

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF  
THE BUTTE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT IN THE  
SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT PROCESS

**WHEREAS**, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (“SGMA”) provides local agencies (counties and cities with land-use authority and single and multipurpose special districts with water management authority) with the directive and authority to manage groundwater locally, with State oversight; and

**WHEREAS**, high and medium priority groundwater basins must develop and be managed under a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), which must be submitted to the California Department of Water Resources by January 31, 2022, for the subbasins within Butte County; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the steps in that process in Butte County is for eligible local agencies in each subbasin to determine the make-up of an inclusive governance structure in their respective groundwater subbasin. The governance agencies, known as Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), can be a single entity managing an entire basin or subbasin or multiple entities; and

**WHEREAS**, in many counties throughout the Central Valley of California, including Butte County, which are subject to SGMA with high and medium priority sub-basins, there are tracts of land known as “white areas,” which are areas within counties that are not within the boundaries of an otherwise eligible local agency; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to SGMA, these “white areas” may be covered and regulated by a county, or they may elect to annex through a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) process to an eligible local agency with SGMA authority, or petition LAFCo to form a new eligible local agency under SGMA such as a California Water District (Water Code Sections 34000 et.al.); and

**WHEREAS**, Butte County is located within the Sacramento Valley Basin, and the State has identified four sub-basins within the Sacramento Valley Basin per DWR’s Bulletin 118, partially located within Butte County: namely Vina, West Butte, East Butte, and Wyandotte Creek; and

**WHEREAS**, Butte County began a collaborative process in 2015 with all eligible local agencies to reach consensus within the County on principles of GSA formation and future SGMA governance. The goal of this process is to define a set of working principles that are shared among eligible local agencies and that consistently and constructively shape SGMA interaction and decision-making; and

**WHEREAS**, those principles include the following:

1. Maximize value of familiar structures and relationships;
2. Acknowledge all key interests of eligible local agencies;
3. Respect legally recognized rights;
4. Anticipate GSA requirements;
5. Make use of basin boundary adjustments;

6. Comply with SGMA regulations;
7. Identify opportunities to address interests of current non-GSA stakeholders;
8. Distribute costs in an equitable manner as possible;
9. Respect mutual interests in maintaining independent decision-making; and

**WHEREAS**, the “white areas” of Butte County within the four sub-basins are not represented by other eligible local agencies and will therefore be represented by Butte County unless these areas choose to annex to an eligible local agency or form a new one; and

**WHEREAS**, Butte Environmental Council (BEC) as a local non-profit engaged in Butte County water advocacy since 1975 has taken an active role in the collaborative SGMA process since it began in 2015 and continues to engage in all aspects of SGMA implementation and governance. Butte Environmental Council is uniquely positioned to represent key interests in SGMA for under-represented stakeholders throughout the County and in “white areas” to represent the interests of domestic groundwater users, and the environment at large in the on-going decision making process; and;

**WHEREAS**, the Butte Environmental Council recognizes and respects the leadership of Butte County and its efforts to create a workable and cooperative structure to discuss GSP; and

**WHEREAS**, the Butte Environmental Council recognizes and respects the leadership of Butte County to move forward to complete a comprehensive GSP by January 31, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, inherent in this process and timeframe Butte County will endeavor through the stakeholder process to develop a governance structure, for SGMA oversight of each of the four subbasins within Butte County consistent with the nine principles enumerated above; and

**WHEREAS**, principle number 7 above, recognizes that the interests of non-GSA stakeholders such as domestic pumpers, and the environment at large should be addressed; and

**WHEREAS**, Butte County recognizes the value of input and participation in the SGMA process by the Butte Environmental Council, which has been committed to protecting and defending the land, air and water of Butte County through action, education and advocacy since 1975, and is comprised of more than 600 community members dedicated to our local environment.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. The County of Butte will continue to work with stakeholders within Butte County utilizing a collaborative process to establish a governance structure and ultimately develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan, and the Butte Environmental Council will openly and earnestly participate and cooperate in that process as representatives for domestic pumpers, and the environment at large.
2. As a governance structure for implementation of SGMA is discussed among, and ultimately decided by all eligible local agencies within the four subbasins within the County, the County of Butte and the Butte Environmental Council will work together to advocate for and implement representation for domestic pumpers,

and the environment at large within each applicable governance structure/entity as applied to each of the four subbasins.

3. Furthermore, the County of Butte and the Butte Environmental Council support governance structures in each subbasin that will recognize and allow for appropriate representation of domestic pumpers, and the environment at large within the governance structure in compliance with SGMA.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Butte County Board of Supervisors this [DAY] day of [MONTH], 2018 by the following vote:

**AYES:**

**NOES:**

**ABSENT:**

**NOT VOTING:**

---

**Steve Lambert, Chair  
Board of Supervisors**

ATTEST:

Shari McCracken, Chief Administrative Officer  
And Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy