



SAN ANTONIO BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (“Agency” or “SABGSA”) Board of Directors (“Board”) will hold its regular **Board Meeting** at **6:00 P.M.** on **Tuesday, July 16, 2024** at the **Los Alamos Community Services District** located at **82 St. Joseph Street, Los Alamos, CA 93440**. Virtual options are available for public participation.¹

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83127401605?pwd=WHpIQmZTR2hoY2NWa3J2MDczbnhtUT09>

Meeting ID: 831 2740 1605 Passcode: 203727

Dial: (669) 900 6833

SAN ANTONIO BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY (SABGSA)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, July 16, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

The Board will receive public comments on items not appearing on the agenda and within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Agency. The Board will not enter into a detailed discussion, answer questions, or take any action on any items presented during public comments. At the Board’s discretion, any issue raised during Public Comment may be referred to the Executive Director or other staff for administrative action or scheduled on a subsequent agenda for discussion. Persons wishing to speak on specific agenda items should do so at the time specified for those items. The presiding Chair shall limit public comments to no more than three minutes.

4. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes from June 18, 2024, Regular Meeting

b. Agency Finances, Budget, and Training

- i. The Board will receive a report from the accountant regarding finances and expenses for June 2024.
- ii. The Board will receive a report regarding training.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

a. Executive Director Update

- Update on activities performed by the Executive Director

b. San Antonio Basin Water District Update

- Update on San Antonio Basin Water District activities

c. Advisory Committee Updates

- Update on Advisory Committee

d. Board Member Updates

- Board members will provide any updates relevant to the SABGSA

¹ SABGSA will make reasonable efforts to make the meeting accessible virtually; however, if one of the virtual options are unavailable due to technological issues, you are invited to take advantage of the other options, including in-person attendance.

6. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Consider a Proposal from GSI Water Solutions to Provide On-Call Services for FY 24-25

The Board will review and discuss the proposed scope of work and associated fees for GSI Water Solutions to provide on-call hydrogeological services for fiscal year 2024-25. The Board may take action and/or provide specific direction to SABGSA staff and/or GSI Water Solutions related to this item.

b. Consider Contract Amendment No. 1 from Bertoux & Company

The Board will review and discuss a Contract Amendment No. 1 for Bertoux & Company for administrative services. The Board may take action and/or provide specific direction to SABGSA staff and/or SABGSA's legal counsel related to this item.

c. SABGSA Metering Program Ordinance and Administrative Enforcement Policy

The Board of Directors will review and discuss an updated draft ordinance requiring metering and reporting of groundwater extraction in the Basin, a draft Administrative Policy regarding enforcement and penalties, and will consider authorizing legal counsel to draft a fee deposit agreement related to the appeal process (Section 11 of the draft updated Rules & Regulations). There will be no first reading of the ordinance at this meeting and no formal public hearing will be held. The Board may take action and/or provide specific direction to the Ad Hoc Committee, staff and/or SABGSA's legal counsel related to this item.

d. SABGSA Metering Program Frequently Asked Questions

The Board of Directors will review a revised draft of the proposed Frequently Asked Questions document. The Board may take action and/or provide specific direction to the Ad Hoc Committee, staff and/or SABGSA's legal counsel related to this item.

7. ADJOURN

NEXT MEETING: August 20, 2024, at 6pm



SAN ANTONIO BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY (SABGSA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
Tuesday, June 18, 2024

- 1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL** – The meeting was called to order by Chairman Randy Sharer at 6:00pm at the Los Alamos Community Services District, located at 82 St. Joseph Street, Los Alamos, CA. Members of the public had the option to participate virtually or in-person.

Board of Directors Present: Dan Chabot, Tom Durant, Juan Gomez, Kevin Merrill, Patrice Mosby, Kenny Pata, Randy Sharer, Chris Wrather.

Directors Absent: None.

Alternates present, but not acting on behalf of a Director: Bart Haycraft

- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA**

No public comment.

- 4. CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Approve Minutes from May 21, 2024, SABGSA Board Meeting**

Motion by Director Durant, second by Director Wrather to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2024 Board meeting, as presented.

Ayes: Dan Chabot, Tom Durant, Juan Gomez, Kevin Merrill, Patrice Mosby, Kenny Pata, Randy Sharer, Chris Wrather.

Nos: None; **Absent:** None; **Abstain:** None

- b. Agency Finances, Budgeting, and Training**

Motion by Director Chabot, second by Director Pata to approve the financial report dated May 31, 2024, as presented.

Ayes: Dan Chabot, Tom Durant, Juan Gomez, Kevin Merrill, Patrice Mosby, Kenny Pata, Randy Sharer, Chris Wrather.

Nos: None; **Absent:** None; **Abstain:** None

- 5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- a. Executive Director Updates:**

- SABGSA Metering Program: SABGSA's legal counsel is preparing a draft Administrative Policy regarding enforcement and penalties that will be presented at the July Board meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee is working on recommendations for the stakeholder workshop anticipated to take place in Fall 2024.
- SABGSA has an informational meeting scheduled with Solstra Communities, the developer for the Solomon Hills project, on June 28, 2024.

- b. San Antonio Basin Water District Update**

Executive Director Donna Glass reported that the San Antonio Basin Water District (SABWD) Board of Directors met on June 18, 2024.

- The delinquent assessments for FY 23-24 totaling \$67,359 was approved to be placed on the County’s property tax roll.
- The SABWD Board reviewed the Property Change Order Requests from landowners for FY 24-25. The total irrigated acres for FY 24-25 is 13,330.
- The SABWD Board reviewed and approved the preliminary operating budget for FY 24-25. Budget to be approved at the July meeting.
- The SABWD Board reviewed and approved the preliminary assessments for FY 24-25 at a rate of \$40 per irrigated acre and \$0.40 per non-irrigated acre. Approval of Resolution Authorizing Levy and Collection of 2024-25 Assessment will be on the July agenda.
- The SABWD approved a fund request from the SABGSA for \$13,564 to cover invoices received this month.
- There are three SABWD Board members with terms expiring at the end of 2024. The SABWD passed a resolution announcing the November 2024 district election and related procedures for the three open positions.

c. Advisory Committee Updates

- The Advisory Committee did not meet in June 2024.

d. Board Member Updates

- Director Merrill commented that he has received several inquiries from current landowners and prospective investors regarding a potential future Groundwater Base Pumping Allocation Program that is outlined as a possible Tier 2 management action in the GSP. The questions are related to establishing the methodology for determining individual annual allocations, specifically whether that would be based on total acres or irrigated acres or a combination.

6. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Q2 2024 Quarterly Groundwater Level Monitoring Report for the San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin

Chairman Sharer provided an overview of the Q2 2024 Quarterly Groundwater Level Monitoring Report prepared by GSI Water Solutions, Inc. The Q2 2024 report is posted on SABGSA’s website. SABGSA discussed the following recommendations included in the Q2 2024 report.

- Recommendation #1 is not included in SABGSA’s budget for FY 24-25.
- Recommendations #2 and #3: SABGSA to clarify next steps with GSI Water Solutions and then reach out to landowners.
- Recommendations #4 and #5 are included in SABGSA’s budget for FY 24-25. SABGSA staff will request fee proposals from GSI Water Solutions, Inc.
- Recommendation #6 is not included in SABGSA’s budget for FY 24-25.
- Recommendations #7 and #8 are ongoing.
- Recommendations #9 and #10 are included in SABGSA’s budget for FY 24-25. SABGSA staff will request fee proposals from GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

b. SABGSA Budget Priorities for Fiscal Year 2024-25

SABGSA staff presented the final draft of the budget and priorities for fiscal year 2024-25. **Motion by Director Wrather, second by Director Durant to approve the SABGSA budget and priorities for fiscal year 24-25, as presented.**

Ayes: Dan Chabot, Tom Durant, Juan Gomez, Kevin Merrill, Patrice Mosby, Kenny Pata, Randy Sharer, Chris Wrather.

Nos: None; **Absent:** None; **Abstain:** None

7. NEXT MEETING: July 16, 2024 at 6pm at the Los Alamos Community Services District.

8. ADJOURN – 7:09pm

San Antonio Basin GSA
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
 July 2023 through June 2024

Agenda Item 4.b.

100% of the year has elapsed	Jul '23 - Jun 24	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4-Interest Income	12.21			
Total Income	12.21			
Expense				
Administration and Operation				
01 Adminstrative Exp/Office Ex	60,745.34	76,000.00	-15,254.66	79.93%
02-Accountant	8,400.00	7,500.00	900.00	112.0%
03-Comm Eng Grant Wrtng NonGSP	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
04-Monitoring	42,938.42	90,000.00	-47,061.58	47.71%
05-Legal Counsel	18,562.50	75,000.00	-56,437.50	24.75%
06-Insurance	3,498.00	3,000.00	498.00	116.6%
07-Audit Fees	2,920.00	4,000.00	-1,080.00	73.0%
09-GSP Related Costs-Annual Rep	55,192.59	100,000.00	-44,807.41	55.19%
10-GSP Implementation / PMAs	28,890.00	142,500.00	-113,610.00	20.27%
11- Exec Order WellVerification	-197.50			
Total Administration and Operation	220,949.35	498,000.00	-277,050.65	44.37%
Total Expense	220,949.35	498,000.00	-277,050.65	44.37%
Net Ordinary Income	-220,937.14	-498,000.00	277,062.86	44.37%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
11 Operating Transfers	183,061.15	498,000.00	-314,938.85	36.76%
12 Carryover Funds	0.00	50,000.00	-50,000.00	0.0%
Total Other Income	183,061.15	548,000.00	-364,938.85	33.41%
Other Expense				
Contingency (10%)	0.00	50,000.00	-50,000.00	0.0%
Total Other Expense	0.00	50,000.00	-50,000.00	0.0%
Net Other Income	183,061.15	498,000.00	-314,938.85	36.76%
Net Income	-37,875.99	0.00	-37,875.99	100.0%

San Antonio Basin GSA

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2024

Jun 30, 24

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006 23,235.00

Total Checking/Savings 23,235.00

Total Current Assets 23,235.00

TOTAL ASSETS 23,235.00

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities

Payables 5,900.00

Total Other Current Liabilities 5,900.00

Total Current Liabilities 5,900.00

Total Liabilities 5,900.00

Equity

Retained Earnings 55,210.99

Net Income -37,875.99

Total Equity 17,335.00

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 23,235.00

San Antonio Basin GSA
Expenses by Vendor Detail
June 2024

	<u>Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Num</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Split</u>	<u>Amount</u>
BERTOUX & COMPANY						
	Check	06/14/2024	3117	01Administrative Exp/Office Ex	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	5,000.00
Total BERTOUX & COMPANY						<u>5,000.00</u>
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck						
	Check	06/14/2024	3118	05-Legal Counsel	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	2,281.50
Total Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck						<u>2,281.50</u>
Carrie Troup, C.P.A.						
	Check	06/14/2024	3121	02-Accountant	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	700.00
Total Carrie Troup, C.P.A.						<u>700.00</u>
GOLDEN STATE RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY						
	Check	06/27/2024	ACH	06-Insurance	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	1,765.00
Total GOLDEN STATE RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY						<u>1,765.00</u>
GSI WATER SOLUTIONS, INC.						
	Check	06/14/2024	3119	10-GSP Implementation / PMAs	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	1,605.00
	Check	06/14/2024	3120	04-Monitoring	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	857.50
Total GSI WATER SOLUTIONS, INC.						<u>2,462.50</u>
Los Alamos CSD						
	Check	06/14/2024	3122	01Administrative Exp/Office Ex	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	200.00
Total Los Alamos CSD						<u>200.00</u>
MOSS, LEVY & HARTZHEIM LLP						
	Check	06/14/2024	3123	07-Audit Fees	Community Bank of SM -ACCT 9006	2,920.00
Total MOSS, LEVY & HARTZHEIM LLP						<u>2,920.00</u>
TOTAL						<u><u>15,329.00</u></u>



July 8, 2024

Stephanie Bertoux
Executive Director
San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
930A Nysted Drive
Solvang, CA 93463

Dear Ms. Bertoux:

GSI Water Solutions, Inc. (GSI), is pleased to present this scope of work and budget for performing on-call hydrogeological services for the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's (SABGSA) consideration. GSI will provide services associated with the implementation of the San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and other activities that are requested by the SABGSA and the Executive Director. GSI anticipates on-call services may include:

