 2023 and January 25, 2024 meetings. County staff and Stantec are currently drafting the DRP incorporating feedback from Ad Hoc meetings and will present a draft at the next meeting of the Ad Hoc task force on April 25, 2024.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

History and Background

The Technical Advisory Group was formed by resolution of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) on June 21, 2022 and consists of a 5-member panel of technical experts with diverse academic and professional backgrounds. The TAG held its first meeting on August 11, 2022 and has met monthly since then to assist the GSA by providing technical guidance on matters related to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan and implementation of the Projects and Management Actions.

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Recent Activities

Over the course of the last 18 months GSA staff and technical consultants drafted 3 Workplans that were described as Project and Management Actions in the County's approved Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The three workplans are:

- Groundwater Pumping Reduction (GPR) Workplan: Napa Valley Subbasin
- Napa County Water Conservation (WC) Workplan: A Guide for Vineyards, Wineries, and Other Water Users
- Interconnected Surface Water (ISW) and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE) Workplan: Napa Valley Subbasin

The draft workplans were released for a public comment period from October 31, 2023 to January 31, 2024. The GSA held 3 public meetings on the draft workplans:

- December 11, 2023 – Yountville Community Center
- December 12, 2023 – Virtual Webinar
- January 9, 2024 – Napa County Library

The recording from the virtual webinar is available: https://www.countyofnapa.org/3251/Past-Events. Comments from the public and TAG members are currently being incorporated into the draft plans. The draft final workplans will be presented to the TAG at their March 14th meeting along with a matrix of the public comments received. The TAG will vote to consider recommending the GSA Board of Directors adopt the workplans at the next GSA Board of Directors meeting on March 26, 2024. If adopted, Workplan implementation will commence immediately and will be ongoing until the GSP update is submitted to DWR in 2027.

Brief descriptions of the 3 workplans can be found below:

GPR Workplan

This Groundwater Pumping Reduction Workplan: Napa Valley Subbasin (GPR Workplan) summarizes the actions, opportunities, and implementation plan for achieving water conservation that result in a reduction in total groundwater pumping and a reduction in net depletion from the Subbasin aquifer system. The specific objectives of the GPR Workplan are:

- Provide technical data, analysis, and a roadmap for implementing measures to reduce groundwater pumping in the Napa Valley Subbasin.
- Improve the understanding of groundwater use in the Subbasin and evaluate the effectiveness of pumping reduction measures for improving groundwater conditions and sustainability.
- Develop an adaptive management process, including implementing mandatory measures if voluntary measures are insufficient to achieve groundwater sustainability.
- Develop strategies that can achieve pumping reductions while supporting the Napa Valley community and regional economy.

WC Workplan

While the WC Workplan is focused on groundwater resources within the Subbasin, many of the practices and tools outlined can be implemented throughout Napa County. The WC Workplan

summarizes the opportunities, costs, and potential funding sources for achieving water conservation that results in a reduction in total groundwater pumping and a reduction in net depletion from the Subbasin aquifer system. The specific objectives of the Workplan are:

- Summarize current water use and water conservation practices in the Subbasin.
- List and describe water conservation practices that may be expanded or adopted in the Subbasin by different water users.
- Identify technical assistance, funding opportunities, and other technical resources that are available for businesses and individuals seeking to implement water conservation practices.
- Describe how water conservation will be measured and monitored, and how businesses and individuals can assist.

ISW and GDEs Workplan

The overarching goal of the ISW and GDE Workplan is to use physical and biological data coupled with hydrologic modeling to better understand the conditions required to maintain healthy terrestrial and aquatic GDEs. In particular, the Workplan describes the steps needed to understand conditions necessary to:

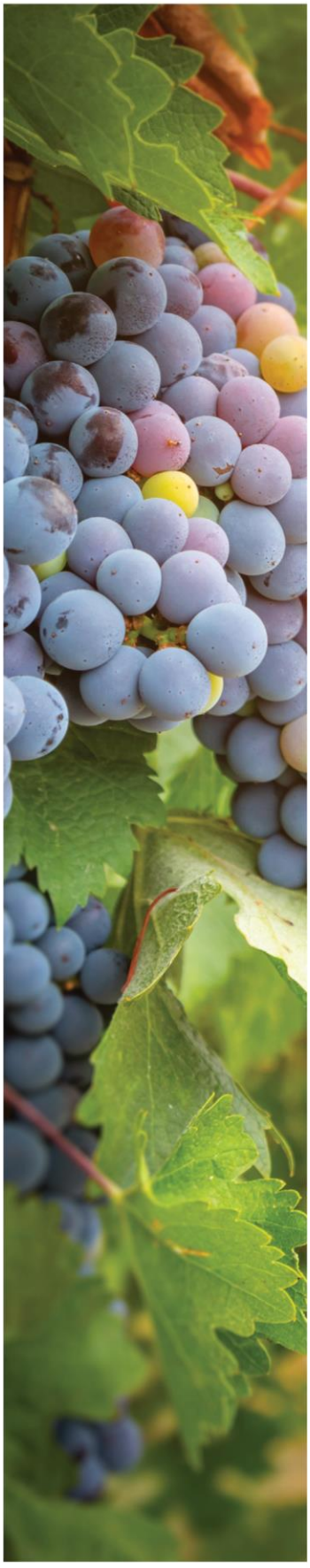
1. Maintain steelhead (O. mykiss) spawning, rearing, and migration in the watershed;
2. Support special status aquatic species; and
3. Maintain terrestrial GDEs and special-status species.

