



Scope of Work and Fee Estimate

To: Stephanie Bertoux, Executive Director, San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

From: Michael McAlpin and Dave O'Rourke, GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Date: June 10, 2026

RE: San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan 5-Year Periodic Evaluation

GSI Water Solutions, Inc. (GSI) is pleased to present this proposal to develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (Plan) 5-Year Periodic Evaluation for the San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin). The Periodic Evaluation will review the progress and effectiveness of Plan implementation to date and assess how current efforts are advancing the Basin toward its established sustainability goals. Evaluation will also address recommended corrective actions (RCAs) provided by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in their Plan approval determination. Based on the findings of the Periodic Evaluation, potential amendments to the Plan may be identified as needed.

The GSI team is excited to support the SABGSA in the development of this important document and is prepared to act swiftly to ensure it is submitted to DWR on time. Our team offers:

- **Expertise with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).** GSI led the development of multiple Plans and provided hydrogeologic input on several others. We served as technical lead in the development of the Basin Plan, and we understand the needs and challenges of the SABGSA. We have proven experience in developing annual reports for several clients on the Central Coast that successfully meet DWR requirements. GSI has developed the annual reports for the Basin Plan since Plan submittal in 2022. Our team members are highly knowledgeable and familiar with the specific hydrogeology of the Basin.
- **Efficiency and continuity.** Our experience preparing the Basin Plan annual reports has allowed us to develop standardized templates and procedures for data analysis and reporting. These tools can be carried forward into the Periodic Evaluation, helping to increase efficiency in report preparation and support timely completion of project milestones and deadlines.
- **Comprehensive experience with the 5-Year Periodic Evaluation reporting process.** Our groundwater experts have developed Periodic Evaluations for nearby groundwater basins, including the Eastern Management Area (EMA) portion of the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin and the Paso Robles Area Subbasin. GSI is familiar with the Periodic Evaluation process and content requirements as well as addressal of DWR RCAs.

We value our partnership with the SABGSA and appreciate this opportunity to continue to collaborate with you. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding our proposal. The detailed scope of work is outlined below.

Scope of Work

The San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin), designated as Basin No. 3-014 and classified by DWR as a medium-priority basin, submitted its Plan in January 2022. DWR approved the Plan in January 2024. Pursuant to the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), GSAs must prepare and submit a Periodic Evaluation every five years to assess progress made during Plan implementation.

The Periodic Evaluation will summarize Basin conditions and implementation progress during the evaluation period. Consistent with guidance provided in DWR's *Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation: A Guide to Annual Reports, Periodic Evaluations, and Plan Amendments* (DWR, 2023), the evaluation will assess groundwater conditions, progress toward sustainability objectives, and the effectiveness of projects and management actions implemented during the first five years of SGMA implementation. The evaluation will include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- An assessment of groundwater conditions and trends observed during the first five years of SGMA implementation.
- An evaluation of progress toward achieving interim milestones and measurable objectives.
- A summary of the status of projects and management actions, including their quantified cumulative benefits.
- A discussion of how these benefits support achievement of the Basin's sustainability goal and operation within the Basin's sustainable yield.
- Identification of any challenges encountered during project implementation and the outcomes of actions taken to address those challenges.
- An assessment of the RCAs identified in DWR's Basin Plan approval determination, including the status of efforts to address those recommendations through implementation activities or potential future Plan updates.

The tasks proposed to complete the Periodic Evaluation are described in the following sections.

Task 1 – Project Management and Administration

GSI will allocate staff and resources strategically to ensure the work is completed efficiently and effectively. The project team will draw on the broader expertise of GSI's technical staff as needed. Our approach to project management emphasizes proactive and consistent communication with our clients. Accordingly, the team will maintain regular interaction with SABGSA staff throughout the project. GSI has developed strong working relationships with members of the SABGSA staff and working group and looks forward to continuing this collaborative partnership during preparation of the Periodic Evaluation.