- Performance of technical reviews of replacement well applications pursuant to EO N-7-22 paragraph 9a and the Santa Barbara County Temporary Water Well Permitting Urgency Ordinance,
- Hosting and managing the DMS,
- Assisting with development and implementation of the well metering program,
- Review SABGSA Well Registration Program data to identify existing candidate wells to incorporate into the monitoring network,
- Collaborate with Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc. to share existing Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program well information,
- Review and propose potential replacement RMS wells,
- Planning the wellhead reference point elevation surveys,
- Review of DWR AEM survey data,
- Update HCM based on DWR AEM and USGS SACIM,
- Assisting the SABGSA with any grant writing to pursue funds for GSP implementation,
- Ongoing coordination and consultation with the SABGSA,
- Assistance with SABGSA budgeting and project planning,
- Review USGS/VSF/ SBWA Barka Slough Study,
- Review of USGS SACIM,
- Attendance at stakeholder and Board of Directors meetings at the request of the Executive Director, and
- Attendance at Advisory Committee meetings at the request of the Executive Director.

These services would be performed at the specific direction of the SABGSA Executive Director (Executive Director). GSI will perform the work on a time and materials basis in accordance with GSI's 2024 fee schedule

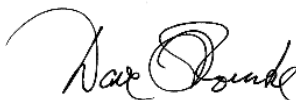
(Attachment A). The rates included in the 2024 fee schedule are valid through the 2024 calendar year and are subject to change thereafter. Because it is not possible to estimate fees for the work that will be requested, GSI is proposing that the SABGSA authorize a budget of **\$30,000** for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.¹ This amount will not be exceeded without the written approval of the Executive Director. On a monthly basis, GSI will provide a summary of activities that were performed that month with the associated cost. GSI understands that the Executive Director may re-prioritize requested services depending on what is needed at the time.

We thank you for your consideration of this proposal. Please contact us if you have any questions. Thank you for allowing GSI the opportunity to continue to serve the interests of the SABGSA.

Sincerely,
GSI Water Solutions, Inc.



Michael McAlpin, PG
Managing Hydrogeologist



David 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

¹ GSI understands a total of \$50,000 has been allocated in the SABGSA 2024-2025 fiscal year budget for hydrogeological on-call services. If the proposed total of \$30,000 is exhausted prior to the end of the fiscal year, GSI, at the direction of the Executive Director, will submit a change order request to the SABGSA up to the remaining budgeted amount of \$20,000.



2024 GSI Fee Schedule

Labor Category	Hourly Rate
Technical Professionals	
Principal	\$250 – \$360
Supervising	\$210 – \$310
Managing	\$170 – \$230
Consulting	\$150 – \$190
Project	\$140 – \$170
Staff	\$120 – \$160
Other Services	
GIS/Graphics/Database	\$130 – \$185
Editor/Documents	\$130 – \$155
Administration	\$95 – \$125

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

CONTRACT AMENDMENT NO. 1

Project Name: Executive Director Position	Contract Amendment: No. 1
Client Name: San Antonio Basin GSA	Date: July 11, 2024

Bertoux & Company requests the Agency's authorization to proceed with revisions to the contract agreement for the above referenced project as herein described. Approval below incorporates this document as a part of the original contract signed March 15, 2022. If approved, please return one signed original Contract Amendment to Bertoux & Company.

Description and Purpose of the Revision(s)

Bertoux & Company is currently authorized to spend an average of 40 hours per month with a not to exceed total of 480 hours annually at a rate of \$125 per hour. Contract Amendment No. 1 authorizes Bertoux & Company to spend an average of 45 hours per month with a not to exceed total of 540 hours annually for Executive Director services at a rate of \$125 per hour. The increase in hours is due to additional tasks related to GSP implementation.


No Other Changes

Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Agreement, all of the terms and conditions of the Contract, including the scope of services and hourly rate, remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

Issued by,

Bertoux & Company

Approved by Agency

Signature: 	Signature:
Print Name: Stephanie Bertoux	Print Name: Randy Sharer
Title: Owner, Bertoux & Company	Title: SABGSA Board Chair
Date: July 11, 2024	Date:

ORDINANCE NO. 24-001

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SAN ANTONIO BASIN
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY REQUIRING METERING AND
REPORTING OF GROUNDWATER EXTRACTION**

WHEREAS, the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (“Agency”) was formed pursuant to a joint exercise of powers agency (“JPA”) executed on May 16, 2017 between the Cachuma Resource Conservation District and the Los Alamos Community Services District;

WHEREAS, the Agency decided to become the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency (“GSA”) for the San Antonio Creek Valley Basin (“Basin”) on June 14, 2017;

WHEREAS, the San Antonio Basin Water District replaced the Cachuma Resource Conservation District as a member of the JPA on May 19, 2020;

WHEREAS, in compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (“SGMA”), on December 7, 2021, the Agency adopted the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“Plan”) that establishes the Agency’s groundwater management program and sustainability goal for the Basin;

WHEREAS, SGMA, authorizes a local GSA to manage a groundwater basin in a sustainable manner pursuant to its groundwater sustainability plan;

WHEREAS, to assist in its management, Water Code Section 10725.2 authorizes GSAs such as the Agency to adopt rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions for the purpose of complying with SGMA and perform any act necessary or proper to carry out the purposes of SGMA;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Water Code Section 10725.8(a), a GSA may require that the use of every groundwater extraction facility within the management area of the GSA be measured by a water-measuring device satisfactory to the GSA, provided that de minimus extractors are exempt from such requirements;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Water Code Section 10725.8(c), a GSA may also require that the owner or operator of a groundwater extraction facility file statements with the GSA setting forth the total extraction in acre-feet of groundwater from the facility during the previous water year;

WHEREAS, the Plan identifies development of a metering and reporting program as a Tier 1 Management Action;

WHEREAS, to sustainably manage the Basin, the Agency requires consistent and reliable data on the volume of groundwater extracted from each groundwater extraction facility in the Basin; ~~and~~

WHEREAS, to implement the Plan, the Agency finds it necessary and in the best interest of both the Agency and the Basin to adopt an ordinance requiring all landowners within the Basin, except de minimis extractors, to install measuring devices on groundwater extraction facilities and file reports on a biannual basis reporting groundwater extraction to the Agency;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Water Code Section 10725 et seq., SGMA empowers the Agency with the authority to enforce adopted rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions necessary and appropriate to implement the Plan; and

WHEREAS, decisions by the Agency’s Board of Directors made pursuant to rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions necessary and appropriate to implement the Plan may be appealed to ensure a fair administration process.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Recitals Incorporated

The above recitals are supported by substantial evidence, incorporated herein by reference and each relied upon independently by the Agency’s Board of Directors in its adoption of this Ordinance.