PILOT SITE PROGRAM

As part of the of the implementation activities related to these workplans, the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) is interested in working with vineyards and wineries that have implemented water conservation practices that have reduced their water uses and are interested in sharing their experiences with GSA. The GSA seeks to engage with volunteers to (1) refine estimates of vineyard and winery water use in the Napa Valley, (2) to share, collaborate, and contribute information about management practices, lessons learned, and building climate resiliency. Know of any vineyards or wineries that fit the bill and might be interested in working with the GSA? Let them know about the Pilot Site Program. More information can be found in the attached flyer.

NAPA VALLEY VINEYARDS: PROMOTING WATER CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Pilot Site Program Request



Background

In accordance with the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) submitted the required Napa Valley Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) on January 31, 2022. The Napa County GSA began GSP implementation in January 2022. On January 26, 2023, DWR approved the GSP.

Since GSP implementation began in January 2022, the GSA has engaged with numerous agencies, vineyard and winery owners and operators, and stakeholder groups to outline paths forward to attain groundwater sustainability. Information exchange and data sharing are integral to the Napa community achieving sustainability. The Napa Valley Integrated Hydrologic Model (NVIHM) was developed during the preparation of the GSP to quantify basin-wide water budget components and establish sustainable management criteria. The hydrologic model is used to estimate total water use for vineyards, wineries, municipalities, and domestic users. The total amount of groundwater used is reported every year to DWR. Additional data would help refine water use estimates to better reflect ongoing conservation efforts.

A Pilot Sites Program for vineyards and wineries is underway to accomplish two overarching objectives: (1) to refine estimates of vineyard and winery water use in the Napa Valley and (2) to share, collaborate, and contribute information about management practices, lessons learned, and building climate resiliency.

Napa Agriculture, Stewardship, and Pilot Sites

Napa Valley vineyards and wineries have a history of implementing water conservation measures, evaluating new water conservation methods, identifying approaches to achieve climate resiliency, and advancing water and soil management practices.

Through engagement with stakeholders, including the Napa County Farm Bureau, Napa Valley Grapegrowers, Winegrowers of Napa County, individual vineyard managers, and others, the GSA understands a wide range of water conservation and data collection methods and technologies are used in the Valley, tailored to achieve specific vineyard and winery management and sustainability objectives.

The GSA seeks vineyard and winery managers or operators at the leading edge of water management and stewardship efforts with an interest in:

1) sharing information with others about the benefits they have experienced from changes in practices;
2) participating as a pilot site to highlight the benefits of adopting different practices for the viticulture and winemaking industry as well as basin-wide sustainability objectives; and
3) contributing information that helps to refine the understanding of total water use in Napa Valley and aid ground truthing of watershed-scale remotely sensed data.

Data

Many types of data could be shared through the Pilot Site Program. Each pilot site may have different data types that are applicable to their unique management practices and beneficial for sharing. The different data types could include measurements of water applications, plant, soil, or weather conditions and fluxes, or many other practices that inform or conserve water use. The summary table below outlines general data types and examples of their utility for improving groundwater management in the Napa Valley.

Data Type	Utility
Applied Water	• Provides a benchmark for other vineyards and/or wineries. • Improve estimates of applied water basin-wide.
Evapotranspiration	• Shows how emerging technologies could assist in understanding irrigation needs. • Support verification of remotely sensed evapotranspiration measurements obtained from OpenET in Napa Valley.
Soil Moisture	• Help inform the role of soil moisture in delaying irrigation and quantify the amount of soil water available for plant uptake. • Improve the hydrologic model soil moisture accounting.
Plant Water Use	• Could include sap flow or other measurements for plant water use. • Shows how emerging technologies could assist in understanding irrigation needs.
Grape Variety and Rootstock	• Provides useful information related to building drought and climate resiliency.

Data Confidentiality

Data shared through the Pilot Site Program would be analyzed, with other data being collected and presented to the public. The GSA would coordinate with Pilot Site Program participants to understand the sensitivity of different shared data and discuss ways to balance the value of shared data with preserving confidentiality interests. In general, information volunteered would be anonymized when shared for illustrative purposes. Vineyards or wineries participating in the Program will be acknowledged by the GSA if desired.

Data Use

For each field/vineyard/winery, the information shared will be compiled with information from other volunteered pilot sites to show the range of techniques and measurements being implemented and the benefits realized. Location-specific data will be used in the hydrologic model to help improve water use estimates throughout the Napa Valley.

Data Request

The GSA is asking participants to contribute to water conservation and sustainability efforts by providing information as part of the Pilot Sites Program. Any data collected over the last 10 years would help accomplish the Pilot Sites Program objectives.

Contact Information

The Napa County Department of Planning, Building, and Environmental Services will be coordinating the Pilot Site Program. Please reach out to Jamison Crosby, the Natural Resources Conservation Manager, for additional information.

Jamison Crosby
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