Completion of the 5-Year Periodic Evaluation will require intentional management to remain within budget, adhere to the project schedule, and minimize unexpected issues. To support these objectives, GSI proposes a streamlined project team led by Michael McAlpin, who will oversee overall project performance and ensure that the work progresses according to the agreed scope, schedule, and budget. Project financial tracking will be supported by GSI's accounting staff, enabling Michael to provide the GSA with regular updates on project status, including scope, schedule, and budget considerations.

Task 2 – Review Background Information

Through many years of work in the Basin, GSI staff have developed a strong familiarity with relevant background documentation. The resources that will be reviewed include these in addition to Periodic Evaluation guidance documents. Background information includes but is not limited to the following:

- The entirety of the approved Plan, which provides information and data regarding historical groundwater use, Basin conditions, sustainable management criteria (SMC), and recommended projects and management actions.
- The entirety of submitted annual reports, which provide annual updates on Basin conditions and progress toward sustainability.
- The DWR GSP Implementation Guide (DWR, 2023), which provides DWR guidance on periodic evaluations. This document will be a significant resource, because this is the first Periodic Evaluation being completed on the Basin Plan.
- DWR's Basin Plan Determination Letter detailing RCAs.
- Relevant California Water Code Sections regarding periodic evaluations, including Sections 10728.2, 356.4, and 357.4.
- Recent U.S. Geological Survey San Antonio Creek Integrated Model publications.
- Recent DWR Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) Surveys Data and subsurface texture modeling for the Basin

Task 3 – Develop Responses to DWR's Recommended Corrective Actions

This task will be the most significant effort in the Periodic Evaluation process. Responses to the DWR corrective actions outlined in the January 18, 2024 determination letter from DWR will demonstrate adequate progress during the first 5-year implementation period of the Plan. GSI has reviewed the comments and five numbered RCAs presented in DWR's determination letter. DWR categorized their RCAs into the following five general categories:

1. Reevaluate the sustainable management criteria for the chronic lowering of water levels.
2. Reevaluate the quantitative definition of undesirable results related to degradation of water quality.
3. Evaluate the rate, timing, and volume of depletions of interconnected surface water and support for establishing specific sustainable management criteria.
4. Define the data collection frequency in tabular format for the degraded water quality monitoring network in the Plan.
5. Expand the land subsidence monitoring network to provide sufficient coverage of the Basin.

The determination letter provides additional detail on DWR's comments and RCAs. GSI will consult with the SABGSA to determine applicability and prioritization of these comments and RCAs. GSI will then develop appropriate responses to DWR that demonstrate significant progress or current compliance with respect to the RCAs.

We assume that GSI will incorporate two rounds of SABGSA staff edits to the responses to the DWR's RCAs and that these edits will satisfy the DWR requirements.

Task 4 – Develop Plan Periodic Evaluation

GSI will develop the Periodic Evaluation for the Basin Plan and ensure that the evaluation meets the requirements of SGMA and California Water Code, and references the annotated outline provided in the DWR GSP Implementation Guide. The evaluation will focus on determining whether the actions performed under the implementation of the Plan to date are meeting the Plan's management objectives, and whether those objectives are demonstrating reasonable progress toward meeting the SABGSA's Basin sustainability goals. Consistent with SGMA regulations, the evaluation will include:

- a) A discussion assessing if the original Plan's implementation is advancing the Basin toward sustainability.

- b) A description of current groundwater conditions over the evaluation period for each applicable sustainability indicator relative to measurable objectives, interim milestones, and minimum thresholds.
- c) A description of the progress toward implementation of any projects or management actions, and the resulting effect on groundwater conditions toward meeting the original Plan's sustainability goal.
- d) A description of the monitoring network within the Basin, including identification of data gaps, or any areas within the Basin that are represented by data that does not satisfy the requirements of Sections 352.4 and 354.34(c). The description of the monitoring network shall include the following:
- e) A discussion of any other Plan topics that have changed during the Plan. These may include some or all of the following, based on results of the evaluation and input from the stakeholder groups:
- f) A detailed discussion of how the RCAs are being addressed. This subject is discussed previously in Task 3 of this proposal. This detailed discussion will be addressed in the text of the Periodic Evaluation.
- g) A description of public outreach activities during the evaluation period, describing engagement of interested parties and beneficial users potentially including mailers, flyers, public workshops, public meetings, receipt of public comments and SABGSA response to comments, and other elements of a public engagement program executed during the development of this 5-year evaluation.

