



# **BIG VALLEY BASIN STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

## **DRAFT**

**SOLICITING PUBLIC INPUT AND FEEDBACK  
ON THIS DRAFT PLAN FROM  
SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 15, 2021, AT  
[WATER.RESOURCES@LAKECOUNTYCA.GOV](mailto:WATER.RESOURCES@LAKECOUNTYCA.GOV)**

**PREPARED FOR:**  
Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability  
Agency (BVGSA)  
Lake County, California

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**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021**

## 1 **Executive Summary**

2 The Big Valley Basin Communication and Engagement Plan (C&E Plan) provides a high-level  
3 overview of potential near- and long-term outreach strategies, tactics, and tools that support  
4 public and stakeholder communication actions, as required by the Sustainable Groundwater  
5 Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) and for consideration by Big Valley Groundwater  
6 Sustainability Agency (BVGSA).

7 This C&E Plan recognizes that communication evolves, and so it broadly describes potential  
8 actions in categories. These actions may be implemented by the BVGSA to inform and engage  
9 stakeholders about the development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), the delivery  
10 of clear and consistent messaging about SGMA, and to comply with the SGMA outreach  
11 requirements. The potential outreach tools and activities identified in this document were  
12 informed by a Stakeholder Assessment conducted in the Summer and Fall of 2020, input from  
13 members of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee (GSPAC), and  
14 information gathered from public meetings. Both the Stakeholder Assessment and this C&E  
15 Plan were funded through a Facilitation Support Services grant from the California Department  
16 of Water Resources (DWR).

## 17 **Outreach Tools**

18 This Plan identifies several potential tools to support communication and engagement activities  
19 with stakeholders in the Lake County's Big Valley Basin. For the purposes of this C&E Plan,  
20 stakeholders are defined as beneficial users of groundwater in the basin or individuals or  
21 organizations with an interest or stake in the management of groundwater resources in the  
22 region. Identified tools include the following:

- 23 • **Project Website:** The BVGSA has updated its webpages  
24 ([http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs\\_Proj](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Proj)  
25 [ects/Big\\_Valley\\_GSP.htm](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Proj)) to provide information about SGMA and to house BVGSA  
26 meeting and outreach materials.
- 27 • **Interested Parties Database:** Pursuant to the requirements of SGMA, the BVGSA has  
28 developed and will maintain an Interested Party Database. Opting-in to the database will  
29 be a simple process via a *Stay Connected* online form, with the ability to request  
30 inclusion, should someone not have access to the form. The Database will be used to  
31 notify stakeholders of pending meetings and workshops, opportunities for public  
32 comment, and notices of other GSA outreach actions.
- 33 • **Informational Materials:** The BVGSA will develop template outreach materials during the  
34 GSP process. These materials may include informational fact sheets, template  
35 presentation slides, notices, and new releases. Materials may be translated, as needed,  
36 into Spanish or other languages.

37

## 38 **Outreach Activities**

39 This Plan identifies a variety of potential outreach activities to provide opportunities for  
40 interested parties and stakeholders to stay informed and engaged in the development of the

41 GSP. These potential outreach activities seek to build and expand public awareness of the  
42 BVGSA, groundwater in the Big Valley Basin, and SGMA and to actively engage key  
43 stakeholder groups to coordinate and collaborate on technical issues important for GSP  
44 development and implementation. Below is a summary of existing and potential additional  
45 outreach opportunities.

- 46 • Groundwater Sustainability Plan Development Meetings: The ongoing way for members  
47 of the public to provide input on development of the GSP is by attending and providing  
48 public comment at regular GSPAC monthly meetings, or to attend any one of the series  
49 of technical subcommittee meetings that are publicly noticed and open for anyone to  
50 join.
- 51 • Board of Directors Briefings: BVGSA representatives or technical consulting staff may  
52 conduct periodic presentations to the Lake County Board of Supervisors, as the sitting  
53 Board of Directors for the agency. These presentations are intended to provide updates  
54 on GSP progress and next steps and to respond to questions.
- 55 • Public Meetings and Workshops: In support of plan development, the BVGSA will  
56 periodically host public meetings or workshops aimed at educating members of the  
57 public about key GSP topics, and to solicit input on technical content and draft GSP  
58 sections and chapters. It is anticipated that up to seven workshops will be held between  
59 Spring 2021 and Winter 2022.
- 60 • Community Presentations: The BVGSA may provide brief, high-level overviews of the  
61 GSP process and status at meetings hosted by various civic, nonprofit, and community  
62 groups in the Big Valley Basin.
- 63 • Partnerships with Local Organizations: The BVGSA may establish partnerships with  
64 trusted organizations in the basin to broaden the dissemination of SGMA information  
65 and to connect with specific stakeholder groups. This may include sending these  
66 organizations notices and informational materials for distribution to their stakeholders,  
67 cohosting events or workshops, and/or holding briefings with partners' leadership.
- 68 • In-Person Outreach at Community Events: The BVGSA may also conduct targeted  
69 outreach to specific stakeholder groups during community events. These gatherings  
70 would provide an opportunity to distribute informational materials while allowing an  
71 agency representative to talk to people about SGMA, groundwater in Big Valley Basin,  
72 and the GSP process.

74 **Groundwater Sustainability Plan Comment Process and Adoption Outreach**

75 The BVGSA will release draft GSP sections and chapters for public review and comment as  
76 content is developed. Interested parties will be able to view draft chapters on the BVGSA  
77 webpages and to submit comments remotely via email or in-person during any of the GSPAC  
78 meetings, related subcommittee meetings, or in public meetings. The draft chapters may be  
79 revised according to comments received during the respective comment periods.

80 It is currently envisioned that a complete Public Draft GSP will be released for public review in  
81 late Fall 2021, for a public comment period. A summary of the comments received during this

82 period will be attached to the Final GSP and posted on the BVGSA webpages. The Final GSP  
83 will be adopted at a public hearing and then submitted to DWR no later than January 31, 2022.  
84

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

BVGSA	Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency
CASGEM	California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring
C&E Plan	Communication and Engagement Plan
District	Lake County Watershed Protection District
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
FSS	Facilitation Support Services
GDE	groundwater dependent ecosystem
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSPAC	Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
MHI	median household income
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

## 1 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2 1.1 About the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

3 The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) was signed into law by  
 4 Governor Jerry Brown on September 16, 2014—three years after the start of California’s historic  
 5 drought. The legislation requires local public agencies and newly formed Groundwater  
 6 Sustainability Agencies (GSA) in high- and medium-priority subbasins to meet certain  
 7 requirements for the long-term sustainable management of California’s groundwater resources.  
 8 These requirements include the following:

- 9 • June 30, 2017: Establish GSAs (or equivalent) for all high- and medium-priority basins.  
 10 Water Code § 10724(b)
- 11 • July 1, 2017: County must affirm or disaffirm responsibility as GSA if no GSA has been  
 12 established. Water Code § 10724(b)
- 13 • Jan. 31, 2022: All non-critically overdrafted high- and medium-priority basins must be  
 14 managed under a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Water Code § 10720.7(a)(1)
- 15 • On April 1, following GSP adoption and annually thereafter, GSAs will provide reports on  
 16 progress towards sustainability to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR).  
 17 Water Code § 10728

18 Oversight of these requirements is provided by DWR with potential intervention by the State  
 19 Water Resources Control Board if management activities are determined to be inadequate.

