

# Owens Valley Basin

## Communication and Engagement Plan

Updated: October 8, 2020

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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 Owens Valley Groundwater Basin stakeholders, beginning with the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority board members, staff and consultants. 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.*

*At the date of this publication, the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin was categorized as a low priority basin by the California Department of Water Resources.*

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# Owens Valley Groundwater Basin Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan

## Purpose

The purpose of this Communication and Engagement Plan is to assist the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority (OVGA) in its efforts to develop general and strategic communications to engage stakeholders in groundwater management activities.

## Background

California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 requires broad and diverse stakeholder involvement in Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) activities and the development and implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) for 127 groundwater basins around the state that are listed at high or medium priority. While the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin has recently been characterized by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) as a low priority basin (as of December 2019)<sup>1</sup>, it has elected to move forward with development of a GSP. The OVGA was created to comply with the SGMA requirement that local agencies sustainably manage groundwater in the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin (OVGB).

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.

To that end, the intention of the Communications and Engagement Plan (Plan) is to make transparent to stakeholders their opportunities to contribute to the development of a GSP that can effectively address groundwater management within the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin. At the same time, the intention of the Plan is to provide community leaders and the OVGA with a roadmap to follow to ensure stakeholders have meaningful input into OVGA decision-making, including GSP development, through a process widely seen as fair and respectful to interested parties.

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<sup>1</sup> At the date of this publication, the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin was categorized as a low priority basin by the California Department of Water Resources.

## Basin Overview

The OVGB is a large basin – 1,030 square miles - with a number of jurisdictional, legal, and water management considerations specific to the basin. The Basin includes the Owens, Round, Chalfant, Hammil, and Benton Valleys as well as Fish Slough. Owens Valley is currently identified as a low priority Basin by DWR, and not in a critically overdrafted condition. However, in 2014 the Basin was considered a medium priority basin, but an approved basin boundary modification in 2016 triggered a reassessment of basin priority. In 2018 DWR proposed the basin be classified as high priority due largely to out-of-basin groundwater exports. The OVGA ~~objected to~~ [commented on](#) that draft DWR designation and in May 2019, the DWR released phase II of its prioritization proposing to designate the basin low priority. That designation was finalized in December 2019. [It is possible that DWR could reassess the Basin priority again at a future date.](#)

## Basin Governance and Decision-Making

The GSA for the Basin was formally established as the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority in May 2018. The OVGA is a joint exercise of powers agency composed of Inyo County, Mono County, City of Bishop, Indian Creek-Westridge Community Service District (CSD), and Big Pine CSD. Each of these members has water supply, water management, or land use responsibilities, and is thus eligible to individually form a GSA. The document forming the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority allows for tribes, federal agencies, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, PUC regulated private water companies, and other interested parties to have a voting role in GSA decision making. The OVGA has two Interested Party seats for the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe and the Owens Valley Committee.

The OVGA is administered by a governing board consisting of one primary appointment and one alternate from each member agency. All OVGA Board of Director meetings are public, noticed, held and conducted in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act open and public meeting law. The Board may occasionally establish ~~ad hoc~~ committees for the purpose of making recommendations to the Board on the various activities of the Authority.

OVGA decisions will be informed through staff direction, development of recommendations from ~~ad hoc~~ committees, and input from technical consultants. Furthermore, the OVGA and their staff representatives will engage with Basin stakeholders through the strategies outlined in this plan to help inform the OVGA's decisions.

## Communication and Engagement Plan Goals

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

- To provide the OVGA, 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 OVGA and community leaders to follow to ensure

stakeholders have meaningful input into OVGA 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.

**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. OVGA member agencies within the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin.
  - d. How stakeholders are represented in the OVGA.
2. Communicate important deadlines and dates pertinent to GSP development.
3. Articulate strategies and channels for gaining ongoing stakeholder input and feedback to inform GSP design and development.
4. Coordinate outreach and engagement activities between OVGA member agencies, and between Basin management areas, to ensure efficiencies and to support stakeholders in GSP development.
5. Encourage stakeholder engagement by advertising dedicated SGMA outreach channels, including meeting and workshop dates and content, as opportunities for stakeholders to provide input in the OVGA decision-making process and GSP planning process.
6. Gain early and continuing feedback to inform GSP design and development.

### Opportunities for Engagement

Opportunities for stakeholder input will be provided throughout the GSP development process, by way of public participation at OVGA Board of Directors meetings, hosted public workshops, direct outreach to constituent groups, and other mechanisms as outlined in this document. 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 within.

## 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, the California Department of Water Resources (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 Owens Valley Groundwater Basin, and will continue to be updated during the planning process. Furthermore, Management Area Outreach Leads may maintain more exhaustive lists respective to their management area, for targeted stakeholder outreach efforts.

**Table 1: Stakeholder Engagement Chart for GSP Development. This table will continue to be updated during the GSP planning process.** Note: The groups and communities referenced are those identified during initial assessment. OVGA shall maintain current and more exhaustive lists of stakeholders fitting into these groups.

