
SANTA MARGARITA Groundwater Agency

smgwa.org

Board Meeting Recap — May 2020 —

SMGWA Board considers standards for groundwater levels, quality

Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency's May board meeting was held Thursday, May 28. The meeting, including time for public comment and participation, was again conducted via web- and phone-based access due to County Shelter-in-Place Orders put in place as a response to the coronavirus outbreak.

The majority of the meeting was dedicated to an informational session about criteria for degraded groundwater quality and chronic lowering of groundwater levels in the Santa Margarita Basin. Georgina King of Montgomery & Associates and Dave Ceppos of California State University, Sacramento led the session.

The implementation of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Basin cannot degrade groundwater quality such that it causes adverse impacts, though King pointed out that SMGWA and its member agencies cannot control everything that happens in the Basin, such as if a spill were to affect groundwater quality. Following questions from board members and an opportunity for public input, the board accepted the draft statement of significant and unreasonable conditions for degraded groundwater quality.

The meeting also covered how to set sustainable management criteria for degraded groundwater quality. King recommended using State drinking water standards, which establish maximum contamination levels for various chemicals, for minimum thresholds. King suggested the board set realistic standards for measurable objectives for groundwater quality by using an averaging approach over the past 10 years. The item will be brought back to the board in June for further consideration. A third component of King's presentation that covered sustainable management criteria for groundwater levels wasn't completed and will be continued at the next board meeting.

The Board also received an informational item about SMGWA's youth outreach efforts, including the creation of a pilot program to offer a summer internship for community service credit through Scotts Valley High School. Details of the program will be announced soon.

The next SMGWA Board of Directors meeting will be held Thursday, June 25 at 5:30 pm. More information at smgwa.org.



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