#### 20 1.1.1 Groundwater Sustainability Plan Emergency Regulations

21 Following the passage of SGMA, DWR embarked on a series of public and agency meetings to  
 22 develop the GSP Emergency Regulations. These regulations were released in July 2016 and  
 23 are chaptered under the California Code of Regulations Title 23, Waters (§350-§358.4). In  
 24 conjunction with the release of these regulations, DWR published the Groundwater  
 25 Sustainability Plan Emergency Regulations Guide. This guide summarizes and defines the  
 26 processes and requirements for GSA formation found in Title 23, the development and  
 27 implementation of GSPs, the responsibilities of DWR—and by extension the State Water  
 28 Resources Control Board (State Water Board)—and inter-basin coordination (§357.2).

29 The Big Valley Basin Communication and Engagement Plan (C&E Plan) describes methods,  
 30 tools, and activities available to the BVGSA as it undertakes communication and engagement  
 31 activities identified in the GSP Emergency Regulations and chaptered in California Code of  
 32 Regulations Section 354.10:

33 *Each plan shall include a summary of information relating to notification and*  
 34 *communication by the agency with other agencies and interested parties*  
 35 *including the following:*

36 *(a) A description of the beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the basin,*  
 37 *including the land uses and property interests potentially affected by the use of*



- 38 *groundwater in the basin, the types of parties representing those interests, and*  
 39 *the nature of consultation with those parties.*
- 40 *(b) A list of public meetings at which the plan was discussed or considered by the*  
 41 *agency.*
- 42 *(c) Comments regarding the plan received by the agency and a summary of any*  
 43 *responses by the agency.*
- 44 *(d) A communication section of the plan that includes the following:*
- 45 *(1) An explanation of the agency’s decision-making process.*
- 46 *(2) Identification of opportunities for public engagement and a discussion of how*  
 47 *public input and response will be used.*
- 48 *(3) A description of how the agency encourages the active involvement of diverse*  
 49 *social, cultural and economic elements of the population within the basin.*

## 50 **1.2 About the Big Valley Basin**

51 There are a total of 515 groundwater basins and subbasins in the State of California. The Big  
 52 Valley Basin (DWR Bulletin 118 Basin Number 5-015) is located entirely within Lake County. It  
 53 is one of two DWR-designated basins in Lake County, with the other being Scotts Valley Basin  
 54 that has a low-priority designation. Big Valley Basin is one of the 94 basins and subbasins that  
 55 have been designated as high or medium priority by DWR’s California Statewide Groundwater  
 56 Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) program. With CASGEM data and analysis, DWR has  
 57 classified the Big Valley Basin as a medium-priority basin. This classification requires the GSA  
 58 in the basin to submit a GSP to DWR no later than January 31, 2022.

## 59 **1.3 Previous Groundwater Efforts in Big Valley Basin**

60 The Lake County Watershed Protection District (District) initiated the original well monitoring  
 61 network in the Big Valley groundwater basin in the late 1940s, and it has provided routine  
 62 monthly well monitoring in the basin since the early 1990s. In the early 2000s, the District  
 63 established a Groundwater Database for tracking well measurements for both the monthly well  
 64 collection and the bi-annual well collection. The District also participates in the DWR CASGEM  
 65 program, where seasonal and long-term groundwater elevation trends are tracked for certain  
 66 wells. This historical monitoring has aided in planning efforts throughout the basin, such as the  
 67 development of the following documents: 1967 Big Valley Groundwater Report, 1999 Big Valley  
 68 Groundwater Management Plan, 2003 Big Valley Recharge Investigation, 2006 Lake County  
 69 Groundwater Management Plan, and the 2019 Annual Big Valley Report. These reports can be  
 70 found on the BVGSA webpages at

71 [http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs Projects/Big](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Protocols/Projects/Big_Valley_GSP/Advisory_Committee_Documents.htm)  
 72 [\\_Valley GSP/Advisory Committee Documents.htm](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Protocols/Projects/Big_Valley_GSP/Advisory_Committee_Documents.htm).

73

#### 74 **1.4 About the Big Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency**

75 The Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (BVGSA) has formed in response to the  
76 regulations set forth by SGMA. A 2019 resolution by the Lake County Board of Supervisors  
77 formally established the BVGSA and tasked it with managing SGMA-related activities in basin.  
78 The BVGSA is working to develop a single GSP for the Big Valley Basin, conduct general and  
79 targeted outreach communication and engagement activities, and working toward GSP  
80 implementation with the intent to achieve groundwater sustainability in the Big Valley Basin.

#### 81 **1.5 About the Big Valley Basin Communication and Engagement Plan**

82 This C&E Plan was developed by Stantec in coordination with the BVGSA, with funding  
83 provided by DWR's SGMA Facilitation Support Services (FSS) program. The Plan provides a  
84 structure for potential communication and engagement activities that will support the  
85 development, adoption, and implementation of a GSP for Big Valley Basin. The purpose of the  
86 Plan is to provide options that may aid the BVGSA and technical teams as they work to: (1)  
87 meet the regulatory requirements of SGMA, (2) support the GSP development processes  
88 (technical, policy, and others, as applicable), and (3) accomplish the communication and  
89 engagement objectives specific to the members of the BVGSA.

90 Every chapter of this C&E Plan begins with the California Water Code or California Code of  
91 Regulations section(s) identifying the applicable requirements for public outreach and  
92 engagement under SGMA. Introduction of these requirements serve as a reminder of the  
93 applicable regulatory and statutory requirements of SGMA, and they establish content  
94 development for inclusion in the BVGSA GSP.

95 **2.0 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

96 **Legal Requirements:**

**§354.10 (d)** A communication section of the Plan that includes the following:

- 1) An explanation of the Agency's decision-making process.