Report Outline

The following outline will be used to structure the Periodic Evaluation, as provided in the GSP Implementation Guide:

1. Executive Summary
2. New Information (23 California Code of Regulations [CCR] § 356.4. (f))
 - a. Compile new information since Plan Adoption
 - b. Evaluate aspects of Plan affected by new information
 - c. Determine whether new information warrants Plan Amendment
3. Groundwater Conditions Relative to Sustainable Management Criteria (23 CCR § 356.4. (a))
 - a. Evaluate current groundwater conditions for each sustainability indicator (Management Objectives [MOs], Interim Milestones, Minimum Thresholds [MTs])
 - b. Describe effectiveness of Plan implementation
 - c. Explain areas for improvement and GSA plans for improvement
 - d. Forecast for next evaluation cycle (10 year)
4. Status of Projects and Management Actions (23 CCR § 356.4. (b) & (f))
 - a. Summarize Projects and Management Actions since Plan Adoption
 - b. Detailed project descriptions, including current status and quantified or anticipated benefits
 - c. Discuss added, removed, or delayed projects
 - d. Outline anticipated projects during next 10-Year Evaluation cycle
5. Basin Setting based on New Information or Changes in Water Use (23 CCR § 356.4(d))
 - a. Detail hydrogeologic conceptual model revisions due to new information and infilling of data gaps
 - b. Discuss remaining data gaps and create detailed plan to address and fill these gaps
 - c. Evaluate groundwater conditions utilizing data from: Synthetic Aperture Radar (InSAR), dry well reports, water quality data, and assessments of interconnected surface water (ISW) and groundwater-dependent ecosystems (GDEs)
 - d. Discuss water use changes, including updated current and projected water budgets
 - e. Model updates
6. Monitoring Networks (23 CCR § 356.4(e))
 - a. Assessment of Plan's monitoring networks (for each applicable sustainability indicator)
 - i. Groundwater levels/groundwater in storage/depletion of ISW
 - ii. Land subsidence
 - iii. Water quality

7. GSA Authorities and Enforcement Actions (23 CCR § 356.4. (g) and (h))
 - a. Describe implemented authorities/enforcements
8. Documentation of Outreach, Engagement, and Coordination with Other Agencies
 - a. Outreach and engagement
 - b. Responsibilities of GSA Boards
 - c. Coordination with other agencies
9. Other Information
 - a. Consideration of adjacent basins
 - b. Challenges not previously discussed
10. Summary of Proposed or Completed Revisions to Plan Elements (23 CCR § 356.4. (c) and (i))
 - a. Summary of Periodic Evaluation
 - b. Proposed revisions to plan elements

Assumptions

This task includes:

- One set of revisions to the Administrative Draft report
- One set of revisions to the Public Draft report
- One set of minor revisions to the Final Draft report

While the Periodic Evaluation will provide an overview of any potential revisions to the Plan, the Plan Amendments will not be prepared at this time.¹ We estimate that amendments to the Plan may be warranted during the next Periodic Evaluation, which may be prepared approximately two to five years following preparation of the subject Periodic Evaluation. The preparation of the Plan Amendments may take place sooner pending additional evidence that they are warranted to support both compliance with SGMA regulations and sustainable groundwater management.

Task 5 – Support Public Outreach

GSI will support the public and stakeholder outreach component of the Periodic Evaluation in coordination with the SABGSA. The scope of public outreach activities anticipated will include continuation of outreach efforts to engage stakeholders, interested parties, and the public during the development and review of the Periodic Evaluation process. This is anticipated to be accomplished through the on-going public meetings, which include broad public communication strategies similar to those being used currently by the SABGSA for this purpose during Plan implementation. In this context, a public workshop may be held during a SABGSA Board of Directors (Board) meeting to guide the public's understanding of the Periodic Evaluation and Plan Amendment processes, curating the receipt of public comments received on the public draft document, and documenting the public outreach component for inclusion in the final Periodic Evaluation report.

