



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Receive an update from Gina Bartlett, Consensus Building Institute (CBI), regarding the facilitated process related to development of a recommended structure for the Salinas Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors of the Water Resources Agency and the Board of Directors of the Water Resources Agency receive an update from Gina Bartlett, Consensus Building Institute (CBI), regarding the facilitated process for development of a recommended structure of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin.

SUMMARY:

The California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) is intended to provide a comprehensive framework for sustainable management of groundwater by local authorities. SGMA requires that Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) be formed by June 30, 2017. It further requires that Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) be adopted by January 31, 2020 for "critically over drafted" basins. This deadline applies to the Salinas Valley Basin.

At your meeting of September 13, 2016, Gina Bartlett of CBI will provide an update on the status of the facilitated process for GSA formation.

DISCUSSION:

Given the relatively short timeframe for GSA formation, the complex nature of water issues in the Salinas Valley Basin, and the number of stakeholders and potential GSA eligible agencies, CBI was hired in September 2015 to conduct a facilitated process that could lead to a recommended governance structure for a single GSA for the Salinas Valley Basin. Funding to hire CBI came from the City of Salinas, the County of Monterey, the Water Resources Agency and the agricultural community.

A very robust stakeholder involvement process has been underway since early spring 2016. The Collaborative Work Group (CWA) is made up of representatives of GSA eligible entities and has been meeting approximately two times per month. There have also been two meetings to date of the larger Stakeholder Forum/Public Workshop.

The CWG, in consultation with the Stakeholder Forum, will recommend a preferred GSA structure to the GSA eligible entities in the Salinas Valley Basin. A number of proposals related to GSA formation have been discussed by the CWG. In general, the CWG is considering a single GSA for the bulk of the basin which would be initially formed as a Joint

Powers Authority which would be transitioned to a legislated special district (Marina Coast Water District is considering declaring itself a GSA for portions of the Seaside sub-Basin and the Corral de Tierra area of the Salinas Valley Basin). As envisioned, the governing board would include representatives from local government (County and cities), water suppliers, agriculture, environment, disadvantaged communities and an at-large member of the public with preference given to a rural residential well owner. Details of this proposed structure are still very much under discussion by the CWG.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Collaborative Work Group includes representatives from the County of Monterey, the Water Resources Agency, Salinas Valley cities, environmental groups, agriculture, water suppliers and rural residential well owners.

FINANCING:

CBI was hired to facilitate the GSA formation process under a contract in the amount of \$175,000. This cost was shared equally by the County, the City of Salinas, Monterey County Water Resources Agency and the agriculture community. Projected County costs related to participation in a GSA, once formed, are unknown at this time.

Approved by: Nicholas E. Chiulos, Assistant County Administrative Officer