Category of Interest	Examples of Stakeholder Groups	Engagement Purpose
<b>Land Use or Water Management Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities (City, County planning departments)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City of Bishop</li> <li>- Mono County</li> <li>- Inyo County</li> <li>- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Water Management Authorities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tri Valley Groundwater Management District</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Regional Agencies               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- California Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</li> <li>- Great Basin Air Pollution Control District</li> <li>- State Lands Commission</li> <li>- United States Forest Service</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Community Service Districts               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indian Creek Westridge</li> <li>- Big Pine</li> <li>- Keeler</li> <li>- Lone Pine</li> <li>- Sierra Highlands</li> <li>- Sierra North</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Consult and/or involve to ensure land use policies are supporting the GSP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Starlite</li> <li>- Wheeler Crest</li> </ul>	
<b>Private Users</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Interests &amp; Private Pumpers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cattlemen’s Association</li> <li>- Crystal Geysers Roxane LLC</li> <li>- Rio Tinto Minerals</li> <li>- Southern California Edison</li> <li>- Zack Ranch</li> </ul> </li> <li>• School Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bernasconi Education Center</li> <li>- Bishop Unified School District</li> <li>- Eastern Sierra College Center</li> <li>- Eastern Sierra Unified School District</li> <li>- Lone Pine Unified School District</li> <li>- Round Valley School District</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Domestic Users</li> </ul>	Inform and/or involve to avoid negative impact to these users
<b>Urban/ Agriculture Users</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Water Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aberdeen Water System</li> <li>- Benton Community Center</li> <li>- Benton Station</li> <li>- Bird Industrial Complex LLC</li> <li>- Bishop Country Club</li> <li>- Boulder Creek Trailer Park</li> <li>- CDCR Owens Valley Conservation Camp</li> <li>- Chalfant Community Center</li> <li>- Comfort Inn</li> <li>- Eastern Sierra Regional Airport</li> <li>- Glenwood Mobile Home Park</li> <li>- Highland Mobile Home Park</li> <li>- Horseshoe Meadow Campground</li> <li>- Inyo County Parks and Recreation</li> <li>- Keoughs Hot Springs</li> <li>- Meadowlake Apartments</li> <li>- Mountain View Trailer Court</li> <li>- Park West</li> <li>- Pine Creek Village</li> <li>- Rolling Green</li> <li>- SCE Bishop Creek Plant 4</li> <li>- Sunland Village Mobile Home Park</li> <li>- Van Loon Water Association</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mutual Water Companies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brookside Estates</li> <li>- Cartago</li> <li>- Chalfant Valley West</li> <li>- Meadowcreek</li> <li>- Mountain View Estates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Collaborate to ensure sustainable management of groundwater

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- North Lone Pine</li> <li>- Owens Valley</li> <li>- Park West</li> <li>- Ranch Road Estates</li> <li>- Rawson Creek</li> <li>- Rocking K Ranch Estates</li> <li>- R and V</li> <li>- Sierra Grande Estates</li> <li>- Valley Vista</li> <li>- Van Loon</li> <li>- White Mountain</li> <li>- Wilson Circle</li> <li>• Resource Conservation Districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inyo Mono RCD</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Farm Bureau <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inyo-Mono County</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Environmental and Ecosystem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal and State Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bureau of Land Management</li> <li>- California Department of Fish and Wildlife</li> <li>- California Department of Water Resources</li> <li>- California State Lands Commission</li> <li>- Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District</li> <li>- Inyo County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office</li> <li>- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power</li> <li>- Mono County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office</li> <li>- National Park Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NPS Manzanar National Historical Site</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Owens Valley Radio Observatory</li> <li>- United States Forest Service</li> <li>- White Mountain Research Center</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Environmental Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- California Native Plant Society, Bristlecone Chapter</li> <li>- Eastern Sierra Audubon</li> <li>- Eastern Sierra Land Trust</li> <li>- Friends of the Inyo</li> <li>- Owens Valley Committee</li> <li>- RCRC</li> <li>- Sierra Club</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Land Trusts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eastern Sierra Land Trust</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Special Interest Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cattleman’s Association</li> <li>- Sierra Nevada Alliance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Inform, involve and/or collaborate to sustain a vital ecosystem and ensure basin sustainability.
<b>Tribes &amp; Tribal Organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tribes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benton Paiute Tribe</li> <li>- Big Pine Tribe</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Inform, involve, and/or consult with tribal government

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bishop Paiute Tribe</li> <li>- Fort Independence Paiute Tribe</li> <li>- Kutzadika’a Tribe</li> <li>- Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe</li> <li>- Timbisha Shoshone Tribe</li> <li>- Cabazon Band of the Mission Indians</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tribal Organizations</li> <li>• Owens Valley Indian Water Commission</li> </ul>	
<b>Industrial Users</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial and Industrial Self-supplier</li> <li>• Local Trade Association or Group</li> </ul>	Inform and/or involve to avoid negative impact to these users
<b>Economic Development</b>	<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> <li>• Civic Clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Altrusa of the Eastern Sierra</li> <li>- Big Pine Civic Club</li> <li>- Bishop Lions Club</li> <li>- Independence Civic Club</li> <li>- Rotary Club of Bishop</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Inform and/or involve to support a stable economy
<b>Integrated Water Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional water management groups (IRWM regions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inyo Mono IRWMP</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recycled Water Coalition</li> </ul>	Inform, involve, and collaborate to improve regional sustainability
<b>General Public</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens Groups</li> <li>• Community Leaders</li> <li>• Recreational Users</li> </ul>	Inform to improve public awareness of sustainable groundwater management
<b>Human Right to Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disadvantaged Communities</li> <li>• Environmental Justice Groups</li> <li>• Latino Communities*</li> <li>• Remote private pumpers</li> <li>• Small Community Water Systems*</li> </ul> <p><i>*stakeholders referenced in other categories above</i></p>	Inform and/or involve to provide a safe and secure groundwater supplies to all communities reliant on groundwater

## Key Messages

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

1. The OVGA is committed to proactively and sustainably managing groundwater in the Basin through locally tailored management of groundwater resources to protect and sustain the environment, local residents and communities, agriculture, and the economy.
2. The OVGA is committed to proactive and transparent outreach and engagement with stakeholders and Basin community members throughout GSP planning and SGMA implementation.
3. Local control of groundwater should be preserved to the maximum extent practicable, and State intervention to implement SGMA should be avoided.
4. Sustainable groundwater conditions in the Basin are critical to support, preserve, and enhance the economic viability, social well-being, environmental health, and culture of all Beneficial Users and Uses including tribal, domestic, municipal, agricultural, environmental, and industrial users.
5. The OVGA is committed to conducting sustainable groundwater practices that fairly consider the needs of and protect the groundwater resources for all Beneficial Users in the Basin.
6. To support SGMA objectives and Basin-wide water needs, the OVGA will pursue an integrated water management approach for the Basin. An integrated water management approach will honor the social, cultural, natural, and economic diversity of the Basin.
7. While the Basin is currently categorized as low priority, Basin water managers recognize the value in being proactive about groundwater management. Issues resulting from groundwater extraction may become apparent in the future, potentially resulting in another recategorization of the Basin by DWR. Foresight and planning can prevent high costs and major water cut backs in the future.
8. The OVGA recognizes its duty to Basin residents, and future generations to ensure that financial resources are used effectively and responsibly to promote sustainable groundwater conditions. The OVGA is committed to carefully and prudently use funds to fully comply with SGMA and to avoid expanding beyond the scope of SGMA in a manner that might create undue costs to Beneficial Users.
9. The OVGA is committed to designing sustainability indicators that avoid significant and unreasonable impacts to groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs).
10. The OVGA is authorized to regulate certain portions of the Basin ~~but and~~ cannot regulate ~~LADWP~~ activities covered under the Inyo County/LADWP Long Term Water Agreement or determine surface water rights due to express limitations set forth as specified in SGMA. The OVGA is committed to responsible water management and ~~will~~

