

Meeting Brief

- **Overview:** Staff representatives from Antelope, Bowman, Butte, Colusa, Corning, Los Molinos, Red Bluff, Sutter, Vina, Wyandotte Creek, and Yolo subbasins held their eighth inter-basin coordination meeting. Subbasin staff provided updates on their Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) development status and key takeaways from relevant meetings, including adjacent subbasin conversations. In addition, staff reviewed and refined the draft report that outlines a proposed framework and scope for sustained inter-basin coordination through GSP implementation. The draft report will be shared for the respective Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Boards’ consideration and for public input through existing subbasin venues (e.g., GSA meetings, committees, etc.). Lastly, GSA staff reflected on a proposed issue resolution process.
- **Next Steps:** Efforts will continue to focus on finalizing the draft inter-basin coordination framework. The facilitation team will incorporate suggested edits and convene one more meeting among staff before sharing the draft report for input to GSA boards and the public. Meanwhile, subbasin staff will provide inter-basin coordination updates and gather public input related to the direction of current efforts and desired priorities, shared concerns, and possible ideas for inter-basin coordination during GSP implementation moving forward.
- **Next meeting:** The next staff meeting will take place on June 23, 2021.

Action Items

Item	Lead	Completion
<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule next inter-basin coordination meeting.	CBI	Done
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare next draft report including the framework for inter-basin coordination based on the ideas shared at the meeting. Refine and share dispute resolution process based on the discussion.	CBI	
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss with consultants options and preferences to include inter-basin coordination in the GSP.	CBI	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with GSA staff to compile the different subbasins’ approaches to sustainable Management Criteria (SMC).	CBI	Ongoing
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore possible collaboration with Eddy Teasdale (LSCE consultants) to compile Projects and Management Actions (PMAs) in the various subbasins and conduct a preliminary analysis to find themes and opportunities for regional coordination on PMAs..	CBI & Ryan Teubert	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide inter-basin coordination updates to advisory groups and at relevant public meetings. Share key questions and concerns at next NSV meeting.	CBI and subbasin representatives	Ongoing Access latest presentation
<input type="checkbox"/> Update inter-basin coordination website.	CBI & Christina Buck	Ongoing Access Here

Summary

1. Meeting Purpose and Introduction

This was the eighth meeting of staff to support the Northern Sacramento Valley (NSV) inter-basin coordination effort. The goal of this meeting was to review and refine the draft inter-basin coordination report outlining a proposed framework and scope for sustained inter-basin coordination through GSP implementation. The draft report will be shared for the respective GSA Boards’ consideration and public input at existing subbasin venues (e.g., GSA meetings, committees, etc.). In addition, staff representatives provided updates on GSP development status, shared takeaways from adjacent subbasin meetings, and determined next steps for technical information-sharing efforts.

2. Meeting Summary

Participants did not provide feedback or suggested edits to the previous meeting summary (4/26/21). The summary is available on the webpage [[Access Here](#)].

3. GSP Development Status Updates

Subbasin staff provided updates on their GSP development status. For more subbasin specific updates, visit websites in the table below.

Subbasin	Website
Antelope, Bowman, Los Molinos & Red Bluff	Website
Butte	Website
Corning	Website
Colusa	Websites (Glenn) (Colusa)
Sutter	Website
Vina	Websites (Vina) (RCRD)
Wyandotte Creek	Website
Yolo	Website

Update on Sacramento River Corridor Coordination

Christina Buck (Butte County) provided an update on a meeting focused on the Sacramento River Corridor among consultants and representatives of Butte, Glenn, Colusa, and Tehama County subbasins. The goal was to continue discussions around the approaches to Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) used to draft SMC around the Sacramento River and its corridor.

Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) Template

Following up on the previous meeting, CBI and C. Buck (Butte County) developed a template to begin compiling information related to the approaches to establish SMC in each subbasin. GSA staff will coordinate with their respective technical consulting teams to fill out the template with information prior to the next meeting.

This document will serve as a centralized document for managers to reference and made public once GSAs have released SMC for public review.

4. Framework and Scope for Inter-basin Coordination

The facilitation team revised the draft report outlining the intent and purpose of inter-basin coordination in the Northern Sacramento Valley, based on feedback received at the previous meeting. During the meeting, staff representatives discussed the scale (i.e., coordination groups, neighbor-to-neighbor, regional) and timing for each of the individual pillars (i.e., ongoing, near term, and long-term). Timeframes included ongoing, near-term (at the 5-year update), or long-term (through GSP implementation).

