



Delta-Mendota Subbasin Communications Subcommittee

DRAFT CHARTER

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PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Communications Subcommittee is to coordinate stakeholder outreach and engagement activities related to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) among the twenty-four Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin. Subcommittee members will provide insight regarding the most effective methods of communication to their respective areas, will help develop improved communication methods, and will work in conjunction with other member to coordinate communications and outreach activities.

The objectives of the Communications Subcommittee are to:

- 1) Deliver clear and consistent messaging about SGMA across the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.
- 2) Inform and engage stakeholders, interested parties, and members about development and implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP).
- 3) Meet or exceed SGMA requirements for public and stakeholder engagement.

BACKGROUND

The Delta-Mendota Subbasin is one of sixteen subbasins within the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. The Delta-Mendota is a long, relatively narrow groundwater basin that covers portions of five counties: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera and Fresno. Following the passage of the SGMA in 2014, twenty-four GSAs have formed in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin:

- Aliso Water District GSA
- Central Delta-Mendota Region Multi-Agency GSA
- City of Dos Palos GSA
- City of Firebaugh GSA
- City of Gustine GSA
- City of Los Banos GSA
- City of Mendota GSA
- City of Newman GSA
- City of Patterson GSA
- County of Madera GSA #3
- DM-II GSA

- Farmers Water District
- Fresno County, Management Area A GSA
- Fresno County, Management Area B GSA
- Grasslands GSA
- Merced County, Delta-Mendota GSA
- Northwestern Delta-Mendota GSA
- Ora Loma Water District GSA
- Patterson Irrigation District GSA
- San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority GSA
- Turner Island Water District GSA #2
- West Stanislaus Irrigation District GSA
- West Stanislaus Irrigation District GSA #2
- Widren Water District GSA

These GSAs are collaborating in order to develop and implement GSPs. At this time, seven GSPs will be developed in the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.

SGMA includes required actions to ensure that GSPs are developed and implemented in close coordination with stakeholders, interested parties, and members of the public. Examples of this legislative intent include required public hearings, public notifications and establishment of an interested party database. These requirements were then rolled up within Water Code Section 10723.8 (a)(4), and obligate each GSA to provide a detailed explanation of how the interests of beneficial users would be considered in the development and operation of the GSA and development and implementation of the GSP.

It is the responsibility of each GSA to conduct outreach to its constituency and fulfill the outreach and engagement requirements of SGMA. However, many of the GSAs share audiences and a Communications Subcommittee can coordinate these activities across the GSAs and leverage multiple GSAs' resources to more efficiently and effectively engage stakeholders.

MEMBERSHIP

The Communications Subcommittee currently contains seven members and seven alternate members. Subcommittee representatives are self-selected by each GSP group and may be changed. Additional members may be added with approval from the Subcommittee.

1. Maria Encinas – City of Patterson
 - a. Alternate Representative:
2. Ric Ortega – Grassland Water and Resource Conservation District
 - a. Alternate Representative: John Beam
3. Walt Ward – Stanislaus County
 - a. Alternate Representative:
4. Palmer McCoy – Henry Miller Recreation District #2131
 - a. Alternate Representative:
5. Andrew Garcia – San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority (Authority)

- a. Alternate Representative:
6. Jordan Scott – Fresno County
 - a. Alternative: Christina Guzman – Fresno County
7. Jim Stillwell – Farmers Water District
 - a. Alternate Representative:

KEY TASKS

The primary activities that the Communications Subcommittee may undertake include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Developing and implementing intra-basin outreach strategies.
- Developing key messages on key SGMA topics.
- Providing content ideas for coordinated communications, including five coordinated SGMA workshops.
- Coordinating outreach activities across the Delta-Mendota Subbasin.
- Identifying new and existing outreach venues and communications channels and partners.
- Providing input on Delta-Mendota Subbasin website content and design.
- Identifying opportunities for integration or coordination of SGMA outreach activities with other regional projects or programs.
- Leveraging outreach tools and resources among GSAs.
- Sharing and promoting best practices through various media modes.
- Assessing Subbasin compliance towards SGMA requirements for outreach and engagement.
- Maintaining communication and coordination with other Subbasin and GSA committees to ensure clear and consistent information is being conveyed to stakeholders and the public.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members

Communications Subcommittee members agree to:

- Actively participate in meetings, contribute to the discussion, brainstorm, and share innovative ideas.
- Act as a liaison to communicate information to and from their organization.
- Review materials and provide input for improvement.
- Act in a manner that will enhance trust among fellow members.
- Contribute information to clarify issues and assumptions.
- Act collaboratively and seek common ground where possible.
- Attend Communications Subcommittee meetings.