seeks to coordinate with LADWP and prepare a GSP compatible with the [Inyo/Los Angeles Long Term](#) Water Agreement.

## Recommended Communication Strategies and Mechanisms

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

- **SGMA-required** strategies that GSAs must legally undertake during different phases of GSA formation, GSP development and implementation. [See Appendix VI for complete description.]
- **Essential strategies** centrally communicated at the Basin and OVGA management area level that are proven to successfully engage stakeholders.
- **Localized strategies** coordinated among member agencies working in OVGA management areas through existing, trusted channels.
- **Secondary strategies** that will enhance engagement efforts locally, at the beneficial user level, and on an as-needed basis.

## Essential Communication Strategies

The following strategies are meant to ensure successful engagement of Basin stakeholders during the GSP development and implementation process. The OVGA shall incorporate these strategies to ensure that “interested parties” (as defined under SGMA) and other Owens Valley Groundwater Basin stakeholder interests are considered in the development of the GSP and implementation of SGMA.

- 1. Integrate and Expand on Existing SGMA Communication and Outreach Efforts:**
  - a. The OVGA Board Meetings and are open to the public. Other outreach activities already conducted to date include a stakeholder assessment in the summer of 2016, meetings held in 2017 with potential GSA members (facilitated by DWR), public informational meetings and a mandatory public process for the proposed basin boundary adjustment in 2018-19, and regularly scheduled public meetings of the OVGA Board since the Board’s formal establishment in May 2018.
- 2. Develop and Maintain a List of Interested Parties:**
  - a. A list of stakeholders and beneficial users is to be developed and updated throughout the GSP planning, implementation and enforcement processes (see Table 1 above).
  - b. This list should be reviewed for updates every three to six months.

### 3. Maintain a Centralized Website and Social Media Accounts:

While individual OVGA member agencies may seek to maintain separate websites, a centralized location for activities that are basin-wide or related to GSP development will demonstrate coordination and provide consistency in messaging.

- a. Allocate staff and resources to maintain a stand-alone website with information about SGMA and GSP planning efforts and other relevant information.
  - i. As of April 2020, an RFP for a web developer is awaiting approval by the OVGA Board.
- b. Provide easily accessible list of upcoming planning activities, meetings and opportunities for public involvement.
- c. Provide a place where stakeholders can add their name to the interested parties list.
- d. Include Resources and materials:
  - i. Links to external sites (DWR and State Water Resources Control Board)
  - ii. Links to individual OVGA member agency websites, relevant blogs, etc.
  - iii. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and/or white papers
  - iv. OVGA documents (MOUs, bylaws, etc.)
  - v. GSP documents (draft GSP documents, notices and meeting calendars for GSP workshops)
  - vi. Maintain an online database making pertinent groundwater information available to public, stakeholders, and OVGA members (<https://owens.gladata.com/default.aspx#>).
- e. Establish corresponding social media accounts, such as FaceBook, Twitter, and Instagram profiles.
  - i. Social media accounts should be used for information dissemination purposes primarily, and limit or exclude the ability for general public to engage in “sideline conversations” about SGMA, etc. The social media will have the same information as presented on the website. [The social media accounts will not have more information than the website.](#)

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

- a. Provide consistent messaging and outreach regarding SGMA information and GSP updates as they relate to Owens Valley Groundwater Basin. Topics to be noticed include and are not limited to:
  - i. GSP development and planning updates
    1. GSP workshops
    2. GSP work plan and timeline
  - ii. GSP implementation and enforcement updates (if/when applicable)
  - iii. General OVGA updates, including without limitation:
    1. OVGA Board meetings
    2. Public workshops and/or stakeholder roundtables
    3. OVGA annual reports (if applicable)
    4. Other SGMA-related updates

- iv. As the work evolves, new items could be added to the list of update topics that stakeholders are provided, to help highlight their importance (for example, an event like an annual forum, or an ongoing activity like groundwater monitoring).
- b. Schedule notices to be sent on a regular schedule, for example, bi-monthly, monthly or as needed.
- c. Meetings subject to the Brown Act, such as OVGA Board meetings, must provide public notice and post an agenda at least 72 hours in advance of each regularly scheduled meeting (emergency meetings require 24-hour advance notice). [The OVGA typically posts meeting agendas before the required deadlines.](#)
- d. Develop content appropriate to the audience and their interests, ensuring information is articulated in a way that is easily understood.
- e. Notices to community members with less SGMA or technical experience should be easily understood, with streamlined, relatable and repetitive information.
- f. 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.
- g. As applicable, specific items should have an estimated timeline and a designated point of contact, including the person's position, email and telephone.
- h. Updates and information are needed in both English and Spanish.
- i. Designate responsible staff and appropriate resources for ongoing interagency coordination regarding joint messaging, consistent outreach and communication with stakeholders.
- j. Determine appropriate dissemination channels.
  - i. Utilize Constant Contact or similar email marketing platform for management of interested party stakeholder lists.
  - ii. Utilize member agency listservs delivered via standard email and/or U.S. Mail.