SECTION 2. Amendment to the SABGSA Rules and Regulations

The Agency’s Board of Directors amends the “San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Rules and Regulations” (“SABGSA Rules and Regulations”), as attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, and finds that the amendment to the SABGSA Rules and Regulations is consistent with the Plan and shall promote implementation of the Plan in accordance with SGMA.

SECTION 3. Amendment

This Ordinance may be added to, amended, and/or repealed at any time by adoption of a subsequent ordinance of the Agency’s Board of Directors.

SECTION 4. Effective Date

This Ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days after the second reading.

SECTION 5. Actions Against the Agency

Nothing contained in this Ordinance shall constitute a waiver by the Agency or operate as an estoppel against the Agency from asserting any defenses or immunities from liability as provided in law, including, but not limited to, those provided in Division 3.6 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

SECTION 6. Administrative Authorization.

The Agency Executive Director or designee is hereby authorized and directed to take any such actions as may be necessary and appropriate to implement the intent of this Ordinance.

SECTION 7. Severability.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The Agency Board of Directors hereby declares that it would have passed and adopted this Ordinance, and each and all provisions hereof, irrespective of the fact that one or more provisions may be declared invalid.

SECTION 8. California Environmental Quality Act

The Agency’s Board of Directors finds that adoption of this Ordinance, including the SABGSA Rules and Regulations, is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Sections 15307, 15308, and 15061 subdivision (b)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (“CEQA Guidelines”) because the Ordinance will support implementation of the Plan by establishing rules and regulations to support groundwater management in order to prevent environmental degradation associated with groundwater overdraft and said rules and regulations will not have a significant effect on the environment.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Ordinance No. 24-001 was duly adopted and passed by the Board of Directors of the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency at a meeting held on the ___ day of _____, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

, Board Chair

San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

ATTEST:

, Secretary

San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

EXHIBIT A

San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Rules and Regulations

SECTION 1. Definitions

- A. For purposes of these Rules and Regulations, the following definitions apply:
1. “AF” means acre-foot.
 2. “APN” means the Santa Barbara County Assessor’s Parcel Number for a property.
 3. “Agency” or “SABGSA” shall refer to the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency.
 4. “De Minimis Extractor” shall mean a person who extracts, for domestic purposes, two acre-feet or less per year.
 5. “Flow Meter” shall mean a flow meter required to be installed on a Groundwater Extraction Facility pursuant to Section 3 of these Rules and Regulations.
 6. “Flow Meter Installation and Compliance Form” shall mean the form required by the SABGSA pursuant to these Rules and Regulations, which may include an electronic form or electronic submission portal.
 7. “Groundwater Extraction Facility” shall mean a groundwater well or any device or method for extraction of groundwater within the Basin.
 8. “Groundwater Extraction Form” shall mean the form required by the SABGSA pursuant to these Rules and Regulations, which may include an electronic form or electronic submission portal.¹
 9. “Operator” shall mean the person responsible for operating a Groundwater Extraction Facility. The Property Owner of the property containing the Groundwater Extraction Facility shall be conclusively presumed to be the operator unless otherwise declared on the Registration.
 10. “Property Owner” shall mean the fee title owner of land within the Agency’s boundaries, including all San Antonio Basin Water District landowners and all Los Alamos Community Services District customers.

¹ DRAFTER’S NOTE: For ease of review, please note that definitions #5-#8 are the proposed *new* definitions to be added to the Rules and Regulations.

11. "Registration" shall mean submission of the groundwater well registration information as specified in Section 2 of these Rules and Regulations to the Agency.

SECTION 2. Groundwater Well Registration

The Property Owner and/or Operator of each Groundwater Extraction Facility within the Basin shall provide the Agency with groundwater well registration information (to the extent known to the Property Owner and/or Operator at the time of registration) by filling out and submitting a registration form issued by the Agency and returned to the Agency's PO Box or via email.

A. Existing Wells

All existing Groundwater Extraction Facilities located within the boundaries of SABGSA shall be registered with the Agency within sixty (60) days of receiving a registration form and no later than March 31, 2023, whichever occurs later. The Property Owner and/or Operator of a Groundwater Extraction Facility must provide, in full, the information requested on the Agency's registration form, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Name and contact information of the Property Owner;
2. Name and contact information of the Operator, if different than the Property Owner;
3. If appropriate, a certification that the Property Owner does not have a Groundwater Extraction Facility located on their property;
4. Type of Groundwater Extraction Facility and water use;
5. Annual water use information;
6. Groundwater Extraction Facility APN and State Well Number;
7. Physical address and geographic location of each Groundwater Extraction Facility;
8. Date of construction;
9. Well depth;
10. Activity status of the Groundwater Extraction Facility;
11. List of APNs that the Groundwater Extraction Facility serves;
12. Manufacturer/model and type of Groundwater Extraction Facility measuring device, such as a flow meter (for certain users);
13. Recording units of the measuring device (for certain users);
14. Signature of the Property Owner.

B. New Wells

All new Groundwater Extraction Facilities located within the Boundaries of SABGSA shall be registered with the Agency, via the same form described above in Section 2.A, no later than March 31, 2023 or within sixty (60) days of well completion, whichever occurs later.

C. Changes to Registration

Any change to the information provided in the well registration form described above in Section 2.A, including but not limited to, a change to the Property Owner or Operator of a Groundwater Extraction Facility, must be reported within thirty (30) days of when the change takes effect.

D. Registration Confidentiality

The Agency shall keep the information contained in a Registration confidential to the extent permissible under applicable law.

SECTION 3. Metering and Reporting of Groundwater Extraction

A. De Minimis Extractors Exempt

De minimis extractors are exempt from the metering and reporting requirements in Section 3.

B. Installation of a Flow Meter

By October 1, 2025,² each Groundwater Extraction Facility within the GSA's boundary must have a flow meter installed that meets the following specifications:

1. The Flow Meter must be capable of measuring the volume of groundwater extracted from the Groundwater Extraction Facility with an accuracy level of $\pm 5\%$.
2. The Flow Meter must be equipped with either (a) a direct-reading rate-of-flow indicator capable of showing instantaneous flow in gallons per minute or (b) a sweep hand indicator capable of determining the rate-of-flow by timing measurement.
3. The Flow Meter must be equipped with a visual, volume-recording totalizer recorded in gallons, cubic feet, acre-inches, or acre-feet.

C. Installation, Operation, Maintenance and Calibration of Flow Meters

² DRAFTER'S NOTE: Please note that the October 1, 2025 and May 1, 2026 compliance dates are currently placeholders, subject to change based on the timing of any ordinance adoption/public hearing process.

1. The Flow Meter must be installed, operated, and maintained to the manufacturer's specifications, instructions, and recommendations.
2. Prior to installation or by October 1, 2025 at latest, the Flow Meter must be calibrated to achieve an accuracy level of $\pm 5\%$ by volume of groundwater extracted.
3. The Flow Meter must be calibrated pursuant to the schedule described in the manufacturer's specifications. If no such schedule exists, calibration must be performed at least once every five years.
4. If the verification error exceeds 5% upon calibration, then the Flow Meter must be recalibrated or replaced with a flow meter meeting the requirements of this Section.
5. It is a violation of these Rules and Regulations for a Groundwater Extraction Facility to extract any amount of groundwater without a properly installed, operated, maintained, and calibrated Flow Meter.

D. Documentation of Flow Meter Installation

By October 1, 2025, the Operator of each Groundwater Extraction Facility within the Basin shall submit a completed Flow Meter Installation and Compliance Form according to the instructions set forth on the form. For any new Groundwater Extraction Facility, the Operator must submit a completed Flow Meter Installation and Compliance Form no later than October 1, 2025 or within sixty (60) days of well completion, whichever occurs later.

E. Requests for Additional Compliance Information

The SABGSA has the right to request from an Operator additional information concerning a Flow Meter, including but not limited to photographs, certificate of calibration, or the location of the Flow Meter. Upon request by the SABGSA, such information shall be provided within 60 days.

F. Recording of Meter Readings

The Operator of any Groundwater Extraction Facility must read and record the Flow Meter totalizer on at least a monthly basis, in between the 1st and 5th day of each month.

G. Reporting of Meter Readings

Beginning on May 1, 2026 and on at least a biannual basis (twice per year) thereafter, each Operator shall report the monthly Flow Meter readings for each Groundwater Extraction Facility using the Groundwater Extraction Form, according to the SABGSA's submission instructions. Reporting periods and due dates for the Groundwater Extraction Form shall be as follows:

1. Monthly readings for April through September are due by November 1 of each year.
2. Monthly readings for October through March are due by May 1 of each year.

Each Groundwater Extraction Form must be completed pursuant to SABGSA's then-applicable instructions.

H. Further Administrative Policies

The Agency's Executive Director may adopt administrative policies consistent with these Rules and Regulations to collect, manage, and store the data on groundwater extraction collected through Flow Meters in the Basin.

SECTION 4. Reserved.

SECTION 5. Reserved.

SECTION 6. Reserved.

SECTION 7. Reserved.

SECTION 8. Reserved.

SECTION 9. Reserved.

SECTION 10. Penalties.

Failure to comply with these Rules and Regulations may result in administrative and civil penalties, in accordance with Water Code Section 10732, as may be determined by the Agency's Board of Directors. Remedies identified in these Rules and Regulations are not intended to be exclusive. Any other remedy available to the Agency in law or equity may be employed at the discretion of the Board of Directors to address any circumstance related to the management of the Basin in accordance with State law, SGMA, the Agency Plan, or other SABGSA Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 11. Appeal Process.

A Property Owner and/or Operator may appeal a decision made pursuant to these Rules and Regulations by filing a written notice of appeal with the Board within 30 calendar days of the notice of the Agency's decision. The written notice shall include:

1. Name of the Property Owner and/or Operator and address of the Groundwater Extraction Facility (if applicable),
2. Brief description of the project (if applicable),

3. The specific decision that is appealed,
4. The date on which the decision was made,
5. The basis or bases for the appeal,
6. The specific action which the Property Owner and/or Operator requests be taken on appeal, and
7. All information or evidence relied upon to support the appeal.

The Agency's Board of Directors shall consider the appeal expeditiously and, if reasonably possible, at the first regularly scheduled meeting following the filing of an appeal, but no later than 60 calendar days from the date the appeal was filed. The decision of the Board of Directors shall constitute final action on appeal, subject to judicial review pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1094.5. Appellant shall be responsible for all fees and costs, including staff time, associated with an appeal. The filing of a written notice of appeal shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee established by resolution of the Board of Directors. A deposit agreement approved by the Agency's General Manager between Appellant and the Agency shall specify the terms of Appellant's deposit and reimbursement for the Board of Director's review of an appeal. No part of said fee shall be refundable except as provided in such fee resolution.

DRAFT SABGSA ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Well Registration, Metering, and Reporting Requirements

I. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's (SABGSA) Rules and Regulations implement the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (Plan) by imposing requirements on Property Owners and/or Operators that include, but are not limited to, well registration (Section 2), well metering (Section 3.B-D), and reporting of meter readings (Section 3.G).¹ The SABGSA endeavors to work collaboratively with Property Owners and/or Operators, however, the Board recognizes that enforcement of the SABGSA Rules and Regulations is necessary to implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (Wat. Code, § 10720 et seq., SGMA) and SABGSA Plan. The following Administrative Enforcement Policy (Policy) outlines the SABGSA enforcement process in a manner that efficiently and effectively implements sustainable groundwater management within the San Antonio Valley Creek Basin.

II. GENERAL ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY

SGMA empowers the SABGSA with the authority to adopt and enforce rules and regulations necessary and appropriate to implement the SABGSA Plan. (See Water Code, § 10725 et seq.) The authority granted by SGMA is in addition the authority granted to San Antonio Basin Water District and Los Alamos Community Services District under their enabling statutes. (Water Code, § 10725(a).)