Pillar	Scale(s)	Timing	Feedback
<p>1. Information-sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inform each other on changing conditions (i.e., surface water cutbacks, land use changes, policy changes that inform groundwater management) b. Share annual reports and interim progress reports c. Share data and technical information and work towards building shared data across basin boundaries (e.g., monitoring data, water budgets, modeling inputs and outputs, and GDEs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbor-to-neighbor • Coordination groups 	<p>Ongoing Near-term (5-year update) Long-term (through GSP implementation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language may raise concerns in terms of funding needed. • Add dependent on circumstances and contingent upon funding availability • Incorporate broader language with less specificity to avoid creating unnecessary conflicts. • Emphasize move towards “shared understanding” and baseline
<p>2. Joint analysis & evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate and compare contents of GSPs with a focus on Basin Setting, Monitoring Networks, SMCs, and PMAs. Identify significant differences and uncertainties related to cross-boundary flows and stream-aquifer interactions at boundaries, including data, methods, and assumptions. Identify relevant issues of concern related to groundwater interaction at the boundaries. b. Engage in analysis and evaluation of SMCs between GSPs to assess impacts and identify significant differences and possible impacts between subbasins that could potentially lead to undesirable results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbor-to-neighbor • Coordination groups 	<p>Near-term (5-year update) Long-term (through GSP implementation).</p>	
<p>3. Coordination on mutually beneficial activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate, coordinate, and collaborate on mutually beneficial activities, which could include joint monitoring, joint reporting, regional modeling, and other efforts to address data gaps at subbasin boundaries. b. Collectively pursue funding and collaborate on mutually agreed upon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbor-to-neighbor • Coordination groups • Regional: NSV IRWM 		

<p>projects and management actions that provide benefits across boundaries.</p> <p>c. Leverage existing collaboratives (NSV IRWM, etc.)</p>			
<p>4. Coordinated communication and outreach</p> <p>a. Coordinate and collaborate on regional scale public engagement and communication strategies that promote awareness on groundwater sustainability, enhance public trust, and maintain institutional knowledge and establish a foundation for long-term collaboration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional: NSV IRWM and NCWA Groundwater Committee 		
<p>5. Non-binding</p> <p>a. Honor the individual authorities of GSAs</p>			Remove as pillar and include in description above.

Review Process

The draft report will be shared as staff recommendations for the respective GSA Boards consideration and for public input through existing subbasin venues (e.g., GSA meetings, committees, etc.). Staff discussed the decision-making process for “adopting” the framework or for GSAs to incorporate common language into the GSPs. Some staff suggested including the inter-basin coordination framework in the GSP as an Appendix and incorporating specific sections of the report into the body of the GSP, based on individual subbasin needs and priorities.

Proposed process:

1. GSA staff develop proposed framework (May 2021)
2. Content from the draft framework discussed within each subbasin-specific GSA public venues for input and feedback (early June 2021)
3. Input received is incorporated into framework and report (late June 2021)
4. Draft report brought to GSA boards for consideration and direction (July 2021)
5. Any additional board input addressed by staff group (July-August 2021)
6. Final report brought to boards for possible inclusion in draft GSPs (late August 2021)
7. Following public review of GSPs, public comments brought to staff group for refinement (and boards, if substantive) before including in final GSPs (November 2021)
8. Include framework report in GSP (December 2021)

Discussion:

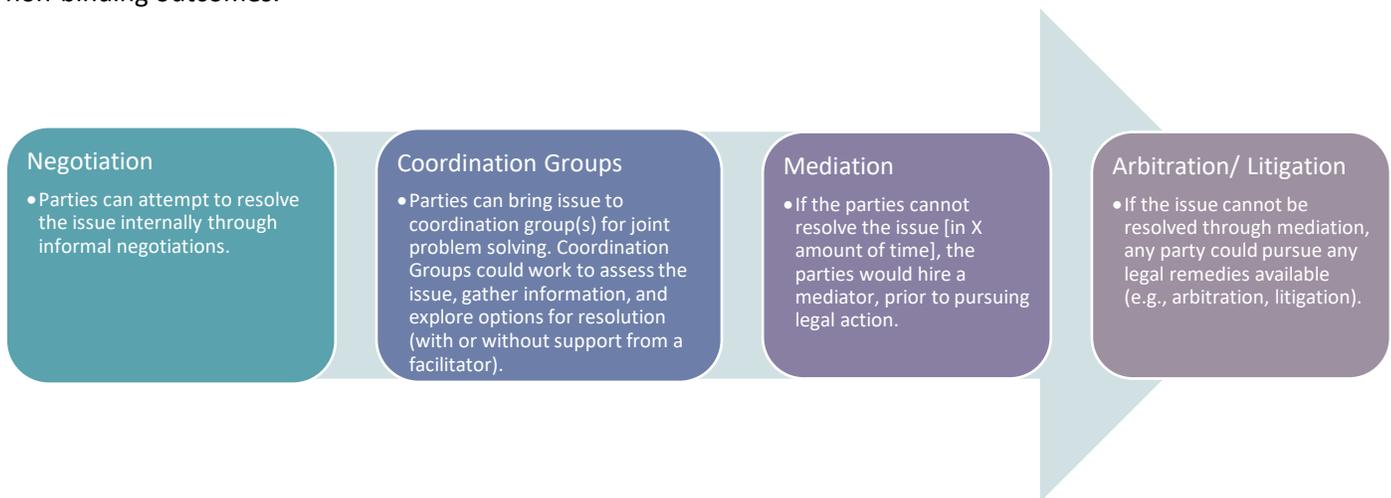
- Staff suggested softening the language, removing “commitment to,” and rather present the pillars as a “menu of options” neighboring subbasins can draw from, depending on individual needs and challenges. GSA Boards could decide which options they would support and/or incorporate, acknowledging circumstances may change with time. Subbasins could include the report as an appendix relevant to all. Neighboring subbasins each decide how to include specifics of coordination, which could be a mix of the options presented.
- Some staff were concerned with the timeline presented, acknowledging time and resource constraints, capacity, and competing priorities as they develop their GSPs. While there was overall agreement for including the report as an appendix to the GSPs and drawing on its content, as needed, in specific sections of the GSP and update yearly, staff would like to bring this information to their consultants to discuss this further.