**5. Provide Notices and Updates in Print Publications:**

- a. Notices can take the form of public notices, op-ed articles, letters to the editor, advertisements or paid or earned media.
  - i. Send information and/or media releases to regional and local media outlets and contacts.
    - 1. Trusted radio stations in the region, including stations broadcasting in languages other than English.
    - 2. Organization and community newsletters and periodicals.
    - 3. Identify trusted bi-lingual and/or Spanish speaking media outlets.
  - ii. Provide follow-up or wrap-up articles written by staff when appropriate.
  - iii. Notices and information may also be provided via:
    - 1. Mailers:
      - a. Send to PO boxes in Mono County
      - b. As bill inserts via utility districts
      - c. As an insert in the Saturday Inyo Register

2. Print publications, including but not limited to:
  - a. Inyo County Register
  - b. The Sierra Reader
  - c. The Sheet
  - d. Sunday Paper
  - e. CSD Consumer Confidence Report
3. Posted flyers at:
  - a. Libraries
  - b. Feed supply stores
  - c. Grocery stores
- iv. Include notices for:
  1. Public workshops
  2. Specific stakeholder meetings (targeted or special topic meetings)
  3. OVGA Board meetings
  4. Other standing meetings of particular interest related to SGMA
  5. GSP development and planning updates
  6. GSP implementation and enforcement updates (if/when applicable)
  7. General OVGA and SGMA-related updates
- v. Schedule
  1. Advertisements (if applicable): allow 21 to 30 days advance (with content approved)
    - a. Identify advertisement space
    - b. Develop content
  2. Letters to Editor: allow up to two weeks for preparation of letter and posting. Letters to the Editor can be published easily without advertisement space.
  3. Posting: minimum of one week in advance of meetings for placement of final advertisement.
- vi. Dissemination

**6. Institute Regular Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Opportunities:**

- a. Stakeholder engagement opportunities include but are not limited to:
  - i. OVGA Board meetings
  - ii. Mono County Regional Planning Advisory Committee
  - iii. County Board of Supervisors meetings
  - iv. GSP Technical Workshops
  - v. Public Workshops and Roundtables
  - vi. Owens Lake Groundwater Working Group
- b. Public workshop or roundtable content includes but is not limited to:
  - i. Updates on OVGA activities
  - ii. Updates on GSP development and planning activities

- iii. Opportunities for interested parties to participate in the development and implementation of the GSP (i.e., technical workshops on specific GSP components)
- iv. Notice of OVGA intent to adopt or amend a GSP
- v. Updates on groundwater management activities in the Basin
- vi. Notice to impose fees
- c. Logistics Considerations
  - i. Schedule in evenings and/or near community areas as feasible.
  - ii. Provide translation and facilitation services in English and Spanish
  - iii. Public comments will be made part of the record for consideration by the OVGA.

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

- a. Identify Management Area Outreach Leads for each management area defined in the GSP to coordinate and direct localized public outreach and engagement efforts for their areas.
- b. Develop a targeted communication strategy to engage difficult to reach communities and community members that may be impacted by SGMA. This may include activities such as:
  - i. Door-to-door engagement
  - ii. Speaking at pre-existing community meetings
  - iii. Coordination with existing advisory groups or non-profit organizations as part of roundtable discussions.
- c. Groups include:
  - i. Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)
  - ii. Underrepresented communities
  - iii. Latino communities
  - iv. Remote private pumpers
- d. Recommendation: GSP Management Area Outreach Leads to manage targeted audience outreach activities, and coordinate activities among outreach team.

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

- a. Assess and define coordinating OVGA member agencies' outreach tools and resources available for Basin-wide outreach and engagement activities.

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

- a. 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.
  - i. For each GSP topic being discussed, develop a set of talking points that can be used by OVGA members when speaking to specific stakeholder groups or audiences. Talking points and messaging may be customized to specific stakeholder groups as appropriate.

- ii. 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.
- iii. Identify and communicate opportunities for public engagement and/or public comment during meetings on GSP development.
- iv. Provide clear messaging that the OVGA retains legal responsibility for final OVGA and GSP related decisions.

### Localized Outreach and Engagement Strategies

While consistent messaging is to be coherently coordinated at the Basin level, localized outreach should be coordinated among member agencies working in management areas through existing, trusted channels.

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.
  - a. Support local agencies and community organizations in disseminating information and engaging stakeholders in the following ways:
    - i. During standing board and/or community meetings
    - ii. Through monthly information pieces in newsletters or included in bills
    - iii. Disseminating information in both English and Spanish
  - b. Local trusted agencies and community organizations include but are not limited to [refer to Table 1 for specific groups]:
    - i. Civic Groups
    - ii. Mutual water companies
    - iii. DAC community meetings and leaders
    - iv. Growers associations and industry organizations
    - v. Resource conservation groups
    - vi. Local and regional environmental justice groups
    - vii. Inyo-Mono County Farm Bureaus
  - c. Leverage local, trusted resources for community meetings, such as schools, churches, and community centers.
    - i. Organize public meetings around explicit topics to specific stakeholders, including:
      1. As needed or requested, SGMA 101 meeting to inform stakeholders of important changes in groundwater management and how it may impact them.
      2. Meetings that explain components of the GSP, so that stakeholders can later provide meaningful input in the GSP development process.
      3. Meetings that detail when and how opportunities to provide input to the OVGA decision making and GSP development processes will occur.

4. Public meetings regarding fee structures to help people understand how to interpret the impacts on them (if/when applicable).
  - d. Logistics Considerations:
    - i. Make information and meetings accessible to various stakeholder groups.
    - ii. Provide information in easy to understand and streamlined terms.
    - iii. Provide information and facilitation in both English and Spanish.
    - iv. Hold meetings during hours that do not impede with regular work schedules (i.e., nights and weekends).
- 2. Utilize Existing Local Agency Resources**
- a. 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.
  - b. Disseminate consistent, coordinated messages and talking points through existing local newsletters, websites and social media.
  - c. Customize messages to audiences, providing easy to understand updates.
  - d. 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**
- a. To build on the Basin-wide outreach referenced above, it is recommended that each OVGA Management Area Outreach Lead develop additional locally-targeted communication strategies to engage difficult-to-reach communities and community members that will be impacted by SGMA. Groups include Disadvantaged Communities (DACs), underrepresented communities, Latino communities, and remote private pumpers.
  - b. Some groups may need to be engaged through channels that do not require internet access, via door-to-door outreach and other opportunities for face-to-face engagement.
  - c. OGVA member agencies may offer “office hours” or posted open times where interested members of the public can come in to casually discuss SGMA on their own schedule.

### Secondary, Conditional Communication Strategies

The following strategies and activities are options for increased stakeholder engagement, or to address particularly difficult discussions (due to, for example, political factors or limited stakeholder knowledge of content). These are for consideration on an as-needed basis to generate more or specialized stakeholder engagement and participation.

1. Develop and update Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on website
2. Create an inexpensive informational brochure
3. Develop a strategic media plan
4. Actively cultivate relationships and updates with state and local elected officials

5. Participate in related planning efforts in the local area and region
6. Create an annual electronic newsletter (annual report)
7. Engage stakeholders through personal outreach of members of the OVGA
8. Participate in local events with an informational booth, such as:
  - ChooChoo Swamp Meet (Bishop)
  - The Lone Pine Film Festival
  - The City Park
  - Earth Day Events

### 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 2) 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 2: Summary of Engagement Opportunities and Milestones

Timeframe	Milestone or Stage	Required Community Engagement Under SGMA	Essential & Localized Communication Strategies
<p><b>Between Notice of GSP Planning and June 30, 2021</b></p>	<p>During GSP Development</p>	<p>Public Workshops and other opportunities providing stakeholder avenues to participate in GSP development</p>	<p><i>Essential</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public workshops on GSP development (e.g. basin conditions, sustainable management criteria, etc.)</li> <li>• Develop and maintain centralized website and social media accounts</li> <li>• Email notices of public meetings</li> <li>• Newspaper notices of public workshops</li> </ul> <p><i>Localized</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make time in standing meetings for updates and information on GSP development</li> <li>• Develop newsletter updates</li> <li>• Disseminate updates via website and social media</li> </ul>
<p><b>Between Notice of GSP Planning and December, 2021</b></p>	<p>During GSP development</p>	<p>Active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the Basin</p>	<p><i>Essential</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide regular email notices and updates</li> <li>• Update website regularly</li> <li>• Convene bimonthly meetings of OVGA and technical consultants</li> <li>• Identify and communicate opportunities for public engagement and/or public comment during meetings on GSP development</li> <li>• Develop consistent, coordinated messages and talking points to effectively convey SGMA-related information to various audiences</li> <li>• Develop content appropriate to the audience and their interests, ensuring information can be easily understood</li> <li>• Update area legislative bodies at strategic milestones (and any other groups upon request)</li> </ul> <p><i>Localized</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize local channels and meetings to identify and communicate opportunities for public engagement and/or</li> </ul>

Timeframe	Milestone or Stage	Required Community Engagement Under SGMA	Essential & Localized Communication Strategies
			public comment during meetings on GSP development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage and support local agencies and community organizations in disseminating information and engaging stakeholders, including through existing community meetings, newsletters, websites, and social media</li> <li>• Organize public meetings around concrete impacts to specific stakeholders</li> <li>• Develop additional, locally-targeted communication strategies to engage difficult-to- reach communities and community members</li> </ul>
<b>GSP adoption no later than December, 2021</b>	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>	SEE ABOVE
<b>GSP adoption no later than December, 2021</b>	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>	SEE ABOVE
<b>Prior to GSA imposing fee or increasing fee</b>	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.</li> <li>• Post on project website and mail to any interested party who submits written request for mailed notice of</li> </ul>	SEE ABOVE

Timeframe	Milestone or Stage	Required Community Engagement Under SGMA	Essential & Localized Communication Strategies
		meetings on new or increased fees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No sooner than 10 days following public notice, hold a public meeting.</li> </ul>	