97

98 The BVGSA has been tasked with overseeing development of a GSP for the Big Valley Basin,  
 99 and it serves as the administrative body for public outreach and all phases of the GSP under  
 100 SGMA. The five members of the Lake County Board of Supervisors serve as the Board of  
 101 Directors for the Lake County Watershed Protection District, and they thereby act as the  
 102 BVGSA. Big Valley Basin includes territory under the Lake County Board of Supervisors District  
 103 4 and District 5 regions.

104 Through a chartered process, the BVGSA Board of Directors created the Big Valley Basin  
 105 Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee (GSPAC), a group of stakeholder  
 106 representatives that reflect local beneficial uses and users of groundwater. The eleven-member  
 107 GSPAC is coordinating on all basin-wide outreach and implementation efforts and activities. The  
 108 GSPAC members and the entities they represent are also consulting and coordinating, both  
 109 individually and collectively as a group, with community organizations and nonprofits to support  
 110 or implement outreach efforts and activities.

111 Pursuant to SGMA regulation §354.10 (d), the Big Valley Basin GSP will contain a description of  
 112 the GSA's decision-making process, which will include their governance structure. Consistent  
 113 with the GSPAC charter, administrative and plan-development activities of BVGSA has been  
 114 delegated to GSPAC members by the BVGSA Board of Directors. These GSPAC  
 115 representatives will be utilized to solicit input, help guide public outreach activities, provide  
 116 guidance on GSP elements, and to achieve adoption of the GSP.

117 **3.0 BENEFICIAL USES AND USERS**

118 **Legal Requirements:**

**§354.10** Each plan shall include a summary of information relating to notification and communication by the Agency with other agencies and interested parties including the following:

- (1) A description of the beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the basin, including the land uses and property interests potentially affected by the use of groundwater in the basin, the types of parties representing those interests, and the nature of consultation with those parties.

119

120 SGMA requires that each GSP include a description of beneficial uses and users of  
 121 groundwater in the basin, and to describe the nature of consultation with those parties.  
 122 California Water Code §10723.2 identifies beneficial user types, including:

- 123 • Agricultural well owners
- 124 • Domestic well owners
- 125 • Municipal well operators
- 126 • Public water systems
- 127 • Local land-use planning agencies
- 128 • Environmental users of groundwater
- 129 • Surface water users
- 130 • Federal government
- 131 • California Native American Tribes
- 132 • Disadvantaged communities (DAC)
- 133 • Groundwater elevation monitoring entities

134 As part of its initial GSA formation notification, the BVGSA provided a preliminary list of  
 135 beneficial users within Big Valley Basin. These actions centered around leveraging existing  
 136 relationships with stakeholders in the basin and initially connecting with participants who had  
 137 knowledge of water-related issues in the region. Stakeholders identified in the initial notification  
 138 included:

- 139 • Agricultural water users, including small individual landowners that rely on groundwater  
 140 for agriculture
- 141 • California Native American Tribes
- 142 • DACs
- 143 • Domestic well owners

- 144 • Environmental uses and users
- 145 • Improvement districts and other special districts that own or maintain water infrastructure
- 146 • Land-use planning agencies or organizations

147 This C&E Plan identifies proposed tools and activities to engage and consult with each of these  
148 beneficial users in development of the GSP for the Big Valley Basin. In some cases, these  
149 beneficial users will be consulted through the general public and stakeholder outreach activities  
150 identified in **Section 4.3**. In other cases, targeted outreach activities may be needed, and  
151 targeted stakeholder outreach activities are described in **Section 4.4**.

152 **4.0 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

153 Legal Requirements:

§354.10 (d)

- (2) Identification of opportunities for public engagement and a discussion of how public input and response will be used.
- (3) A description of how the Agency encourages the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of population within the basin.
- (4) The method the Agency shall follow to inform the public about progress implementing the Plan, including the status of projects and actions.

154

155 Consistent with SGMA, the BVGSA intends to develop and implement their GSP in close  
 156 coordination with the public and stakeholders through various outreach tools and activities. It is  
 157 important to note that these tools and activities can, and should, evolve and adapt as new  
 158 stakeholders are identified and as new outreach needs arise. Thoughtful communication  
 159 planning provides a foundation for consistent and progressive engagement with diverse social,  
 160 cultural, and economic stakeholder communities within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Big  
 161 Valley Basin.

162 Communication and engagement activities described in this section include tools, activities, and  
 163 strategies tailored to the unique needs of the stakeholders within the Big Valley Basin. These  
 164 tools and activities have either already been completed, are currently in progress, or may be  
 165 scheduled to be initiated or completed on an as-needed basis. They draw from results of the Big  
 166 Valley Basin Stakeholder Assessment, further described below, and establish and maintain  
 167 stakeholders’ awareness and understanding of SGMA, the BVGSA, and the GSP development  
 168 process.

169 **4.1 Stakeholder Assessment**

170 The Big Valley Basin Stakeholder Assessment (Stakeholder Assessment) was conducted by  
 171 Stantec (outreach consultant) in Summer and Fall 2020 on behalf of the BVGSA. The purpose  
 172 of the Stakeholder Assessment was to evaluate stakeholders’ initial knowledge of SGMA and  
 173 groundwater management practices in the Big Valley Basin, and to establish goals and  
 174 strategies for public outreach, communication, and engagement to achieve SGMA compliance.  
 175 Stantec conducted the Stakeholder Assessment in three parts: a pre-interview stakeholder  
 176 survey, individual one-on-one interviews, and follow-up stakeholder sessions to review findings  
 177 and to solicit additional input. This section describes each of these parts and summarizes the  
 178 key Stakeholder Assessment findings.

179 **4.1.1 Stakeholder Pre-Survey**

180 The first part of the Stakeholder Assessment was a stakeholder pre-survey to assess an  
 181 identified group of stakeholders’ understanding and perspectives on key SGMA topics and  
 182 groundwater conditions in Big Valley Basin. The surveys were sent in Summer and Fall 2020,  
 183 prior to individual one-hour interview sessions with each of the identified stakeholders.

184 **4.1.2 Stakeholder Assessment Interviews**

185 The second part of the Stakeholder Assessment was a series of one-on-one interviews with  
 186 stakeholders that were identified by the BVGSA as beneficial users in the Big Valley Basin. The  
 187 purpose of the interviews was to gauge community knowledge of SGMA, local groundwater  
 188 efforts, and to gather information on preferred methods for public outreach in the Big Valley  
 189 Basin. At the onset, BVGSA identified 10 beneficial user stakeholders as candidates to  
 190 participate in the interviews. As facilitators of the Stakeholder Assessment, Stantec conducted  
 191 interviews with 9 stakeholders representing the following beneficial user groups: agricultural  
 192 water users, improvement districts/other special districts, land use agencies, private users-  
 193 schools, and Native American Tribes. Two additional categories of beneficial users were  
 194 identified as high priority and sought out during the Stakeholder Assessment—representatives  
 195 for disadvantaged communities and domestic well owners—but initial interviewee candidates  
 196 did not complete the process or were not located. Both of these beneficial user groups remained  
 197 a high priority as the GSPAC was being developed and in long-range planning; both categories  
 198 have identified representation positions on the GPSAC.

