



## Groundwater Sustainability Plan Adopted

*By Bryan Bondy, UVRGA Executive Director*

The UVRGA Board of Directors adopted the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Upper Ventura River Basin during a Special Board meeting held on January 6, 2022. This follows a public hearing held on December 9, 2021 to receive comments. Comments were received from the National Marine Fisheries Service and those comments were addressed prior to adopting the GSP. It is also noted that a 60-day public comment period on the draft GSP was held August 10 through October 8, 2021. Your comments were considered and the draft GSP was updated prior to the public hearing. After the adopted GSP has been through final formatting, it will be posted on the UVRGA website at <https://uvrgroundwater.org/sgma-overview/>.

As a reminder, GSP adoption was not the end of the process; rather, it marks the beginning of a twenty-year implementation timeframe to ensure sustainable management of the Upper Ventura River Basin. The GSP establishes sustainable management criteria for the Basin and a plan to achieve them that will be implemented over the next 20 years. The first steps UVRGA will be taking in 2022 will be to implement the various monitoring programs identified in the GSP. These include groundwater level and groundwater quality monitoring and visual and gaged surface water flow monitoring. UVRGA will also be developing workplans for aquatic biological monitoring in the Ventura River at Foster Park and near the confluence with San Antonio Creek.

UVRGA has much work to do to implement the GSP and your feedback and comments along the way will help ensure the GSP is successfully implemented. We encourage your continued involvement. If you haven't already, please join our interested parties list at: <https://uvrgroundwater.org/join-interested-parties-list/> or contact our Executive Director, Bryan Bondy for more information at: [bbondy@uvrgroundwater.org](mailto:bbondy@uvrgroundwater.org).

### Agency Funding Discussions Are Happening Now

UVRGA must fund implementation of the GSP to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

The UVRGA Board is requesting input from well owners and other members of the public concerning development of a fee structure to fund GSP implementation.

Please see the article on page 2 and please join us at our next Board meeting on February 10, 2022 to provide input or send your input to our Executive Director, Bryan Bondy at: [bbondy@uvrgroundwater.org](mailto:bbondy@uvrgroundwater.org)

### New Environmental Stakeholder Director

Please join us in welcoming Vivon Crawford to the UVRGA Board of Directors. Ms. Crawford was appointed on January 13, 2022 and replaces Director Larry Rose who was with UVRGA since the beginning. Larry Rose made many valuable contributions during his time on the UVRGA Board. Ms. Crawford comes to us from the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy where she serves as the Restoration Program Manager. We look forward to collaborating with Director Crawford.



## **GSP Implementation Funding and Fees**

*By Emily Ayala, UVRGA Agricultural Stakeholder Director*

The method we used for assessing groundwater pumping fees while we wrote our Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) over the past 3 years was based on estimated pumping from 2017 (which was the year from which we had more recent pumping data available at the time). The fee was set as to not exceed \$79.16/acre foot based on the projected costs for developing the GSP.

We adopted the GSP on January 6, 2022 and are currently working on submitting it to the Department of Water Resources, due by January 31, 2022.

Now that the GSP has been adopted, our agency can change the method of collecting fees which will begin in our new fiscal year starting July 1, 2022. There are various options for collecting fees. Some of the options the UVRGA Board has been discussing include the following:

- A metered extraction fee (would require all pumps to be metered)
- An estimated extraction fee (similar to what we have been doing, but could fluctuate based on use/rainfall)
- A flat parcel fee/tax (this would require a vote and be expensive to implement)
- It could be a hybrid – where municipals pay differently than small pumpers to even out the budget?

Over the next several Board meetings we will be discussing this issue—it would be great to get your input on what method you would prefer. We will be discussing this at our next meeting on February 10, 2022 at 1pm. For more information you can read the materials provided in the previous Board meeting packet from January 13, 2022 (see page 35 of the agenda packet (you can download or view at <https://uvrgroundwater.org/public-meetings/>). You can read through the various fee options and our preliminary projected per acre foot fee (page 40). Please note that the budget projections do not include getting any grants for which we will be applying.

As a farmer it is very difficult for me to ask any of you to pay more fees.... Grumble, grumble—but I would appreciate getting your feedback on what you think the most equitable fee method would be for your operation (metered, estimated, etc.). Your input is important.

### **Upcoming UVRGA Board Meetings**

The UVRGA Board of Directors scheduled its 2022 Regular Board meetings on the second Thursday of each month. The next scheduled regular meeting is February 10, 2022. Special meetings are also scheduled on as-needed basis. The UVRGA Board will continue to meet virtually via Zoom until further notice.

For the latest updates concerning Board meetings, please visit:  
<https://uvrgroundwater.org/public-meetings/>