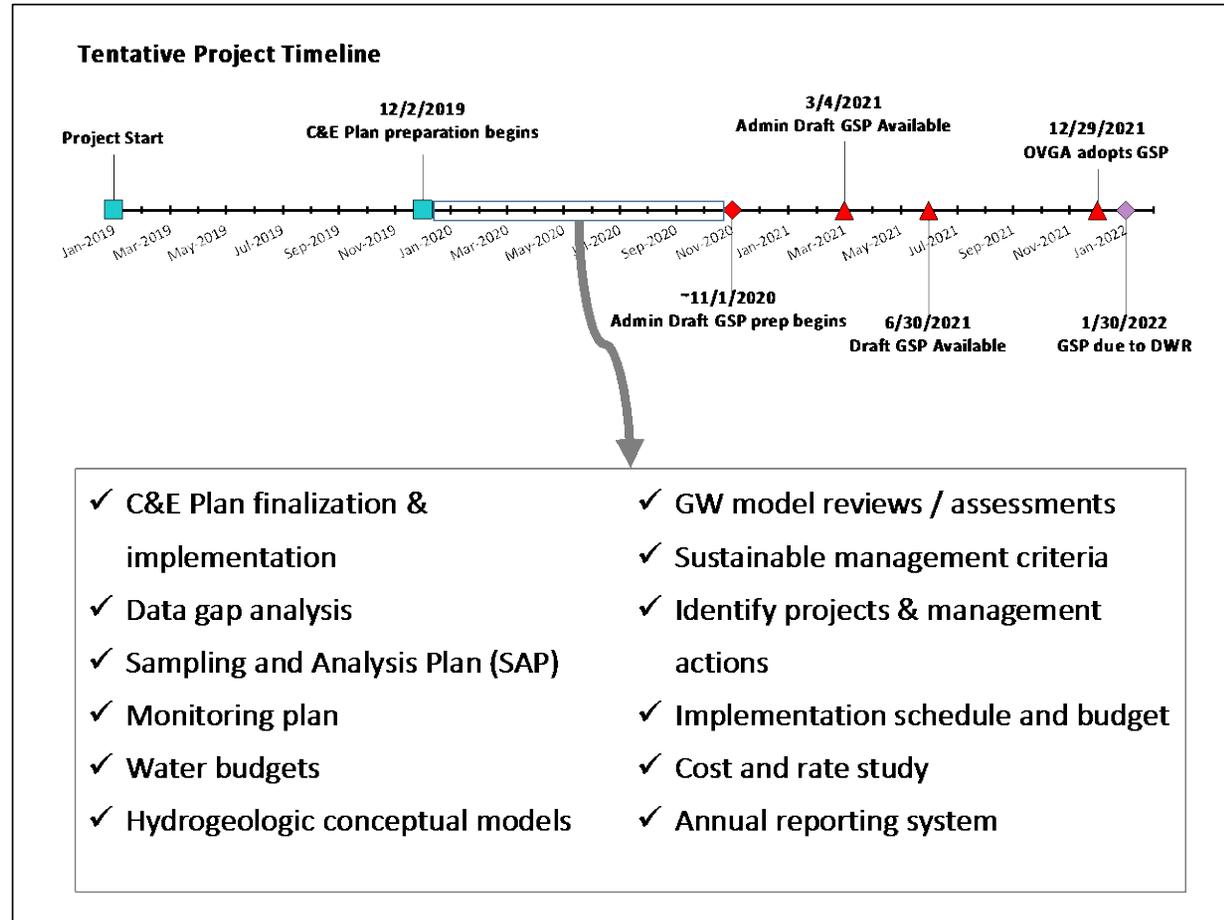
### Evaluation and Assessment

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

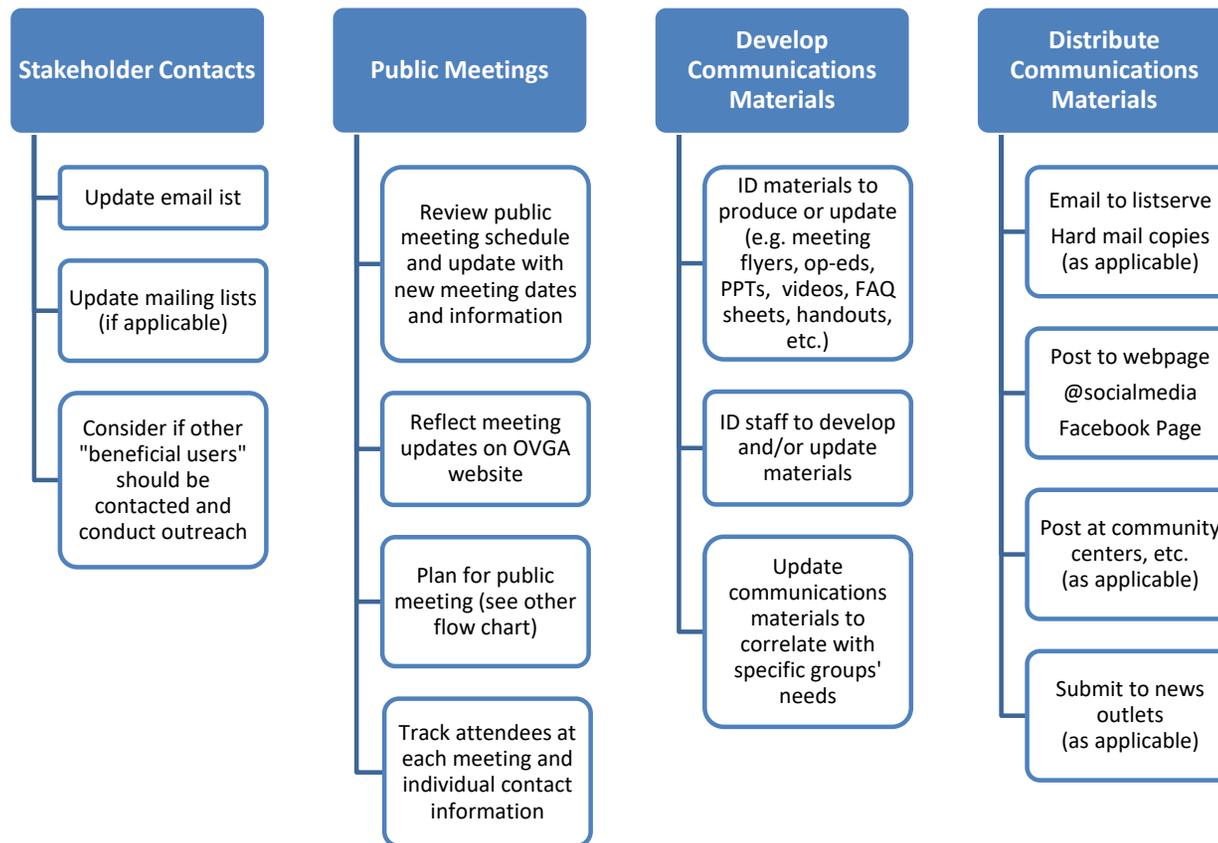
## Appendix I: Project Timeline for GSP Development

Figure 1. Approximate project timeline for GSP development.

