

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Planning for Groundwater Sustainability

Report Date: June 16, 2017

Response by: Sean McGlynn Title: City Manager

Agency/Department Name: City of Santa Rosa

FINDINGS:

I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F4, F5, F6, F7, F9, F10

I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F2, F3, F8

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations numbered: R1, R2

have been implemented.

(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)

Recommendations numbered: None

have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)

Recommendations numbered: None

require further analysis. _____

(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.)

Recommendations numbered: None

will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

(Attach an explanation.)

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Number of pages attached: 2

**City of Santa Rosa's Response to
the 2016-2017 Grand Jury Report
"Planning for Groundwater Sustainability"**

FINDINGS

We agree with these finding(s):

We agree with Findings F1 through F10, with the following clarifications:

- F2: The JPAs were finalized and approved prior to the June 30, 2017 deadline.
- F3: The exemption from metering applies to wells that pump less than two acre-feet per year for domestic purposes. While this translates to an average of about 1,785 gallons per day, the key factor is an annual, rather than a daily, total.
- F8: In addition to the two review periods listed in the finding, there will be a review of each Basin's JPA within three years of submission of its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to the Department of Water Resources and at least once every 10 years after adoption of the GSP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. Continue to work cooperatively in order to finalize and approve the JPA's by the State mandated June 30, 2017 deadline.

Response: Recommendation R1 has been implemented. The City of Santa Rosa worked cooperatively with the other member agencies in the Santa Rosa Plain to develop and finalize the joint powers agreement for the Santa Rosa Plain groundwater basin. The member agencies in all three groundwater basins subject to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) approved the joint powers agreements to form the new groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) for each basin in April and May 2017. Specifically, the City approved the Santa Rosa Plain JPA on May 2, 2017. As required by SGMA, each GSA held public hearings on the following dates in June 2017: June 1 (Santa Rosa Plain); June 7 (Sonoma Valley); and June 22 (Petaluma Valley). At these meetings, each of the boards of directors approved filing of the required documents with the State to become GSAs under SGMA. Staff filed these documents prior to the June 30, 2017 deadline.

R2. Specifically instruct, through their JPA agreements that the three Groundwater Agencies pool technical resources and staff in order to avoid costly duplication.

Response: Recommendation R2 has been implemented. The JPAs contain the following provisions regarding coordination:

“WHEREAS, in order to promote efficiency and sharing of resources, the Members individually and collectively, encourage coordination between GSAs in Sonoma County”.

“Section 4.05 – Coordination between Basins.

In order to maintain consistency and the efficient use of resources, to the extent feasible, the Agency shall endeavor to coordinate between and among the other Sonoma County GSAs for administration, matters involving public communication and outreach, and for developing frameworks to support groundwater management, which may include agreement to certain areas of coordination, provided that the Agency retain its own authority and that such recommendations are ratified by the Board. The Agency may clarify and acknowledge coordination among the other GSAs through a document or agreement if deemed appropriate.”

As the GSAs are beginning their activities, the desired coordination is being implemented. Each GSA Board approved an agreement with the Sonoma County Water Agency to provide technical, grant writing and outreach services for each of the basins to ensure efficiency and consistency. In support of this, a single data management system is being created for all three basins, utilizing State grant funding. The three interim administrators for each GSA are meeting regularly to coordinate work and share information. In addition, all three basins worked together to develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for legal services.

OTHER COMMENTS

We also note that page 15 of the Grand Jury Report discusses that advisory panels for each basin will have five interest-based panel members in addition to the member agency appointments. The description in the Grand Jury Report is for the Petaluma Valley advisory committee. For the Santa Rosa Plain GSA, there will be seven-interest based appointments by the GSA Board in the following categories:

- 2 environmental representatives
- 2 rural residential well owners
- 2 agricultural interest representatives (surface water or GW user)
- Business community representative

For the Sonoma Valley GSA, there will be six interest-based appointments by the GSA board in the following categories:

- Environmental representative
- Rural residential well owner - domestic water primary use
- Business community representative
- Agricultural interest (surface water or GW user)
- 2 At-Large seats (one with hydrologist/geologist expertise preferred)