Facilitator

The kick-off and initial Communications Subcommittee meetings will be led by a professional facilitator. The facilitator agrees to:

- Set the meeting agenda.

- Develop meeting slides, handouts, and materials, as needed, and circulate the materials to the group prior to the meeting date.
- Follow the meeting agenda and keep the meeting on-time.
- Respect the views of all Subcommittee members.
- Equally weigh the input of all Subcommittee members and incorporate Subcommittee feedback into written documents.
- Record Subcommittee member comments and develop meeting minutes.

Chair

In the absence of a meeting facilitator, the Communications Subcommittee Chair will assist Authority and consultant staff in facilitating Subcommittee meetings. The Communications Subcommittee Chair agrees to:

- Follow the meeting agenda and keep the meeting on-time.
- Respect the views of all Subcommittee members.
- Equally weigh the input of all Subcommittee members.
- [Prepare meeting minutes and provided to Authority Staff and its Consultant](#)

The Chair position is voluntary and will be rotated among the Subcommittee members. A different Subcommittee member will serve as Chair at each Subcommittee meeting. Prior to each meeting, Authority staff will contact the next Subcommittee member on the roster to confirm the member's role as Chair. If the designated Chair is not able to attend the meeting, that Subcommittee member's alternate representative will serve in the Chair role. If neither the designated Chair nor the alternate representative are able to attend, the next Subcommittee member on the roster will serve as Chair.

Authority Staff and Consultants

Authority and consultant staff agree to:

- Set the meeting agenda
- Send Subcommittee meeting invites to staff.
- Circulate meeting agendas to Subcommittee members.
- Develop meeting slides, handouts, and materials, as needed, and circulate the materials to the group prior to the meeting date.
- Record Subcommittee member comments and develop meeting minutes (in absence of facilitator).
- Post meeting agenda, materials, and minutes to the Delta-Mendota Subbasin website.

ATTENDANCE AND MEETING SCHEDULE

It is anticipated that the Communications Subcommittee will meet monthly, or on an as-needed basis. Attendance at every meeting is encouraged. Subcommittee members should anticipate giving an average of 2-3 hours per month to attend Subcommittee meetings and review Subcommittee meeting materials.

GROUND RULES

- Use common conversational courtesy.

- All ideas and points of view have value.
- Members will encourage innovation by listening to all ideas.
- Meetings will begin and end on time.
- Humor is welcome.
- Be comfortable.
- Electronics courtesy.
- All members take responsibility for success of the meeting.
- Meeting agenda will be sent in advance to members.
- Members will use a “parking lot” for ideas that come up, but are outside the scope of the meeting focus where they were raised.

DECISION MAKING

GSA and GSP groups will be responsible for conducting outreach activities to stakeholders and interested parties within their GSA boundaries. Therefore, decisions made at the Communications Subcommittee level apply only to coordinated outreach tasks and activities.

The Delta-Mendota Communications Subcommittee will operate as a consensus-based decision-making body. Consensus requires majority to approve a given course of action, but that the minority agree to go along with the course of action. If the minority opposes the course of action, consensus requires resolution by modifying the decision to remove objectionable features. One person can block action if objections cannot be resolved.

One GSP Group Representative or Alternative Representative shall vote on behalf of the GSP Group at the subcommittee level; if no GSP Group Representative or Alternate Representative is present, one individual working on the Subcommittee on behalf of the Parties in a GSP Group shall vote on behalf of the GSP Group. The Subcommittee shall report voting results and provide information to the Coordination Committee but shall not be entitled to make determination or determination that are binding on the Parties.

Straw polls or requests for general preferences may also be conducted. These types of inquiries are for the purpose of refining ideas, providing direction to the project staff, or both.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Communications Subcommittee resources include the following:

- Communications Plan (Stantec 2017)
- [Groundwater Sustainable Plan Emergency Regulations Guide](#) (DWR, 2016)
- [Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Digital Toolkit](#) (DWR)
- [Stakeholder Engagement Requirements by Phase](#) (DWR, 2017)
- [Engagement with Tribal Governments Guidance Document](#) (DWR, 2017)
- [Draft Guidance Document for Groundwater Sustainable Plan Stakeholder Communication and Engagement](#) (DWR, 2017)
- [Collaborating for Success: Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation](#) (Community Water Center, 2015)
- [Inclusive Public Engagement](#) (Institute for Local Government)
- [Public Participation Pillars](#) (International Association for Public Participation)