Pursuant to SGMA, the SABGSA may impose penalties in accordance with California Water Code section 10732(a)(2), which allows for a civil penalty of at most one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per violation and an additional penalty of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each additional day the violation continues. (Water Code § 10732(a)(2).) In addition, the SABGSA may impose a penalty of five hundred dollars (\$500) per acre-foot extracted in excess of the amount that person is authorized to extract. (Water Code, § 10732(a)(1).) The SABGSA has full latitude to impose the maximum penalties allowed under California Water Code section 10732. The SABGSA also may initiate legal action against a Property Owner and/or Operators that violate the SABGSA Rules and Regulations or the Plan to seek remedies under applicable law, including but not limited to public and private nuisance and Article X, Section 2 of the California Constitution.

¹ Capitalized terms not defined herein have the same meaning as provided in the SABGSA Rules and Regulations.

III. SABGSA ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

1. **Investigation:** If SABGSA has cause to believe that a Property Owner and/or Operator is in violation of the Rules and Regulations, SABGSA may request additional information from the Property Owner and/or Operator, and/or conduct an investigation pursuant to Water Code section 10725.4.
 - a. **Inspection Warrant.** If the Property Owner and/or Operator refuses to voluntarily comply with the SABGSA's request for additional information or request to investigate, the SABGSA may seek an inspection warrant in accordance with Water Code section 10725.4(c) and its authority under Water Code section 35404.
2. **Warning Letter:** In the event the situation does not resolve itself to SABGSA's satisfaction, or the potential violation is a failure to register a well under Section 2 of the Rules and Regulations, SABGSA may issue a written "Warning Letter."
 - a. A Warning Letter may include, among other things: (1) the nature and extent of the violation; (2) the steps that the entity must take in order to come into compliance; (3) a specific compliance deadline ; (4) a summary of the potential penalties; (5) SABGSA staff contact information for assistance with resolving the violation; and (6) a warning that SABGSA reserves the right to utilize additional legal and practical methods to ensure compliance. Deadlines will be set based on a reasonable estimate of the time necessary to resolve the violation.
 - b. Warning Letters for Well Registration. The SABGSA need not conduct an investigation prior to enforcement of potential violations for failure to register a well under Section 2 of the Rules and Regulation and may immediately issue a Warning Letter. Once a Warning Letter is sent for failure to register a well, a Property Owner and/or Operator has 30 days, or another period specified in the Warning Letter, to comply before further action may be taken.
3. **Notice of Violation:** If a violation persists following issuance of a Warning Letter, a written Notice of Violation will be issued for any violation of the Rules and Regulations. The Notice of Violation will include, among other things: (1) the nature and extent of the violation; (2) the penalties imposed; (3) the deadline to pay applicable penalties; and (4) a warning that the SABGSA reserves the right to utilize additional legal and practical methods to receive payment of applicable penalties and ensure compliance with the Rules and Regulation. Such methods may include, but are not limited to, withholding or reducing the award of future groundwater allocations, exercising lien authority, or utilizing any other remedy available to SABGSA under SGMA.
4. **Opportunity to Appeal:** Property Owners and/or Operators may appeal a Notice of Violation and/or fine by filing an appeal with SABGSA's Board within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Violation in accordance with Section 11 of the Rules and Regulations.

- 5. Penalties Issued.** Pursuant to California Water Code section 10732, SABGSA may impose a civil penalty for violation of the Rules and Regulations in the following amounts:
- a.** Civil penalty of up to \$1,000, plus an additional \$100 for each additional day a violation continues if Property Owner and/or Operator fails to comply within 30 days of Notice of Violation.
 - b.** Civil penalty of up to \$500 per acre-foot extracted in excess of the amount that person is authorized to extract in violation of the Rules and Regulations. (Water Code, § 10732(a)(1).)
- 6. File a lawsuit.** If SABGSA cannot obtain compliance through the process above, SABGSA Board reserves the right to seek civil penalties and remedies available at law for violations of the Rules and Regulations.

IV. SABGSA DISCRETION

The remedies identified in this enforcement policy are not intended to be exclusive. Any other remedy available to SABGSA in law or equity may be employed at the discretion of SABGSA to enforce the SABGSA Rules and Regulations and ensure compliance with SGMA and the Agency Plan. The SABGSA retains full discretion to deviate from the enforcement process outlined in the Policy to obtain compliance with the SABGSA Rules and Regulations in accordance with applicable law.



SAN ANTONIO BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Well Metering & Extraction Reporting Program Frequently Asked Questions

Revised July 11, 2024

(Revisions to What's Next Section – Page 7)

Please Note: The proposed policies, actions, and compliance forms described below are in draft form and are subject to change. The SABGSA will continue to update this document as the framework for the metering program is developed. The intent of this document is to provide landowners with advance notice of policies being considered by the SABGSA.

Key Acronyms

- Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
- Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)
- San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SABGSA)
- San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin)
- Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- Acre Feet per Year (AFY)
- Acre Feet (AF)

Documents and Presentations for Reference

- Approved GSP and GSP Annual Reports: <https://sanantoniobasingsa.org/approved-gsp/>
- Quarterly Groundwater Level Monitoring and Reports: <https://sanantoniobasingsa.org/groundwater-planning-and-reports/>
- Framework for Metering Program: <https://sanantoniobasingsa.org/metering-program/>

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)?

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was enacted in 2014 and became effective January 1, 2015. The objective of this state law is to ensure the long-term sustainable management of groundwater resources in California. SGMA requires designated medium-and high-priority groundwater basins to form locally controlled Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) to develop Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP).

What is a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)?

A Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) contains an assessment of groundwater conditions in the basin, describes plans for monitoring conditions, and explains how the Groundwater Sustainability Agency will implement and measure the results of specific actions to achieve or maintain sustainability within 20 years. SABGSA's GSP was approved by the Department of Water Resources on January 18, 2024.



SAN ANTONIO BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

What's the current state of the Basin?