199 Prior to each Stakeholder Assessment interview, the participants were asked to fill out a pre-  
 200 meeting questionnaire about their background, experience with groundwater issues, and  
 201 general knowledge of SGMA. Stantec compared the pre-survey and interview responses from  
 202 each participant to that of other interviewees, as well as to those of other survey participants.  
 203 The results of this analysis was a discussion topic during the interviews, to gauge both  
 204 individual knowledge of groundwater issues and each participant’s assessment of community  
 205 knowledge of groundwater efforts and activities. The other discussion topics included  
 206 expectations for and barriers to the GSP development process, priorities for water use in the  
 207 basin, and activities and communication channels for stakeholder outreach. The feedback and  
 208 input received from each stakeholder interview was compared and contrasted with the other  
 209 responses, then aggregated to create a set of stakeholder findings.

210 **4.1.3 Stakeholder Assessment Findings**

211 Stantec staff collated and analyzed the results of the interviews to identify common trends and  
 212 deviations between interviewees and perceptions of community needs and knowledge. The  
 213 results of this analysis were summarized in a series of presentation slides. Stantec staff  
 214 presented the Stakeholder Assessment findings summary to all interview participants in two  
 215 stakeholder sharing sessions in Spring 2021, to provide additional opportunities for their input  
 216 and direction at the onset of GSP efforts. Key findings from the Big Valley Basin Stakeholder  
 217 Assessment include the following:

- 218 • Big Valley Basin groundwater is in good stead, with no critical issues to address other  
 219 than potential effects from drought.
- 220 • Of the interviews conducted, there was an average time of 37 years spent living in the  
 221 basin among the stakeholders interviewed.
- 222 • Stakeholders are most concerned about the costs and potential financial burden of  
 223 implementing SGMA.
- 224 • There is an interest in continuing with stakeholder and community engagement and  
 225 outreach as it relates to Big Valley GSP development and implementation.

- Members of the general public do not have a strong understanding of the roles and responsibility of the District and groundwater management, historical groundwater efforts, and the overall SGMA process.

The Stakeholder Assessment findings served as the basis for many of the selected outreach tools and activities recommended in this C&E Plan. It is important to note that the Stakeholder Assessment was based on a statistically small sample size and some results may not represent the opinion of the majority of stakeholders in the basin. This C&E Plan reflects both the findings from the Stakeholder Assessment as well as discussions with the GSAs representatives and best practices for stakeholder engagement in groundwater sustainability planning. It is vital to note that what is reflected in this current C&E Plan is an initial effort to communicate with both stakeholders and the public, and the tools, methods, and activities for outreach and engagement should be constantly evaluated and updated as the GSP process moves from development and adoption into implementation.

**4.2 Outreach Tools**

This section describes the collection of tools the BVGSA has developed, plans to develop, or may develop to disseminate information to the public and engage stakeholders in support of the GSP. The BVGSA intends to, on an as-needed basis, translate materials in Spanish or other languages to reach non-English-language communities. Each tool is evaluated to see how it can work most effectively with other tools and resources—and a premium is put on materials that are easy to access and that provide information for varied levels of knowledge on groundwater issues.

**4.2.1 Website**

The BVGSA has developed websites to keep stakeholders and other interested parties informed of GSP development, adoption, and future implementation activities. The BVGSA web pages are housed under the Lake County Water Resources Department ([http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs Projects/Big Valley GSP.htm](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Protocols/Big_Valley_GSP.htm)) website. The site includes copies of informational, background, technical, and planning documents; GSPAC meeting agendas and materials; and information on the Big Valley Basin. The site includes a simple *Stay Connected* form for gathering contact information for the Big Valley GSP Interested Parties Database. In addition, the BVGSA site has been the location of public postings of draft GSP sections to solicit public review and input. As the GSP is submitted in January 2022 and the move is made toward implementation, the webpages for the BVGSA will be streamlined, an archive of all materials will be available, and the site will become a hub for notifications, GSP updated information, and guidance on getting involved in Big Valley Basin groundwater issues.

**4.2.2 Interested Parties Databases**

California Water Code §10723.8 requires a GSA to “establish and maintain a list of persons interested in receiving notices regarding plan preparation, meeting announcements, and availability of draft plans, maps, and other relevant documents.” Pursuant to this requirement, the BVGSA has developed an Interested Parties Database—a list of individuals, organizations, or agencies that have expressed interest in being informed about BVGSA activities and efforts related to the GSP. The BVGSA uses the contacts in its Interested Parties Databases for



268 notifications related to public meetings, GSPAC meetings, workshops, and announcements  
 269 related to SGMA implementation in the Big Valley Basin. Interested parties can self-select to be  
 270 added to the Interested Parties Databases by filling out the simple form on the BVGSA webpage  
 271 or by contacting a GSA representative in the Lake County Water Resources Department or on  
 272 the GSPAC.

273 **4.2.3 Informational Materials**

274 The BVGSA intends to develop a suite of informational materials aimed at educating members  
 275 of the public and stakeholders about key SGMA topics, and for keeping interested parties  
 276 informed about GSP development and implementation. These materials can be used to bridge  
 277 information gaps that may exist related to SGMA and groundwater conditions in the Big Valley  
 278 Basin. As needs arise, the BVGSA intends to offer and adapt materials over time as the GSP is  
 279 completed, adopted, and implemented. As needed, the BVGSA may have materials translated  
 280 into non-English languages, to reach specific-language communities. As such, these documents  
 281 are fit-for-purpose outreach tools that include the following:

282 *Fact Sheets*

283 The BVGSA may develop a set of informational fact sheets aimed at educating members of the  
 284 public about SGMA and key topics identified in the GSP. The purpose of the fact sheets is to  
 285 prepare interested parties to provide meaningful input on GSP-related elements and to  
 286 encourage engagement at public meetings and workshops. Fact sheet topics may include the  
 287 following:

- 288 • SGMA 101: Aimed at a general audience, this fact sheet provides an introductory-level  
 289 overview of SGMA, the Big Valley Basin, and the GSP process and implementation.
- 290 • Groundwater Conditions: This fact sheet educates stakeholders about historical and  
 291 current groundwater conditions in the Big Valley Basin, including groundwater supply,  
 292 storage, and quality.
- 293 • Water Budget: This fact sheet explains a water budget, water budget inputs/outputs, and  
 294 how the water budget will be used as part of the GSP.
- 295 • Sustainable Management Criteria: This fact sheet defines key terms related to  
 296 sustainable management criteria, including minimum thresholds and measurable  
 297 objectives, and describe how the sustainable management criteria will be used to  
 298 manage groundwater conditions in the basin.
- 299 • Overview of the BVGSA GSP: This fact sheet provides an overview and explanation of  
 300 each chapter of the GSP, and then describes the GSP process and opportunities to get  
 301 involved.