- Staff suggested including specific discussion questions to guide GSA feedback.

Possible Issue Resolution Process

CBI prepared a document describing the purpose, types, and examples of issue resolution processes. There are many options to identify and resolve issues that involve different parties, goals/objectives, and resources. Ideally, issue resolution processes are thoughtfully designed and tailored to specific contexts. The broader goal for such a process can be tailored to meet the agencies' long-term needs, considering local dynamics, desired outcomes, and expected uses. Goals can include keeping it efficient, maintaining relationships, ensuring quality of the process, fostering participation and community engagement, etc.

The facilitators prompted a discussion about the possible inclusion of an issue resolution process in the inter-basin coordination framework and the desired level of specificity that would be agreeable and beneficial. The figure below shows a tiered dispute resolution process presented for consideration. Parties could begin with negotiation, which gives the parties control over the process and outcomes. Then, mediation, which brings in a third-party neutral (mediator) to facilitate the discussion and help parties work towards resolving issues. Often, negotiation and mediation lead to “non-binding” outcomes, non-enforceable by courts. Parties could opt to move towards arbitration or litigation, which are controlled by a third party (arbitrator or judge/jury) and can lead to binding and non-binding outcomes.



Discussion:

- Staff representatives leaned towards a tiered approach and would like to avoid the level of specificity in the approach to avoid creating unnecessary conflicts.
- Staff shared that subbasin attorneys may have strong opinions related to issue resolution processes. Eventually, any process described would need review by legal teams, which requires a longer timeframe.
- This version of the report could describe a general desire to establish an issue resolution process. Neighboring subbasins could consider developing a more elaborate process by the first five-year update.
- Staff would like to present the document outlining the various types of dispute resolution clauses and some discussion questions to their boards for consideration.

Outcomes & Next Steps:

- + CBI will work with Ryan Teubert (Tehama County) and explore possible collaboration with their technical consultants to conduct a preliminary analysis on the compiled list of PMAs in the various subbasins.
- + CBI will incorporate changes to the inter-basin coordination framework and incorporate elements of the issue resolution processes, based on the discussion.

NSV INTER-BASIN COORDINATION MEETING (05/26/2021)

- + Staff representatives will talk to their respective consultants to discuss options to include inter-basin coordination efforts in the GSP.
- + Staff representatives will seek input on elements of the draft report and framework using existing institutional structures that vary by subbasin. These structures include GSA boards, advisory groups, and groundwater commissions, all of which are public venues. Staff will gather feedback on the entire draft report once the facilitation team incorporates changes, and the draft goes through internal review.

Meeting Participants

Participant	Representation/Affiliation	Subbasins
Staff		
Paul Gosselin	Butte County	Butte, Vina, and Wyandotte Creek
Christina Buck	Butte County	Butte, Vina, and Wyandotte Creek
Mary Fahey	Colusa Groundwater Authority	Butte and Colusa
Lisa Hunter	Glenn County and Glenn Groundwater Authority	Butte, Colusa, and Corning
Ryan Teubert	Tehama County Flood Control and Water Conservation District	Antelope, Bowman, Corning, Los Molinos, and Red Bluff
Anjanette Shadley	Western Canal Water District	Butte
Kristin Sicke	Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency	Yolo
Guadalupe Rivera	Sutter County	Sutter
Facilitation Team		
Tania Carlone	Consensus Building Institute	
Mariana Rivera-Torres	Consensus Building Institute	