Extracting More than the Basin's Estimated Sustainable Yield

Current Basin conditions, comparison of current and historical groundwater elevation contour maps, and the Basin's historical water budget presented in the GSP, indicate chronic groundwater pumping in excess of the Basin's estimated sustainable yield (8,900 acre-feet per year [AFY])¹, creating challenging conditions for sustainable management. The average annual change in groundwater in storage during the Basin's historical water budget period [1981–2018] was a decrease of 10,600 AFY².

Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels

The 2023 GSP Annual Report indicates that groundwater trends are consistent with historical conditions reported in the GSP. The first Annual Report (water years 2019 through 2021) and second Annual Report (water year 2022) indicated groundwater elevations decreased or remained the same in all representative monitoring sites (RMSs), resulting in an overall decrease in total groundwater in storage.

WELL REGISTRATION & METERING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

What is the purpose of the Well Registration and Metering Program?

The San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SABGSA) is working to position you, neighboring landowners, and all groundwater users to achieve groundwater sustainability together as mandated by California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. With the completion and approval of the San Antonio Creek Valley Basin GSP, the SABGSA is now turning to implementation strategies. The Well Registration and Metering Program, identified as a Tier 1 Management Action in the GSP, fills critical data gaps and is an essential precursor to the implementation of other projects and management actions vital to achieving sustainability.

To support effective Basin management, two key pieces of information are needed.

1. Where are extractions occurring?
2. How much is being extracted?

The data collected from well registration established the location and type of each well located within the Basin and helped us gain an accurate count and a better understanding of the wells in active use.

¹ SGMA defines sustainable yield as "the maximum quantity of water, calculated over a period representative of long-term conditions in the basin and including any temporary surplus that can be withdrawn annually from a groundwater supply *without causing an undesirable result*". The historical basin yield was estimated by summing the estimated average groundwater storage decrease of 10,600 AFY with the estimated total average amount of groundwater pumping, of 19,500 AFY, for the historical period. This results in a historical basin yield for the Basin of about 8,900 AFY. It is anticipated that this value may fluctuate in the future as conditions change or as more data is obtained. Please refer to Section 3.3 of the GSP. Based on the Basin's sustainable management criteria described in Section 4 of the GSP, the basin yield is equal to the sustainable yield for the Basin calculated for the historical period.

² Please refer to Figure 3-62. Average Groundwater Budget Volumes, Historical Period in the GSP



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Well metering and extraction reporting is intended to facilitate consistent and reliable reporting of groundwater extraction volumes, excluding de minimis wells (extraction of less than 2 AFY).³

Why metering and how will the data from the Metering Program be used by SABGSA?

Accurately estimating private groundwater usage and the change of groundwater in storage is a challenge, hampered by a lack of systematic and quantitative monitoring. The absence of such information makes it difficult for SABGSA to develop and implement sustainable management policies. The most equitable method for landowners and for SABGSA to measure groundwater extraction is through the implementation of flow measurement devices on all non de minimis wells. Simply put, estimates cannot provide the same accuracy that a permanently installed totalizing flow meter can.

Flow measurement and reporting allows SABGSA and landowners to accurately measure and record the volume of pumped groundwater by well across the Basin, as well as seasonal variation in water demand. This information will serve as a baseline that will enable proactive and adaptive management of groundwater resources, inform future SABGSA demand management actions and policies, provide additional information to be used by the SABGSA for analyzing projected Basin conditions, update the water budget and hydrogeological conceptual model (HCM), identify wells and landowners that could be included in the Basin's groundwater level monitoring network, and complete annual reports and 5-year GSP assessment reports required by DWR. Ultimately, this information will allow SABGSA to sustainably manage, protect, and maintain the groundwater resources within the Basin consistent with SGMA for the benefit of all water users.

Is participation mandatory?

Yes, participation is proposed to be mandatory. All wells located within the Basin (excluding de minimis wells – defined as extraction of less than 2 AFY for domestic supply) would be required to be metered. Following a series of public workshops and hearings, the SABGSA will consider an Ordinance in Fall 2024 requiring meters to be installed on all non-de minimis wells and monthly groundwater extraction data to be reported twice per year. Water Code § 10725.8 authorizes a GSA to require through their GSP that the use of every groundwater extraction facility (except those operated by de minimis extractors) be measured. Wells operated by the Los Alamos Community Services District and Vandenberg Space Force Base are already metered and extraction is reported to SABGSA.

Is a flow meter required for a domestic well?

No, unless use is over two-acre feet per year. SGMA does not authorize GSAs to require metering of de minimis, domestic use wells. Domestic (i.e., residential) well users generally fall within the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act's (SGMA) definition of a de minimis extractor. SGMA defines a de minimis extractor as "a person who extracts, for domestic purposes, two acre-feet or less (of groundwater) per year." (Cal. Water Code § 10721(e).)

³ SGMA defines a de minimis extractor as "a person who extracts, for domestic purposes, two acre-feet or less (of groundwater) per year." (Cal. Water Code § 10721(e).)



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What's the ratio of metered to un-metered wells in the Basin?

The SABGSA's well registration data indicates that 1/3 of private groundwater wells in the Basin currently have meters in place while 2/3 of wells did not report the presence of meters. Wells operated by the Los Alamos Community Services District and Vandenberg Space Force Base are already metered and extraction is reported to SABGSA.

Is there a penalty for non-compliance?

The SABGSA is asking for your assistance and cooperation as we work together toward achieving sustainability within the Basin. In accordance with California Water Code Section 10732, the SABGSA's Board of Directors reserves the right to impose administrative or civil penalties for failure to comply.

FLOW METER SELECTION, INSTALLATION, AND CALIBRATION

What type of meter is required?

The SABGSA will require a flow meter with a totalizer. The SABGSA will not dictate the type of flow meter and is providing landowners with the flexibility to select the best flow measurement device for their wells based on production capacity, size of the discharge pipe diameter, budget, etc.

Regardless of the type of totalizing flow meter selected (propeller, electromagnetic, ultrasonic, to name a few) to be used for reporting to the SABGSA, the meter must meet the following requirements to support accurate measurement of flows:

- Equipped with a direct reading rate-of-flow indicator showing instantaneous flow in gallons per minute or a sweep hand indicator for which rate-of-flow can be determined by timing.
- Equipped with a visual, volume-recording totalizer recorded in gallons, cubic feet, acre-inches, or acre-feet.
- Calibrated prior to installation with an accuracy level of +/- 5% by volume.
- Installed, operated, and maintained to the manufacturer's specifications, instructions, and recommendations.