302 The fact sheets can be distributed through postings on websites, via electronic distribution, or  
 303 offered in hard-copy format in easy-to-access public areas or through GSPAC members'  
 304 existing communication channels.

305 *Presentation Slides*

306 The BVGSA has developed various presentation slides aimed at educating members of the  
 307 general public about SGMA, the Big Valley Basin, groundwater in Lake County, and the

308 BVGSA’s governance structure. These slides may be adapted for use at public meetings,  
 309 workshops, and presentations to community groups or agency decision-making bodies (e.g.,  
 310 Board of Supervisors meetings or existing associations meetings). These slides help educate,  
 311 provide a basis for engaging in meaningful discussions, and ensure consistent messaging and  
 312 that helps unify materials across the basin.

313 *Notices*

314 The BVGSA may develop fliers, email copy, social media posts, and other types of notices to  
 315 promote public meetings, workshops, and other opportunities for public involvement. The  
 316 BVGSA will distribute these notices to the Interested Parties Databases, customers and  
 317 constituents of the member agencies, and other community stakeholders. The materials may be  
 318 distributed via email, by posting on websites and social media accounts, and/or delivered as  
 319 hard-copy materials for physical posting on community bulletin boards or at events.

320 The BVGSA may also periodically develop template email, social media posts, and/or website  
 321 text to promote public comment periods and educate members of the public on key SGMA  
 322 topics. To the extent possible, these posts will be scheduled to align with other public outreach  
 323 events (e.g., National Groundwater Awareness Week, Public Works Week).

324 *Calendar Notices and News Releases*

325 The BVGSA may develop news releases aimed at informing the media about GSP development  
 326 milestones, including the release of public documents and the opening of public comment  
 327 periods or calls for suggestions and input. The BVGSA may also use calendar notices to  
 328 distribute details for upcoming public events or community events where groundwater  
 329 educational materials are being distributed.

330 **4.3 Outreach Activities**

331 The BVGSA may conduct and monitor a variety of public outreach activities to inform, engage,  
 332 and respond to stakeholders and other interested parties during GSP development, adoption,  
 333 and later, implementation. These activities serve to engage and interact with the public and  
 334 stakeholders during GSP development, and to assist GSA staff and leadership in collecting  
 335 information important to groundwater sustainability planning. This engagement and interaction  
 336 will occur through six primary activities: regular GSP development meetings, Board of Directors  
 337 briefings, public meetings and workshops, community presentations, partnerships with local  
 338 organizations in the basin, and in-person outreach at community events. Each of these activities  
 339 are further described below.

340 Most of these activities will be promoted through similar outreach tactics, including webpage  
 341 promotion, sending an email to the Interested Parties Database, posting on the BVGSA  
 342 webpages, and providing social media alerts. In addition, some activities may require other  
 343 tactics to target specific stakeholder groups. The activities identified in this section are assumed  
 344 to be promoted by these standard tactics, unless otherwise noted in the activity description.

345 In response to social-distancing and local health ordinances resulting from the COVID-19  
 346 pandemic, the BVGSA is prepared to adapt these activities to virtual, hybrid, or other distance-  
 347 engagement formats. The BVGSA will utilize online collaboration platforms and implement best  
 348 practices for virtual engagement. In addition, the BVGSA may relay information and materials  
 349 through trusted organizations and existing communication channels in the basin, to keep

350 stakeholders—who may not have access to the technical equipment required to engage—  
 351 virtually informed.

352 **4.3.1 Groundwater Sustainability Plan Development Meetings**

353 The primary way for members of the public to provide input on development of the GSP is by  
 354 attending and providing public comment at standing public meetings of the GSPAC or during a  
 355 topic-specific subcommittee or ad hoc meeting. The GSPAC holds monthly meetings and  
 356 frequent technical subcommittee and ad hoc meetings that are publicly noticed, that include  
 357 public comment periods, and that are recorded and archived for on-demand viewing at any time.  
 358 The meetings are additionally noticed by email alerts to the Interested Parties Database. All of  
 359 these meetings include GSP development updates and discussions and are open for the public  
 360 to attend and provide comment. All meetings’ calendar details and associated materials are  
 361 available on the BVGSA webpages.

362 **4.3.2 Board of Directors Briefings**

363 Representatives of the BVGSA, or the GSP technical consultant staff, will regularly brief the  
 364 Lake County Board of Supervisors—as the standing Board of Directors for the GSA—on the  
 365 status of GSP development, implementation, and any upcoming outreach activities. These  
 366 briefings are conducted during regularly held and publicly noticed meetings, which also include  
 367 opportunities for public comment. The primary purpose of these briefings is to update the  
 368 governing body on GSP progress and next steps, and to respond to questions from the Board of  
 369 Directors. These presentations also provide opportunities to share progress and describe how  
 370 elements of the GSP apply to the Big Valley Basin, outreach partners, or members of the public.  
 371 The frequency of member agency briefings varies by need and the status of the GSP  
 372 development and implementation process.

373 In addition to regular briefings throughout development of the GSP, the BVGSA may also brief  
 374 the Board of Directors during the public review and comment process for the Public Draft GSP  
 375 in late Fall 2021. This public comment process is further described in **Section 6.0**, below.

376 **4.3.3 Public Meetings and Workshops**

377 Public meetings and workshops are another venue to educate the public about SGMA, collect  
 378 feedback on results of technical analyses, and to solicit input on content that will become part of  
 379 the draft GSP chapters. **Table 1**, below, identifies the anticipated schedule, topics, and desired  
 380 outcomes for the GSP development workshops for the Subbasin.

