

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sonoma County Groundwater Sustainability Plans Approved

Santa Rosa, CA – This week, the boards of Sonoma County’s three groundwater sustainability agencies, Petaluma Valley, Sonoma Valley and Santa Rosa Plain, all unanimously approved Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for each basin. The GSPs are required to be submitted as part of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) for the purpose of assessing the conditions of each groundwater basin, analyzing the basin’s sustainability over a 50-year period, and identifying projects and actions needed to ensure the basin is sustainable by 2042.

On Monday, December 6, the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) board was the first agency to approve its GSP for the Sonoma Valley subbasin.

“The GSA Board’s unanimous approval of the plan is an endorsement of the collaborative, stakeholder-driven process that resulted in the final document,” said Sonoma Valley GSA Board chair and Sonoma County Supervisor Susan Gorin. “The plan reflects the concerns over groundwater that were expressed by rural residents, farmers, environmental stakeholders, businesses and disadvantaged communities.”

The Petaluma Valley GSA Board approved the GSP for the Petaluma Valley basin on Wednesday, December 8.

“The plan indicates that based on existing information, the Petaluma Valley groundwater basin, based on existing information, appears to be in relatively good shape. We can now focus on collecting additional data, improving our understanding of groundwater conditions, and expanding a monitoring system that will provide an early warning if we start to see

groundwater level declines or other problems in the future,” said Petaluma Valley GSA Board chair and Sonoma County Supervisor David Rabbitt.

On Thursday, December 9, the Santa Rosa Plain Board approved the GSP for the Santa Rosa Plain subbasin.

“We’re looking forward to rolling up our sleeves and implementing this comprehensive approach to groundwater management, with the goal of protecting a resource that is vital to thousands of people for drinking water, farmers, businesses and the environment,” said Santa Rosa Councilmember Tom Schwedhelm, Chair of the Santa Rosa Plain GSA. “

In January, the GSAs will submit the plans to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for final approval as required by SGMA. DWR will begin its review process with a 60-to-75-day public comment period and has up to two years to approve the plans. Implementation of the GSPs must begin in 2022, while the plans are still under review.

The GSPs are available online on the GSA websites at:

SonomaValleyGroundwater.org

PetalumaValleyGroundwater.org

SantaRosaPlainGroundwater.org

Hard copies of the GSPs are currently being printed, and will be available for review at the following locations:

- Petaluma Valley: Petaluma Regional Library, 100 Fairgrounds Dr., Petaluma, CA 94952
- Sonoma Valley: Sonoma Valley Regional Library, 755 W Napa St., Sonoma, CA 95476
- Santa Rosa Plain: Central Santa Rosa Library, 211 E St., Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Copies of all three GSPs will also be available for review weekdays at Sonoma Water, 404 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa, 95403.

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