Task 6 – Meetings

GSI will attend the following meetings:

- Attend 2 SABGSA Board meetings to provide progress reports, engage in public outreach, and receive SABGSA member feedback. We anticipate that the Periodic Evaluation will be discussed during an agenda item during these meetings. Attendance at additional meetings at the SABGSA staff's request can be accommodated and will be charged on a time and materials basis.
- Attend no more than 3 SABGSA staff meetings, including a kickoff meeting, to review the development of the Periodic Evaluation and receive feedback.

¹ Plan Amendments may be necessary if significant changes are identified, including revisions to SMC, management areas, or the representative monitoring network; updates to projects or management actions that could affect the Basin water budget or sustainable yield; or administrative changes such as the addition or removal of GSAs or Plans.

- Facilitate and provide technical input during a Public Workshop to present the report.

GSI assumes that all public meetings will be attended by the GSI Project Manager. Budget estimates include the preparation of meeting materials and presentations.

Task 7 – Upload Periodic Evaluation to DWR SGMA Portal

GSI shall prepare and upload the Final Periodic Evaluation of the Plan to DWR electronically by January 21, 2027 (5 years from the submittal of the initial Basin Plan). The budget for this task is included in this proposal. We have routinely performed this task for other Plans and are familiar with how to navigate the portal.