381  
382

**Table 1. Big Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Public Meetings and Workshops**

Projected Timing	Topics	Desired Outcome(s)
March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to SGMA</li> <li>• Big Valley Basin Overview</li> <li>• GSP Development Process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate the public about SGMA and Big Valley Basin.</li> <li>• Identify how interested parties can engage in the GSP development process.</li> </ul>
August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on GSP Development</li> <li>• Domestic Wells in Big Valley Basin</li> <li>• Communication and Outreach Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase public knowledge of GSP process, developments, and next steps.</li> <li>• Educate stakeholders on domestic wells and monitoring in Big Valley Basin.</li> <li>• Detail SGMA Communication and Engagement requirements and solicit public input for elements of the draft Communications and Engagement Plan.</li> </ul>
November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Draft GSP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a forum for stakeholders and interested parties to discuss comments on the Public Draft GSP.</li> </ul>
December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Draft GSP Comments and Update</li> <li>• Adoption Process for Big Valley Basin GSP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive feedback and comments on the Public Draft GSP.</li> <li>• Increase understanding of the GSP adoption process.</li> </ul>
February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GSP Implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review SGMA implementation timeline and key milestones.</li> <li>• Overview of GSPAC activity and rechartering process.</li> <li>• Highlight communication and outreach planning and needs.</li> </ul>

Key:  
 GSPAC = Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee  
 GSP = Groundwater Sustainability Plan  
 SGMA = Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

383 The format of each public meeting or workshop will be adapted according to content, feedback  
 384 from stakeholders, and changing needs and conditions in the basin. During periods when state  
 385 and local ordinances limit or prohibit in-person gatherings, meetings and workshops may be  
 386 held using the Zoom virtual collaboration platform, as it was identified as the most prevalent  
 387 virtual engagement tool during the Stakeholder Assessment. Every public meeting and  
 388 workshop held by the BVGSA will be and posted on the BVGSA webpages for on-demand  
 389 public viewing. This tactic allows those who are unable to attend—due to scheduling conflicts or  
 390 health and safety concerns—to have the ability to stay informed about GSP development and  
 391 implementation.

392 **4.3.4 Community Presentations**

393 The BVGSA may conduct presentations to existing civic, nonprofit, and other community  
 394 organizations to build and maintain awareness about SGMA, encourage participation at public  
 395 meetings and workshops, and to solicit self-selection into the Interested Parties Database.  
 396 Representatives from the BVGSA will conduct the presentations. Presenters will be encouraged

397 to use the template presentation slides and other informational materials to ensure consistent  
 398 messaging across all communication. Presentations may be provided upon request by  
 399 organizations or stakeholder groups, and then scheduled as time allows for all involved. Any  
 400 presentations given will be tracked in the Communications Plan Database, described in **Section**  
 401 **5.0**.

402 **4.3.5 Partnerships with Local Organizations**

403 The BVGSA realizes the value and increased outreach that comes from cultivating and  
 404 maintaining relationships with local community and industry organizations. These partnerships  
 405 allow for more effective communication and opportunities to broaden the dissemination of  
 406 SGMA information while connecting with additional stakeholder groups. Participants in the  
 407 Stakeholder Assessment identified the following active organizations in the basin:

- 408 • Lake County Farm Bureau
- 409 • Lake County Land Trust

410 The BVGSA may identify additional potential partner organizations during GSP development  
 411 and throughout implementation. The BVGSA already maintains relationships with many of these  
 412 organizations and intends to keep them informed throughout GSP development and  
 413 implementation via personal communications, informal briefings, or one-on-one meetings. The  
 414 BVGSA may also ask partner agencies to distribute notices and materials to their stakeholders  
 415 and offer opportunities to host events, workshops, and speakers related to SGMA, the GSP,  
 416 and local groundwater issues.

417 **4.3.6 In-Person Outreach at Community Events**

418 The Big Valley Basin is representative of Lake County as whole, in that a good portion of  
 419 information sharing and communication is done when out in the community. The BVGSA will  
 420 create an ongoing list of community events where an agency representative can provide in-  
 421 person distribution of materials to the public, while offering a chance to engage people in  
 422 conversations about groundwater and GSP elements.

423 **4.4 Targeted Stakeholder Outreach Tools and Activities**

424 In addition to general public outreach, the BVGSA may also conduct outreach to targeted  
 425 stakeholder groups that may be underrepresented in public-involvement activities or that benefit  
 426 from specific messaging or engagement.

427 **4.4.1 Tribes**

428 Lake County is the ancestral homeland for a number of Tribal Nations that have lived on the  
 429 land in Big Valley Basin since time immemorial. The BVGSA filled a Sacred Lands File and  
 430 Native American Contacts List Request with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)  
 431 to identify all Tribes that have indicated sacred land or traditional and/or cultural resources  
 432 interests within the Big Valley Basin. The BVGSA received initial NAHC notification from eight  
 433 Tribes with stated interests in the Big Valley Basin, including:

- 434 • Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- 435 • Elem Indian Colony Pomo Tribe
- 436 • Guidville Indian Rancheria

- 437 • Koi Nation of Northern California
- 438 • Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- 439 • Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
- 440 • Pinoleville Pomo Nation
- 441 • Scotts Valley Band of Pomo

442  
 443 After consulting with representatives from the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians and the Scotts  
 444 Valley Band of Pomo Indians, two additional Tribes were identified to include in Tribal outreach:

- 445 • Robinson Rancheria Pomo Indians of California
- 446 • Habematolel of Upper Lake

447  
 448 The BVGSA will consult with all 10 of these tribes to learn about and consider their interests,  
 449 and to ask for their guidance and leadership in the best ways to engage the Tribes—individually  
 450 and collectively—in all aspects of GSP development and implementation.

451 **4.4.2 Agricultural Water Users**

452 Agriculture plays a vital role in both the economy and the community in the Big Valley Basin,  
 453 and groundwater resources are essential to maintaining this industry. Engaging agricultural  
 454 water users will be key to the success of the GSP. In addition to representation on the GSPAC,  
 455 the BVGSA may conduct targeted outreach to agricultural water users in the Big Valley Basin  
 456 with the intent to understand the range of needs as they differ between crop types and their  
 457 respective groundwater needs.

458 **4.4.3 Urban Water Users**

459 To encourage engagement with domestic water users, the BVGSA may conduct targeted  
 460 outreach in the two unincorporated communities in the Big Valley Basin—Finley and Kelseyville.  
 461 These activities may include developing fact sheets on groundwater use and conditions in the  
 462 Big Valley Basin and distributing these materials through existing communication channels and  
 463 community gathering locations (e.g., a library, community center, schools, or civic centers);  
 464 providing presentations on SGMA to local civic and community organizations; and inviting  
 465 community leaders to informal briefings on groundwater issues and GSP elements. These  
 466 activities are further described in **Section 4.3**. In addition, the GSAs may develop key  
 467 messages on the importance of groundwater to the local economy and environment, and to  
 468 incorporate these messages in all informational materials and talking points.

469 **4.4.4 Disadvantaged Communities**

470 California Code of Regulations §79505.5(a) defines a *disadvantaged community* as a  
 471 “community with an annual median household income (MHI) that is less than 80 percent of the  
 472 statewide annual median household income.” The American Community Survey of the U.S.  
 473 Census Bureau provides a dataset that can be used as a source to estimate a community’s  
 474 MHI. According to 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, California’s  
 475 statewide MHI is \$63,783. Thus, a community with an MHI less than or equal to \$51,026 is  
 476 considered disadvantaged.