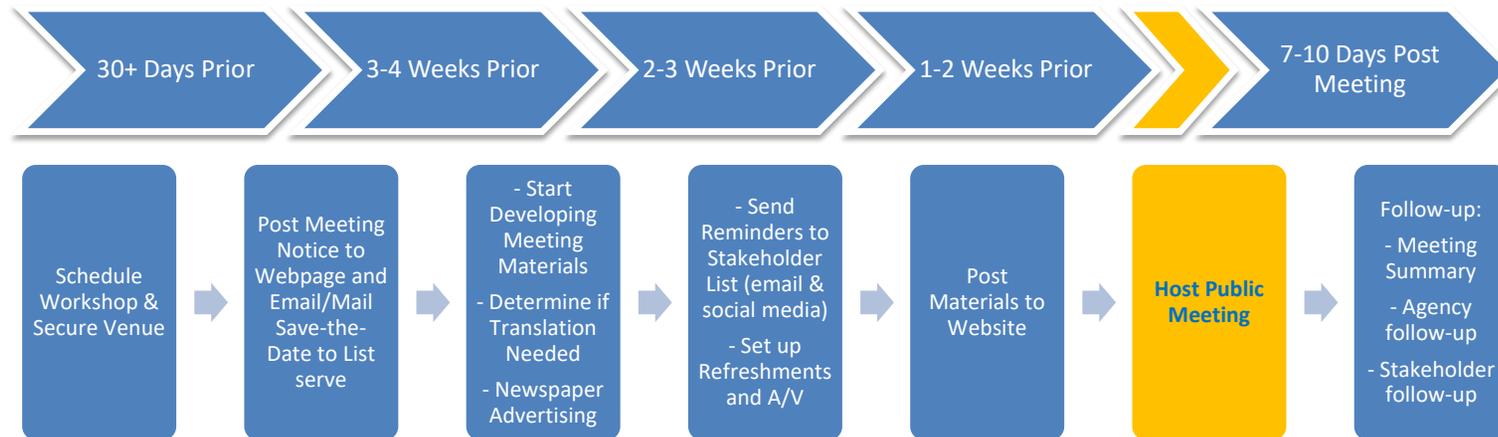


## Appendix II: GSP Outreach and Engagement Process Overview and Example Public Workshop Planning Process

**Figure 2.** GSP Outreach and Engagement Process Overview



**Figure 3.** Example Public Workshop Planning Process



## Appendix III: Recommendations for Public Workshop Planning

### Workshop Logistics Planning Example

- A. **Schedule Workshop:** with 21-30 days advanced notice; all parties agree on a suitable date and time for workshop(s). Consider timing of workshops based on target audiences. Alternatively consider hosting identical workshops one in the morning and one in the evening to target multiple audiences.
- B. **Venue:** select the venue with at least 30 days in advance, giving time to complete contracts (if not free). Utilize Member agency locations throughout Subbasin. Some location resources include: *Table to be completed.*

Mgmt. Area	Venue	Location	Capacity	Point of Contact

- C. **Refreshments** (optional): 7-14 days prior to the meeting, determine what food will be necessary. Depending on the length of the meeting and timing (i.e. a six-hour workshop from 10am-4pm would require lunch, evening meetings should include snacks or dinner) determine if simple refreshments, lunch, or dinner are required. Consider arranging for delivery or pick-up prior to the meeting.
- D. **Materials:** develop materials 7-14 days prior to the meeting. Determine if translation services are required.
- E. **Translators:** may include Spanish speakers. Translation may include translation of materials and/or in-person translation. If the meeting will require in-person translators, identify these persons 30 days in advance.

### Workshop Outreach Strategies Example

- A. **Newspaper advertising:** with 14-21 days advance notice and clear messaging approved by GSA.
- B. **Stakeholder Interested Parties list dissemination:** GSA and member agencies send information to customers via standard outreach protocols (posting in buildings, Board meetings, websites, newsletters, customer flyers, etc.)
- C. **E-mail notice** to existing interested parties list.
  - 1. Also promote to specific stakeholder groups. See list of Beneficial Users / Interested Parties (Table 1)
- D. **Social media:** Utilize existing or created Facebook or Twitter accounts.
- E. **GSA website:** Post materials and update homepage with call to action.

## Workshop Follow-up Example

- A. **Meeting Summary:** within 7-10 business days, develop a meeting summary highlighting action items, presentation content, stakeholder questions, and any discussion held. Include list of attendees for documentation.
- B. **Agency Follow-up:** within 7 business days, contact agency staff to debrief on workshop. Identify pros and cons of the meeting, lessons learned, and any improvements to make. Discuss roles, responsibilities, and deadlines for action items. Identify and obtain GSA approval on key messages for stakeholder follow-up.
- C. **Stakeholder Follow-up:** at the meeting or within 7 days, distribute a workshop evaluation for feedback on communication practices, content, and improvements to make. Create a summary of the evaluation responses.

Workshop	Timeframe	Possible Topics + Notes
Community Workshop #1	Summer 2020 August or September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Virtual</b> Meeting</li> <li>▪ Topics to discuss:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why this matters <a href="#">NO, brief intro</a></li> <li>- How to stay involved and provide input <a href="#">end of each workshop</a></li> <li>- Review GSP Components, Milestones, Action Plan</li> <li>- Basin Setting, Models, Water Budget <a href="#">NO</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Community Workshop #2	Winter 2020 November or December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Virtual</b> or Hybrid Meeting</li> <li>▪ GSP components compiled. Before or near start of development of Administrative Draft</li> <li>▪ Topics to discuss:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SMC, Undesirable Results, Baseline and projected water budgets</li> <li>- review of other technical topics as needed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Community Workshop #3	Spring 2021 March or April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Virtual or Hybrid Meeting</li> <li>▪ Topics to discuss:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Projects and Management Actions</li> <li>- Review of other technical topics as needed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Community Workshop #4	Summer 2021 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Virtual or Hybrid Meeting</li> <li>▪ Coincide with release of Draft GSP</li> <li>▪ Topics to discuss:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overview of GSP by chapter</li> <li>- Process to review + comment on GSP</li> <li>- Review of technical topics as needed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Community Workshop #5	<i>Winter 2021</i> December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Virtual or Hybrid Meeting</li><li>▪ Coincide with completion of review period</li><li>▪ Topics to discuss:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Revisions made to GSP in response to review period</li></ul></li></ul>
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## Appendix IV: Tribal Engagement

The OVGA recognizes the value and importance of directly engaging with tribes in GSP planning and SGMA implementation. Every tribal nation will have its own preferred level and method of engagement. The OVGA shall communicate directly with each tribe to collaboratively develop a communication and engagement plan that suits their needs. The OVGA will operate following these **key outreach principles**:

- Engage early and often
- Consider tribal beneficial uses in decision-making; 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
- Designate a tribal liaison(s) where appropriate
- Share resources for tribal involvement as is feasible

Tribes and tribal organizations within the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin are:

- Benton Paiute Tribe
- Big Pine Tribe
- Bishop Paiute Tribe
- Fort Independence Paiute Tribe
- Kutzadika'a Tribe
- Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe
- Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
- Owens Valley Indian Water Commission

## 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 following 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](#)

