

# MID AND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

Welcome! Below is the second set of articles related to the MID GSA. Again, we appreciate that you are taking the time to become better informed on groundwater topics in the Madera area. This set of articles is meant to update you of the progress and direction of the MID GSA specifically. If you would like more information on the Madera Subbasin in general, please visit <http://www.maderacountywater.com/>.

(Reminder, refer to the definitions on the back page of this insert for commonly used acronyms and terms related to groundwater management).

## PRELIMINARY WATER BUDGET NUMBERS and WHAT THEY MEAN TO ME AS A STAKEHOLDER IN THE MID GSA

At the MID GSA meeting on May 15, 2018 preliminary water budget numbers were released. MID GSA's consultant, Carollo Engineers, Inc., has determined that the MID GSA is **currently operating close to sustainably**.

### ***What does "operating close to sustainably" mean to me as a stakeholder in the MID GSA?***

*Operating close to sustainably means that overall, on average, with today's cropping patterns and land use there is very little overdraft and, in some years, a positive contribution to the groundwater aquifer in the MID GSA.*

For the entire MID GSA, approximately 134,000 acres, it has been determined that there is a range from a negative (-)10,000 acre feet per year (deficit) to a positive (+) 8,000 acre feet per year (surplus) in groundwater conditions. The MID GSA groundwater sustainable yield number, in conjunction with MID's surface water supplies, creates an almost balanced groundwater situation in the MID GSA with current cropping patterns and land use.

**MID GSA groundwater yield + MID surface water supplies =  
MID GSA is close to balance**

### ***If I'm in the MID GSA and an "almost balanced situation" currently exists, then why does my well continue to drop?***

*Carollo Engineers has concluded that this is most likely occurring due to external pumping (pumping of groundwater in the Madera Subbasin, **but outside of the MID GSA**).*

Carollo Engineers have also preliminarily estimated that the sustainable yield outside of the MID GSA in the Madera Subbasin is closer to 0.5 to 0.6 acre foot per acre. MID GSA is continuing to work with the GSAs in the Madera Subbasin on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan process and analyzing water budget numbers such as these.

## HOW WILL GROUNDWATER BE MANAGED IN THE MID GSA

The answer is, the MID GSA will be taking a District-wide sustainability approach.

# MID AND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT - continued

## **What in the world does a “District-wide sustainability approach” mean?**

*It means that instead of monitoring, managing, and potentially restricting the groundwater extraction from every single privately owned well in the MID GSA (including each one of your individually owned wells), that the MID GSA will be managed as a whole and the calculations for inputs and extractions will be done at the District level, not the individual parcel level.*

At the June 19, 2018 MID GSA meeting, the MID GSA Board of Directors gave direction that groundwater will be managed in the MID GSA at the District-wide level. With the preliminary water budget numbers for the MID GSA (described above), it was determined by the Board that sustainability was achievable for the MID GSA at the District level. The Board discussed other management options including a parcel by parcel approach in which individual landowners would be required to meter, monitor, report, and balance their groundwater and, if individual landowners failed to comply or reach sustainability, they could be subject to enforcement actions by the MID GSA and/or the State of California. This parcel-level management would then have to be applied to the almost 5,000 parcels within the MID GSA, **at huge cost and expense to our landowners.**

The benefits of District-level management, on the other hand, include reduced cost to landowners in the MID GSA, reduced monitoring and reporting requirements for individual landowners, and less invasion of privacy for landowners. Additionally, enforcement actions for individual landowners related to groundwater in the MID GSA should be exceedingly rare.

## **So, if I am in the MID GSA, will I have to install meters on all of my existing wells and start reporting all of my pumping?**

*No, at this time with District-wide sustainability approach, the MID GSA will not be requiring landowners to individually meter, monitor, nor report their groundwater extraction (pumping).*

View the interactive map to determine which GSA your land is in and which agency will be managing your groundwater, visit the link <http://bit.ly/MIDGSA18>. Again, the information in this set of articles relate to land within the MID GSA.

## **LEARN THE LINGO - NEW DEFINITIONS**

- Aquifer:** A body of permeable rock that can contain or transmit ground water
- Overdraft:** The condition of a groundwater basin in which the amount of water withdrawn by pumping exceeds the amount of water that recharges the basin
- Sustainably:** In a way that can be maintained at a certain rate or level

## **KEY ACRONYMS IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT**

- SGMA:** Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014
- DWR:** California Department of Water Resources, the state agency tasked with assisting in implementing SGMA
- SWRCB:** California’s State Water Resources Control Board, the state agency tasked with intervention and enforcement
- GSA:** Groundwater Sustainability Agency
- GSP:** Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- MID GSA:** Madera Irrigation District Groundwater Sustainability Agency



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