477 The BVGSA boundary includes one census-designated place considered disadvantaged by the  
 478 state: Kelseyville. This community is identified in DWR’s DAC Mapping Tool. The MHI for this  
 479 area is identified in **Table 2** below.

480 **Table 2. Communities Designated as Disadvantaged in the Big Valley Basin**

Census-Designated Place	Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>
Kelseyville	\$41,680

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Median Household Income determined by California Department of Water Resources DAC Mapping Tool available at <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/dacs/>

481 The overall Big Valley Basin population living in a disadvantaged area—defined by DWR’s SGM  
 482 Grant Program 2019 Guidelines as “a collective group of severely disadvantaged communities,  
 483 disadvantaged communities, and economically distressed area”—is more than 96 percent.

484 Individuals living in communities that are state-designated disadvantaged face unique  
 485 challenges when it comes to participating in public planning processes. This may include  
 486 physical and/or linguistic barriers which may impede their ability to provide input on plans or  
 487 regulations that impact them. The BVGSA intends to use best practices to help address barriers  
 488 these communities may face in participating in the GSP development and implementation  
 489 processes. These practices may include translating materials and fliers into multiple languages,  
 490 offering interpreting services at public workshops and meetings, holding workshops and  
 491 meetings at familiar and trusted locations (e.g., schools, community centers, churches), and  
 492 ensuring workshops/meetings are held at times accessible by a wide range of people. (Note that  
 493 due to social-distancing and local health ordinances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic,  
 494 many of the basin’s outreach activities have been using virtual engagement formats.)

495 The BVGSA may also partner with local community advocates or organizations to educate  
 496 community members about SGMA and local groundwater developments, and to encourage  
 497 further involvement in public events. Often leveraging the communication channels of these  
 498 trusted messengers is a more effective means of reaching DACs than traditional communication  
 499 methods.

500 A key component of outreach to this community is finding an individual to sit on the GSPAC to  
 501 represent disadvantaged communities in the Big Valley Basin. That person will be critical to  
 502 helping develop a meaningful and focused outreach plan that considers how best to engage  
 503 with these stakeholders.

504 **4.4.5 Watershed Stewardship Organizations**

505 GSAs are obligated to consider the potential impact of sustainable groundwater management  
 506 activities on groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDE). These considerations may range from  
 507 monitoring activities to steps to preserve and expand these natural resources. Stewardship of  
 508 these resources has primarily been led through a combination of government, regulatory, and  
 509 nonprofit organizations. In the Big Valley Basin, the Lake County Watershed Protection  
 510 District—the official designation of the Lake County Water Resources Department—is actively  
 511 involved in water-management planning activities. The Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians has  
 512 been instrumental in ecosystem stewardship activities in Big Valley Basin and throughout Lake  
 513 County. The Lake County Land Trust has been successful in preserving land in Big Valley Basin

514 and in partnering with organizations at a local, regional, statewide, and national level. Both the  
515 Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians and the Lake County Land Trust are represented on the Big  
516 Valley Basin’s GSPAC.

517 Other partner organizations may include The Nature Conservancy, Redbud Audubon Society,  
518 and other local entities focused on the protection and restoration of land in Big Valley Basin.  
519 These organizations represent sources of valuable input on the subject matter of groundwater  
520 dependent ecosystems that are being considered during GSP development and  
521 implementation. The BVGSA may engage leadership from these groups throughout the  
522 groundwater sustainability planning process, for discussion of environmental water needs and  
523 groundwater dependent ecosystems. In addition, interested stewardship and environmental-  
524 focused organizations may also request briefings with the BVGSA and are invited to participate  
525 in the outreach activities described in **Section 4.3**.

526 **4.4.6 Government and Land-Use Agencies**

527 The BVGSA may engage local and regional governmental and land-use agencies throughout  
528 the GSP development and implementation process. This may include presentations or meetings  
529 with local planning commissions or local agency formation commissions. In addition, local cities  
530 and counties will receive notice at least 90 days prior to adoption of the Final GSP, as described  
531 in **Section 6.2**.



532 **5.0 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT**533 **Legal Requirements:**

**§354.10** Each plan shall include a summary of information relating to notification and communication by the Agency with other agencies and interested parties including the following:

- A list of public meetings at which the Plan was discussed or considered by the Agency.

534

535 SGMA requires that GSAs include a list of public meetings at which the GSP was discussed or  
 536 considered by an agency. To fulfill this requirement, and to follow best practices for outreach  
 537 and communication, each GSA should develop a tool or database to track all SGMA-related  
 538 outreach conducted by the agency. As an initial step, all public engagement activities have been  
 539 collected on the BVGSA webpages under the Lake County Water Resources Department  
 540 ([http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs\\_Protocols/Big](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Protocols/Big_Valley_GSP.htm)  
 541 [Valley\\_GSP.htm](http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/WaterResources/Programs_Protocols/Big_Valley_GSP.htm)). On this site anyone can access agendas, companion materials,  
 542 presentation slides, and full recordings of all meetings that have occurred since the BVGSA  
 543 convened the GSPAC to undertake the development of the Big Valley Basin GSP.

544 BVGSA will develop a Communications Plan Database to track all SGMA public and  
 545 stakeholder engagement activities in list form, and to identify potential organizations, individuals,  
 546 and media contacts where outreach may be distributed and shared. The database is currently  
 547 envisioned in an electronic spreadsheet format. A copy of the Communications Plan Database  
 548 will be attached to the Final GSP to demonstrate the BVGSA's efforts to involve members of the  
 549 public in GSP development and to comply with California Code of Regulations §354.10.

550 It is the intention of the BVGSA to continue to offer a full archive of all GSP proceedings beyond  
 551 the January 2022 GSP submission date, and to make that archive easily accessible by the  
 552 public.

553

554 **6.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY**  
555 **PLAN ADOPTION**

556 Legal Requirements:

**§354.10** Each plan shall include a summary of information relating to notification and communication by the Agency with other agencies and interested parties including the following:

- (c) Comments regarding the Plan received by the Agency and a summary of any responses by the Agency.

**§10728.4**

- (2) A groundwater sustainability agency may adopt or amend a groundwater sustainability plan after a public hearing, held at least 90 days after providing notice to a city or county within the area of the proposed plan or amendment. The groundwater sustainability agency shall review and consider comments from any city or county that receives notice pursuant to this section and shall consult with a city or county that requests consultation within 30 days of receipt of the notice.