## Appendix V: Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Engagement

The OVGA plans to implement outreach strategies and translatable lessons learned from DAC involvement in the 2008-2011 Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Program. Pertinent excerpts from the published report, *Disadvantaged Communities and the Inyo-Mono IRWM Program: A study of the engagement of disadvantaged communities in Integrated Regional Water Management*, are below for quick reference. The complete report is available online at: [https://inyo-monowater.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IM\\_DAC\\_whitePaper\\_20140930\\_FINALcopy4Submittal.pdf](https://inyo-monowater.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IM_DAC_whitePaper_20140930_FINALcopy4Submittal.pdf)

### Lessons Learned from 2008-2011 IRWM DAC Outreach

- Understand who the target audience is (e.g., with whom you will be meeting) to understand where and when to meet (such as during the day vs. evening meetings)
- Target outreach materials and approach appropriately (e.g., is a Powerpoint presentation appropriate for the audience, or perhaps paper copies of simple handouts and maps along with a verbal description of the Program and time for questions?)
- DAC (and other) audiences are often interested in what other stakeholders are involved in the IRWM Program, what funding opportunities are available, technical trainings, and engineering assistance
- One-on-one meetings with individual communities and stakeholders may be more appropriate than trying to meet with several entities in one location
- It is important to be able to travel to the target community as there may not be time or funds for them to travel to outreach meetings
- Though there may be commonalities across regions, each community/DAC/tribe/water system/stakeholder has unique and individualized water-related concerns
- Several meetings may be required to engage new communities and involve them in the IRWM process. IRWM is a complex concept to explain to new stakeholders, and it is important to follow up from meetings to answer questions and provide additional information.
- It is important to recognize that outreach to and engagement of Native American tribes should not be “lumped in” with outreach to DACs. IRWM groups need to use outreach and communication techniques appropriate for tribes. These might include in-person communications, reaching out to tribal council members, and regular follow-up communications.
- Disadvantage can mean more than low income. There are other socioeconomic and cultural factors to consider when characterizing DACs and working to make resources available. The current simple definition affects what communities are engaged as DACs and to whom resources and funding are targeted.

This report also discusses outreach tools, stating that the **project webpage** was the most effective tool for information sharing. A **mobile-device version** of the website was also developed as many DAC members do not have home computers but can access the internet through cellular data.

With regard to printed materials, they found a **one-page, tri-fold brochure** offering IRWMP-specific information in a very brief format, directing reader to the website for more information, to be most useful to stakeholders.

## Appendix VI: SGMA-Required Outreach and Engagement 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]

GSAAs are given broad discretion in the methods and processes utilized to meet engagement requirements. SGMA explicitly authorizes GSAAs 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. **Local agencies seeking to become a GSA<sup>2</sup>** must issue public notice and hold a public hearing before doing so. The public notice must be consistent with Section 6066 of the Government Code. The hearing must take place in a county overlying the groundwater basin of interest. [CA Water Code Section 10723 (b)]

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

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<sup>2</sup> This item (1) has already been complied with for the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin.

do so upon making this request in writing. [CA Water Code Section 10730. (b) (2); 10723.2; 10723.4; and 10723.8. (a)]

2. **GSA's planning to develop a GSP<sup>3</sup>** 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)]
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)]

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<sup>3</sup> This item (2) has already been complied with for the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin.

## Appendix VII: Published 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 3 lists some essential SGMA educational and reference materials.

*Table 3. Educational and Reference Documents for SGMA Implementation*

Educational/Reference Document Titles	Publishing Entity	Date
<b>Groundwater Sustainability Agency Frequently Asked Questions</b> <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
<b>Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Emergency Regulations Guide</b> <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
<b>Collaborating for Success: Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation</b> <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 Scientists	July 2015
<b>The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: A Handbook to Understanding and Implementing the Law</b> <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
<b>SGMA Engagement With Tribal Governments</b> <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 VIII: Virtual Engagement Opportunities

Due to ongoing COVID-19 considerations and the need to modify and/or adapt stakeholder outreach and engagement efforts to COVID-19 realities and uncertainties, the OVGA may choose to implement Virtual Community Meetings over the next six to 18 months. A hybrid approach of virtual + in-person meetings may also be preferable.

This document describes some options and considerations for virtual stakeholder engagement.

### OVERVIEW

- Emphasis on virtual engagement for Summer and Fall, 2020
- Shorter meetings, hosted more frequently (60-120 min webinars)
- Offered at different times of the day to allow for maximum participation
- In-person or hybrid virtual + in person meetings possible for winter 2020/21

### VIRTUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

- Timing: Summer, Fall and Winter (to correspond with GSP milestones)
- Format: Online Zoom Meetings (or alternative webinar platform)
- Duration: 60 - 120 minute webinars
- Engagement Options:
  - Presentations and information sharing out to participants
  - Stakeholder interaction via call in (computer audio or telephone), chat box, submission of written comments in advance
  - Opportunities for technical/topic-specific “breakout room” discussions (using Zoom’s breakout room feature)
  - Ability to provide real-time Spanish interpretation
  - Ability to record meetings and archive on OVGA website
- Other Considerations:
  - Keep webinars short, 60 to 120 minutes, for maximum attention and retention of information
  - Consider hosting the same webinar twice, at two time slots (morning and evening) to allow for participants to select the time that most works for their schedule
  - Announce meeting 2-4 weeks in advance. Share materials 1-2 weeks in advance
  - Simultaneous live-stream meeting on Facebook Live
  - Real-time engagement with polling feature or surveys
  - Provide for informal “open house” Q&A session before and after official meeting for public to discuss with hydrogeologist, OVGA Board Member, others
  - With consideration of current CoVid safety restrictions, potential to offer in-person participation via satellite office locations.

- Possible Topics to Cover:
  - Basin Setting
  - Water Budget
  - Sustainable Management Criteria
    - Sustainability Indicators
    - Undesirable results
    - Minimum thresholds & measurable objectives
  - Baseline Pumping Allocations
  - Management Actions and Projects
  - Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems
  - Impacts to domestic well users
  - Discussion of topics currently under consideration/debate by the OVGA
  - Review of GSP Chapters and anticipated release dates