

Chowchilla GSP Determined Incomplete

Today, January 28, 2022, the Chowchilla Subbasin (Subbasin) and the four Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) representing the Subbasin (Chowchilla Water District, County of Madera – Chowchilla, County of Merced – Chowchilla, and Triangle T Water District) received official notification from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) that the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) submitted in January 2020 was determined to be incomplete.

The GSAs submitted their GSPs to DWR in January 2020, which outlined a plan for achieving groundwater sustainability in the Subbasin by 2040, in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The GSP developed for the Subbasin and submitted in January 2020 was the result of extensive technical work and stakeholder engagement spanning over two years leading up to the submittal. The GSP is the product of this process and reflects a balance of local interests across a very broad and diverse cross-section of stakeholders and beneficial users.

The GSP deficiencies identified in today's incomplete determination come as no surprise, they are the same as those identified in DWR's November 18, 2021 letter initiating consultation and relate to the following topics:

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels sustainable management criteria and details related to the Domestic Well Mitigation Program;
- Land subsidence sustainable management criteria; and
- Applicability of sustainable management criteria related to interconnected surface water in the Subbasin.

Since receipt of DWR's November 18, 2021 letter, the GSA's have proactively initiated work to address the deficiencies identified and have held several meetings with DWR to better understand their findings. Today's determination and DWR's November 18, 2021 letter are based strictly on the content of the GSP and actions taken by the GSAs leading up to submission of the final GSP in January 2020. It is important to note that since submitting the GSP in January 2020, the Chowchilla Subbasin GSAs have proceeded with GSP implementation and have taken numerous actions during the past two years to implement projects, management actions, and additional studies to enhance our understanding of groundwater conditions and the many beneficial users of groundwater in the Subbasin. A summary of our actions to date and a general outline of our plan to address the defined deficiencies within the 180-day consultation period can be seen in our [January 24, 2022 correspondence to DWR](#).

The GSAs in the Chowchilla Subbasin have been working hard to implement the GSP submitted in 2020 and have made substantial progress towards reaching sustainable groundwater management in the initial two years, with much work ahead before 2040. The GSAs in the Subbasin look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with DWR and to revising the GSP during the 180-day consultation period to address deficiencies identified by DWR and achieve approval of the revised GSP.