Fee Estimate and Schedule

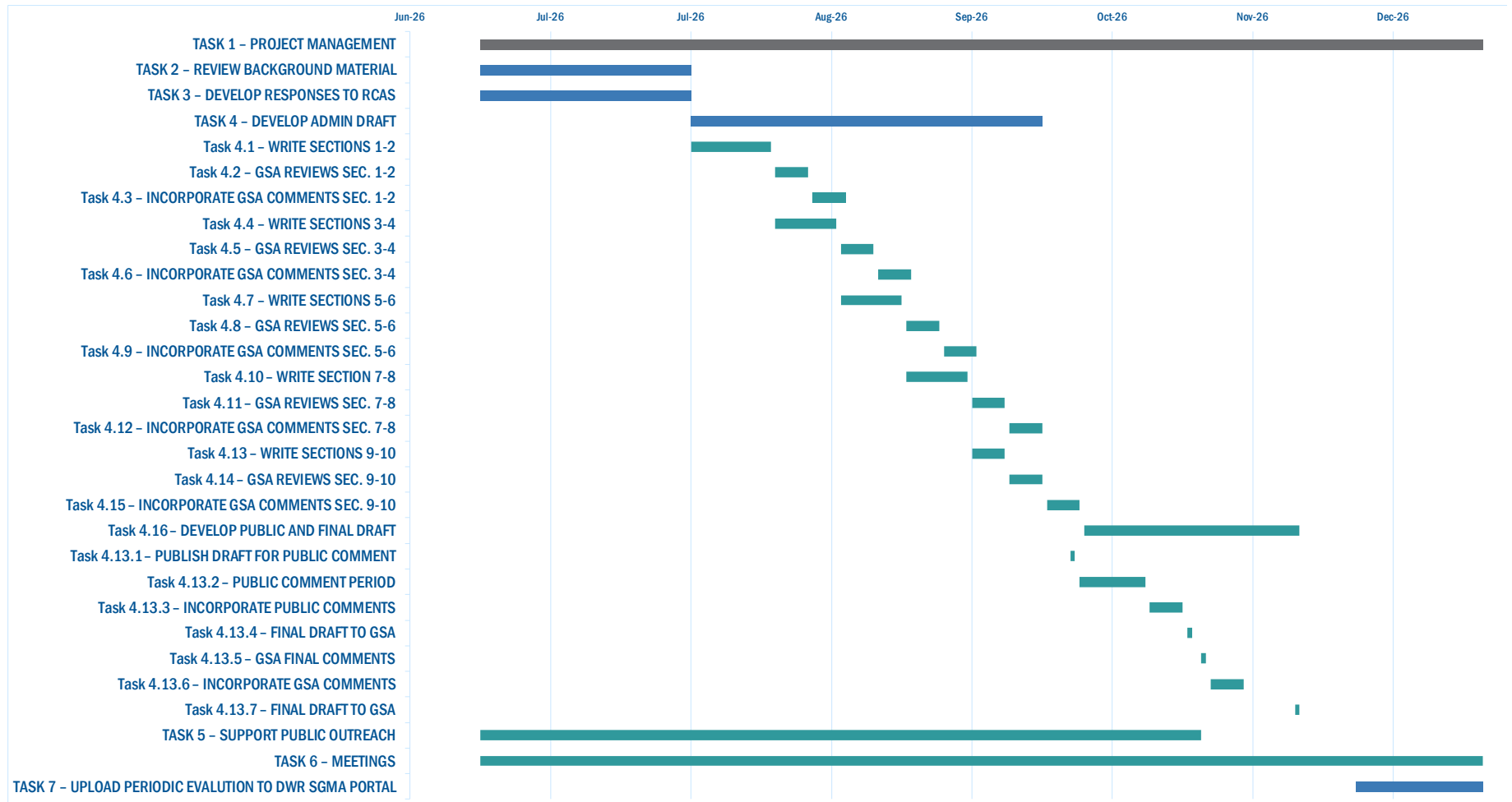
Fee Estimate

Our team’s proposed fee to complete the tasks is **\$120,000**. The work will be performed on a time and materials basis for an amount that will not exceed the authorized budget unless approved by SABGSA. GSI will perform the work in accordance with GSI’s Master Services Agreement with SABGSA dated December 14, 2023. The proposed budget is based on GSI’s 2026 fee schedule (attached). The rates included in the 2026 fee schedule are valid through the 2026 calendar year and are subject to change thereafter.

Task	Total
Task 1 – Project Management and Administration	\$8,000
Task 2 – Review Background Information	\$7,700
Task 3 - Develop Responses to DWR’s Recommended Corrective Actions	\$25,700
Task 4 – Develop Plan Periodic Evaluation	\$62,100
Task 5 – Support Public Outreach	\$7,400
Task 6 – Meetings	\$8,000
Task 7 – Upload Periodic Evaluation to DWR SGMA Portal	\$1,100
Project Total	\$120,000

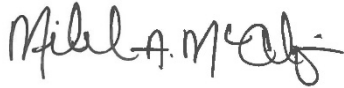
Project Delivery Schedule

The schedule below assumes contracting is finalized in June 2026. The Periodic Evaluation is due for upload to the DWR SGMA portal by January 21, 2027. An estimated schedule is outlined below.



We have enjoyed working with the SABGSA over the past several years and we are committed to helping you continue to meet DWR requirements on your path to achieving groundwater sustainability. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions about this proposal.

Sincerely,
GSI Water Solutions, Inc.



Michael McAlpin, PG
Senior Managing Hydrogeologist



Dave O'Rourke, PG, CHG, PE
Principal Hydrogeologist

Approval

You may indicate your approval of this proposal by signing on the space provided below.

Approved by

Date



2026 GSI Fee Schedule

Labor Category	Hourly Rate
Technical Professionals	
Principal II	\$300 – \$370
Principal I	\$275 – \$330
Senior Managing II	\$245 – \$315
Senior Managing I	\$220 – \$255
Managing II	\$190 – \$225
Managing I	\$180 – \$210
Senior Project II	\$170 – \$200
Senior Project I	\$160 – \$190
Project II	\$150 – \$180
Project I	\$140 – \$170
Staff II	\$130 – \$160
Staff I	\$120 – \$150
Other Services	
GIS/Graphics/Database	\$130 – \$185
Editor/Documents	\$130 – \$160
Administration	\$95 – \$130

The hourly rate for trial preparation and expert witness testimony is 1.5 times the standard billing rate shown above.

Expenses

- **Mileage:** IRS authorized rate/mile plus 10 percent markup
- **Direct expenses and outside services:** Cost plus 10 percent markup
- **Enterprise GIS:** \$100 per month for the duration of use

**Hourly rates are subject to annual increases on the contract anniversary date.*