



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
MAILING ADDRESS: 1106 SECOND STREET, EUREKA, CA 95501-0579
AREA CODE 707

On-line Web: humboldt.gov	Administration 445-7491	Natural Resources 445-7741	Clark Complex Harris & H St., Eureka Fax 445-7388
	Business 445-7652	Natural Resource Planning 267-9542	Land Use 445-7205
	Engineering 445-7377	Parks 445-7651	
	Facility Management 445-7621	Roads 445-7421	

February 9, 2021

Eel River Valley Groundwater Basin Stakeholders, Interested Persons, Groundwater Users
City of Ferndale
City of Fortuna
City of Rio Dell
Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria
Wiyot Tribe
Del Oro Water Company
Scotia Community Services District
Palmer Creek Community Services District
Hydesville Community Water District
Loleta Community Services District

RE: Groundwater Sustainability Plan Preparation Initial Notification for the Eel River Valley Groundwater Basin

The Humboldt County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Humboldt County GSA) hereby gives notice that the Humboldt County GSA is developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin (Basin No. 1-010) for compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. This initial notification regarding the intent to prepare and adopt a Groundwater Sustainability Plan is provided pursuant to Water Code Sections 353.6(a) and 10727.8(a).

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was enacted in 2014. Groundwater Sustainability Plans (or Groundwater Sustainability Plan Alternatives) are required for groundwater basins designated as medium- or high-priority by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The Eel River Valley groundwater basin was designated as a medium-priority basin in 2015 and again in 2018 by DWR. In December 2016, Humboldt County submitted a Groundwater Sustainability Plan Alternative to DWR. In November 2019, DWR disapproved the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Alternative. As a result, formation of the Humboldt County GSA and development of a full Groundwater Sustainability Plan became mandatory. The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors authorized formation of the Humboldt County GSA on May 5, 2020, through Resolution 20-39. DWR is providing financial assistance to the Humboldt County GSA for development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, which must be adopted by January 2022.

The Humboldt County GSA is governed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors and staffed through the Humboldt County Department of Public Works. The Humboldt County GSA is the single GSA for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin. The designated plan manager on behalf of the Humboldt County GSA is Hank Seemann, Public Works Deputy-Director. Humboldt County Public Works is consulting with water users and stakeholders within the basin to develop a single Groundwater Sustainability Plan that will cover the entire Eel River Valley groundwater basin. The purpose of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan is to ensure high quality

and abundant groundwater resources for human consumption, agricultural irrigation, and environmental services without causing significant and unreasonable adverse impacts (undesirable results). The work to develop the plan includes data collection and analysis to characterize the groundwater basin (including interactions with surface waters), develop reliable estimates of water budgets, and quantify the sustainable yield. This work will create computer modeling tools to investigate the presence or absence of undesirable results associated with groundwater pumping and support the development of sustainable management criteria.

Humboldt County Public Works has retained a technical consultant team led by GHD, Inc. and is partnering with the Humboldt County Resource Conservation District and Western Resource Strategies LLC on stakeholder engagement. The United States Geological Survey is providing technical assistance and peer review. The primary forum for stakeholder input is the Eel River Groundwater Working Group, established in 2015. For updates on the Eel River Groundwater Sustainability Plan development, visit the County's [Groundwater](#) website or the [Humboldt County GSA](#) Facebook page.

The Humboldt County GSA will consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater in developing and implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin. Humboldt County Public Works maintains a list of interested persons pursuant to Water Code Section 10723.4. All meeting materials and information relevant to Groundwater Sustainability Plan development and implementation will be made available to the public via websites, newsletters, emails, presentations, and meetings. A formal Communications and Engagement Plan has been developed for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin and can be found on the County's Groundwater website. Public Works staff will continue their ongoing outreach efforts, continue to expand the lists of interested parties, and continue to encourage broad local and regional stakeholder engagement during development and implementation of the Eel River Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

This initial notification will be posted on the DWR [SGMA Portal's](#) Groundwater Sustainability Plan Initial Notification System. The SGMA Portal provides an opportunity for providing public comments. In accordance with Water Code Section 353.8, "*Any person may provide comments to the California Department of Water Resources regarding a proposed or adopted Plan (GSP)*" and "*Comments received by the California Department of Water Resources shall be posted on the California Department of Water Resources website.*"

A request to be added to the Interested Persons List can be sent to the Plan Managers' designee identified below:

Summer Daugherty, Senior Environmental Analyst
Humboldt County Public Works
1106 2nd Street, Eureka, CA 95501
sdaugherty@co.humboldt.ca.us

Sincerely,



Hank Seemann, Deputy-Director
Humboldt County Public Works
hseemann@co.humboldt.ca.us