

PREFACE

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was adopted in 2014 to ensure sustainable management of groundwater resources by local authorities. Since 2016, the Tehama County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Tehama County FCWCD), a local and regional authority, has been the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Subbasin. The GSA developed, adopted, and has been implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Subbasin since that time. The development of the GSP was conducted using the best available data at the time and the best science and management practices in order to ensure adequate access to groundwater resources for all beneficial users in the Subbasin. The GSP was developed with input from groundwater professionals, public officials, land stewards, and the general public throughout the region and Subbasin. In January 2022, the GSP was submitted to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for review.

In October 2023, the GSA was notified by DWR via a determination letter that the GSP required revisions to correct deficiencies identified in the plan. Revisions to the GSP would be required to be developed, adopted, and submitted for review within 180 days. Given this timeline, the GSA moved quickly to address the shortcomings in the GSP. Given this abbreviated timeline, the GSA prioritized the portions of the GSP specifically described in the DWR determination letter for review and revision. Additionally, representatives from the GSA and their technical team met with the DWR on multiple occasions to review initial feedback and discuss strategies for revising the plan to address DWR's concerns. The Revised GSP contained in the following pages was developed and adopted as completely and carefully as possible, given the constraints in terms of time and resources.

The GSA acknowledges that there are portions of the Revised GSP that do not take into account changes to conditions since the submittal of the original GSP in January 2022. For instance, the numerical groundwater model developed and described in the original GSP to predict future conditions in the subbasin was not updated as a part of the revision process due to time and resource limitations. However, every effort was made to update portions of the GSP that directly relate to the deficiencies detailed in the DWR determination letter. Additionally, efforts were made to solicit feedback from all stakeholders and the public during the GSP revision process. However, the GSA acknowledges that the short timeline to develop and adopt changes limited public outreach and participation. Going forward, the GSA will continue and improve its public outreach efforts to inform updates to the plan during periodic evaluations.

Despite the constraints, the GSA was committed to addressing the deficiencies identified in the determination letter. This Revised GSP contains significant updates and additions that will positively contribute to the sustainable management of the Subbasin. These changes include revisions to the Subbasin's Sustainable Management Criteria to ensure that all beneficial users of groundwater are protected and that the GSA can proactively address impacts to beneficial users before they occur. Additionally, the GSA has passed resolutions committing to developing and implementing both Demand Management and Well Mitigation Programs.

With the benefit of feedback from DWR in its determination letter and additional resources now available to the GSA in the form of grants and technical assistance, the GSA believes that this Revised GSP is a significantly improved plan that will help to ensure sustainable management of the Subbasin. This Revised Plan is only the beginning, and the GSA looks forward to continuous improvement of this GSP its management of the Subbasin as additional information and tools become available. The GSA and all stakeholders in the basin are committed to an open and inclusive process of improvement and maintaining local control of a shared resource for the mutual benefit of all.