

Update on the Drought and Water Shortage Task Force

The Drought and Water Shortage Task Force (DWSTF) was formed to comply with California SB 552, requiring the county to develop a plan to respond to dry domestic wells or state small water systems. The DWSTF Ad Hoc utilized funding from the California Department of Water Resources through a Direct Technical Assistance grant to bring on Stantec consultants to assist Napa County draft a Drought and Water Shortage Plan. Since late July 2023, Stantec reviewed our efforts to date including meeting minutes, discussions and the approach to the risk assessment. Stantec has approved the County's risk assessment approach, has presented a series of short-term and long-term mitigation actions to the Ad Hoc task force and facilitated discussions on each item. Due to a shortage of time in meetings, Stantec conducted two surveys among the DWSTF Ad Hoc members to garner input on specific mitigation actions, perceived feasibility, agreement/disagreement among the proposed topics. The results of the 2 surveys were analyzed and presented to the Ad Hoc for deliberation and acceptance. The DWSTF is in the process of drafting the Drought Resilience Plan incorporating feedback from Ad Hoc meetings. The next meeting of the Ad Hoc task for will be April 25, 2024.

Update on the Technical Advisory Group

The Technical Advisory Group has met monthly since its inception in August 2022 to assist the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) by providing technical guidance on matters related to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan and implementation of the Projects and Management Actions. The GSA has been busy drafting 3 Workplans that were described as Project and Management Actions in the County's approved Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The three workplans are:

- Groundwater Pumping Reduction (GPR) Workplan: Napa Valley Subbasin
- Napa County Water Conservation (WC) Workplan: A Guide for Vineyards, Wineries, and Other Water Users
- Interconnected Surface Water (ISW) and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE) Workplan: Napa Valley Subbasin

The draft workplans were open for a public comment period from October 31, 2023 to January 31, 2024. Public comments are being incorporated into the drafts. The final workplans will be presented to the TAG at the March 14th meeting along with a matrix of the public comments received. The TAG will vote to recommend that the GSA Board of Directors adopt the workplans at the next GSA Board of Directors meeting on March 26, 2024.

Brief descriptions of the 3 workplans from the executive summaries of each workplan can be found below:

GPR Workplan

This Groundwater Pumping Reduction Workplan: Napa Valley Subbasin (GPR Workplan) summarizes the actions, opportunities, and implementation plan for achieving water conservation that result in a reduction in total groundwater pumping and a reduction in net depletion from the Subbasin aquifer system. The specific objectives of the GPR Workplan are:

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- Provide technical data, analysis, and a roadmap for implementing measures to reduce groundwater pumping in the Napa Valley Subbasin.
- Improve the understanding of groundwater use in the Subbasin and evaluate the effectiveness of pumping reduction measures for improving groundwater conditions and sustainability.
- Develop an adaptive management process, including implementing mandatory measures if voluntary measures are insufficient to achieve groundwater sustainability.
- Develop strategies that can achieve pumping reductions while supporting the Napa Valley community and regional economy.

WC Workplan

While the WC Workplan is focused on groundwater resources within the Subbasin, many of the practices and tools outlined can be implemented throughout Napa County. The WC Workplan summarizes the opportunities, costs, and potential funding sources for achieving water conservation that results in a reduction in total groundwater pumping and a reduction in net depletion from the Subbasin aquifer system. The specific objectives of the Workplan are:

- Summarize current water use and water conservation practices in the Subbasin.
- List and describe water conservation practices that may be expanded or adopted in the Subbasin by different water users.
- Identify technical assistance, funding opportunities, and other technical resources that are available for businesses and individuals seeking to implement water conservation practices.
- Describe how water conservation will be measured and monitored, and how businesses and individuals can assist.

ISW and GDEs Workplan

The overarching goal of the ISW and GDE Workplan is to use physical and biological data coupled with hydrologic modeling to better understand the conditions required to maintain healthy terrestrial and aquatic GDEs. In particular, the Workplan describes the steps needed to understand conditions necessary to:

1. Maintain steelhead (*O. mykiss*) spawning, rearing, and migration in the watershed;
2. Support special status aquatic species; and
3. Maintain terrestrial GDEs and special-status species.