557

558 This chapter describes requirements and approaches for collecting and summarizing comments  
559 on the Draft GSP and required steps necessary, prior to GSP adoption.

560 **6.1 Public Comment Process**

561 California Code of Regulations §354.10 states that each GSP must include a summary of  
562 comments received regarding the GSP and a summary of any responses that resulted from the  
563 GSA. However, the SGMA regulations do not provide a prescriptive public review process or  
564 comment period for the Public Draft GSP. After the Final GSP is submitted to DWR, the agency  
565 will post the GSP to its website and hold a public comment period. Pursuant to California Code  
566 of Regulations §353.8(b), the minimum period for public comment is 60 days. However, DWR  
567 intends to open the comment period for 75 days or more.

568 The BVGSA intends to release draft GSP sections and/or chapters for public review and  
569 comment as the chapters are developed. Sections and chapters will be released individually or  
570 in groups in a phased or serial review process. The BVGSA intends to post the drafts on the  
571 BVGSA webpages for review and to collect comments through a designated project email  
572 address, direct mail, at public workshops, and publicly noticed meetings. Interested parties will  
573 have a designated time (e.g., 14 days or 21 days) to review the draft chapters and to submit  
574 comments. Comments received during the comment period will be reviewed by the BVGSA and  
575 consultant staff.

576 Once all the draft sections and chapters have been released and revised, the BVGSA intends to  
577 issue a complete Public Draft GSP for further public review and comment. The Public Draft GSP  
578 will be released for a specified public comment period in late Fall 2021. Public comments will be  
579 collected via email or direct mail.

580 The BVGSA intends to summarize comments received during the Public Draft GSP comment  
581 period and to present them in a GSP Public Comment Summary attached to the Final GSP. The  
582 GSP Public Comment Summary will describe the public comment process, summarize the  
583 major themes or topics that individuals submitted comments on, and will include copies of  
584 written comments. In addition, any comments that raise substantive technical or policy issues  
585 may be addressed in the Final GSP text.

586 **6.2 Notice to Cities and Counties**

587 California Water Code §10728.4 states that a GSA must provide notice to any cities or counties  
588 within the GSP area at least 90-days prior to adopting or amending a GSP at a public meeting.  
589 The cities and counties have 30 days upon receipt of the notice to request consultation on the  
590 plan. Pursuant to these requirements, the BVGSA will develop and distribute a notice to cities  
591 and counties within the basin prior to the Public Draft GSP public comment period, and no later  
592 than 90 days before the first scheduled GSP adoption hearing.

593 The notice will provide an overview of SGMA and the GSA; identify where the Public Draft GSP  
594 can be viewed, or copies can be obtained; identify the 90-day notice period; and describe the  
595 method for agencies to submit consultation requests. A single point of contact will be identified  
596 in the notice. Cities and counties will have 30 days to respond to the notice.

597 **6.3 Final Groundwater Sustainability Plan Adoption Process**

598 Following the 30-day consultation request period, if no cities or counties have requested  
599 consultation, the Final GSP will be adopted at a designated public hearing. The BVGSA will  
600 adopt the Final GSP at a public hearing held by the Lake County Board of Supervisors. This  
601 hearing may be held as part of a Board of Supervisors' standing public meeting, or at a special  
602 meeting of the governing body. Notices for the public hearings will follow all applicable local,  
603 state, and federal regulations regarding meeting noticing practices that apply.

604 At this time, it is not anticipated that fees would be adopted with the Final GSP. However, if fees  
605 are associated with adoption of the Final GSP, then additional public meeting notices will be  
606 required pursuant to Government Code §6066.

607 **7.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY**  
608 **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

609 **Legal Requirements:**

**§354.10 (d)**

(2) The method the Agency shall follow to inform the public about progress implementing the Plan, including the status of projects and actions.

610

611 *Please Note: This section will be revised and expanded upon in the coming months, depending*  
612 *upon the implementation efforts identified in the Draft GSP.*

613 As part of its GSP, the BVGSA must describe how it plans to inform the public about progress in  
614 implementing the GSP. GSP implementation outreach activities should build upon activities  
615 conducted during GSP development—but they should also include new and targeted outreach  
616 as the need arises and to cultivate more diverse engagement. Successful and established  
617 activities should be continued throughout GSP implementation and then updated to include new  
618 stakeholder groups and emerging issues.

619 The primary methods to inform the public about progress of the GSP include posting on the  
620 BVGSA websites; sending out progress information to the Interested Parties Database; and  
621 holding regular public meetings focused on GSP implementation. In addition, the BVGSA may  
622 choose to continue other general public outreach activities, such as GSP-related public  
623 meetings, community presentations and Board updates, and engaging the public in  
624 conversations at community events. Informational materials and website content will be updated  
625 at key implementation milestones (e.g., annual reporting periods, Five-Year Updates) to reflect  
626 the status of the GSP and Big Valley Basin current conditions. In addition, new materials will be  
627 developed to help the public understand next steps, how they can stay engaged in GSP  
628 implementation, and how to participate in call-to-action activities in the basin.

629

630 **8.0 INTER-BASIN COORDINATION**

631 **Legal Requirements:**

**§ 357.2. Inter-basin Agreements**

Two or more Agencies may enter into an agreement to establish compatible sustainability goals and understanding regarding fundamental elements of the Plans of each Agency as they relate to sustainable groundwater management.

632

633 The Big Valley Basin is adjacent to the second CASGEM-designated basin in Lake County: the  
 634 low-priority labeled Scotts Valley Basin. Under SGMA, low-priority basins are not required to  
 635 submit a GSP. The City of Lakeport elected to form a GSA for their jurisdiction of the Scotts  
 636 Valley Basin in June of 2017. There are a number of entities working on groundwater issues in  
 637 the Scotts Valley Basin, including the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians and the Scotts Valley  
 638 Groundwater Protection Subcommittee. The Big Valley Basin GSP recognizes the regional  
 639 proximity of the Scotts Valley Basin, current groundwater activities underway in both basins, and  
 640 the importance of regional efforts to achieve sustainable groundwater management.

641 Recognizing the value of shared data and knowledge, the BVGSA is open to ongoing  
 642 discussion and coordination with representatives of the Scotts Valley Basin as it relates to  
 643 regional sustainable groundwater management.

644 The BVGSA has interest in coordinating efforts with any future Scotts Valley Basin GSA  
 645 activities through periodic meetings focused on discussing inter-basin boundary flows and other  
 646 regional groundwater issues. These meetings can also serve to share lessons learned from the  
 647 GSP development and implementation process between the medium-priority Big Valley Basin  
 648 and the low-priority Scotts Valley Basin.

649

650