What if I already have a meter on my well?

SABGSA's well registration data indicates that 1/3 of wells in the Basin currently have meters in place. The existing meter must be a flow meter with a totalizer and meet the requirements outlined above. Utilizing SABGSA's [Flow Meter Installation and Calibration Compliance Form](#), landowners will provide meter and installation information including the most recent date of calibration. The draft form is provided for reference and is subject to change.

How much is a flow meter and who pays for it?

The cost to purchase a flow meter can range anywhere from \$1,000 to over \$10,000, depending on the size of the system and the type of flow meter. Per Water Code Section 10725.8(b), all costs associated with the purchase and installation of the water-measuring device shall be borne by the well owner or operator.



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The SABGSA will make every effort to identify potential state and federal programs and grants, such as the Bureau of Reclamation, to help landowners offset the cost of implementing flow meters. In addition, the Santa Barbara County Water Agency has implemented a Well Metering Assistance Program (WMAP) designed to provide funding to offset up to \$500 of the equipment cost of qualifying water meters. Eligibility is limited to 1 meter per applicant. More information can be found at: <https://www.countyofsb.org/2568/Well-Metering-Assistance-Program-WMAP>.

Who can install the flow meter?

The SABGSA does not have a preferred list of vendors, and it would be at the discretion of the landowner to select a qualified individual to install the flow meter. SABGSA's only requirement is that installation is done per the manufacturer's specifications. Assistance from a qualified professional in flowmeter selection and installation is recommended to ensure proper installation and accuracy of future flow measurements.

What is the deadline for well meter installation and documentation required by SABGSA?

The SABGSA intends to give landowners one year from the date the Well Metering & Extraction Reporting Ordinance is adopted to install a flow meter with a totalizer on all non-de minimis wells. It is anticipated that the SABGSA Board will consider a Well Metering & Extraction Reporting Ordinance in Fall 2024 with installation required by Fall 2025. To demonstrate compliance, landowners will need to return SABGSA's [Flow Meter Installation and Calibration Compliance](#) form by the 2025 deadline that will be specified at the time the Ordinance is adopted. The draft form is provided for reference and is subject to change.

What is the timeline for routine flow meter calibration?

Flow meters should be routinely calibrated per the schedule outlined in the manufacturer's specifications. If no such schedule exists, the SABGSA will require routine calibration to be performed once every five years. If the verification error exceeds 5%, then the flow meter must be recalibrated or replaced with a certifiable meter.

FLOW METER REPORTING

How often will meters need to be read and recorded?

The SABGSA will require meters to be read and recorded monthly between the 1st and 5th day of each month. Monthly reporting of meter totalizer readings will enable a more accurate representation of spatial and seasonal variations (and variation during different water year types) of water demand as well as allow for more consistent analysis with other Basin monitoring networks and analyses. For example, monthly reporting of meter totalizer readings could be used to correlate the response in groundwater levels to known volumes of pumping throughout the Basin to inform annual reports, etc. Likewise, the metered data can be used to further validate the satellite-based method of calculating Basin agricultural groundwater extractions and vice versa.



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When are the monthly readings due to SABGSA and how to report them?

Monthly flow meter readings must be reported twice per year in Spring and Fall using [SABGSA's Groundwater Extraction / Flow Meter Reporting Form](#). The draft form is provided for reference and is subject to change. SABGSA's reporting schedule is based on the water year (October 1 – September 30) in order to capture usage during seasonal highs and lows. The SABGSA will give landowners 60 days to compile and submit the report for each period. The SABGSA anticipates the initial flow meter reporting period to begin in Fall 2025 with the first report due May 1, 2026.

- Reporting period #1: Monthly readings for April through September are due by November 1
- Reporting period #2: Monthly readings for October through March are due by May 1

How do I return the form(s)?

Please return your form(s) to the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency ("SABGSA") via email to admin@sanantoniobasingsa.org or by mail to P.O. Box 196, Solvang, CA 93464. Email is the preferred method. It is anticipated that the SABGSA will eventually require all flow meter reporting to be done electronically utilizing an online form, portal, or cell phone app. The SABGSA is currently exploring cost effective options that will simplify compliance for landowners and reduce staff/consultant time for SABGSA.

WHAT'S NEXT?

In the future, will there be limitations imposed on how much groundwater a landowner can pump?

The GSP indicates a chronic lowering of groundwater levels and that a chronic reduction of groundwater in storage has been occurring in the Basin (an average decrease in groundwater in storage of 10,600 AFY was calculated for the Basin from 1981 through 2018). Although the SABGSA is working to implement projects and management actions (described in the GSP), including projects that enhance groundwater recharge and importing water, the additional volume of groundwater recharge or water supplies from an alternate source(s) (e.g., surface water or imported water) is not anticipated to be enough to offset the current Basin groundwater demand and chronic reduction of groundwater in storage. At some point in the future, it is likely that some reduction in water demand will be required in the Basin, meaning there may be a need to limit the amount of groundwater that can be pumped, aimed at both keeping groundwater levels stable and avoiding undesirable results (as defined in the GSP).

What future demand management actions are being considered by SABGSA?

Section 6 of the GSP outlines a portfolio of potential projects and management actions that the SABGSA could employ based on Basin conditions and progress toward sustainability. As part of the GSP implementation process, the SABGSA will explore various financing options to cover its operational costs, monitoring of the Basin, implementation of management actions, and potential future projects. The SABGSA may consider, for example, adopting a groundwater pumping fee program or developing a sustainable yield allocation with a water marketplace program. In any case, accurate measurement of groundwater extraction through metering is a critical first step and would help ensure that any action taken is equitable for all Basin users and is based on proven, reliable data. Future demand management



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actions will continue to undergo study and discussion, including taking into account the financial impacts on landowners and existing [San Antonio Basin Water District assessments](#).

The SABGSA will continue to monitor the effectiveness of these Tier 1 management actions on an annual basis to determine if they will be sufficient to achieve the Basin sustainability goals defined in the GSP. The overall effectiveness of individual management actions will also be evaluated annually to determine if continued investment in those actions is warranted or if other actions should be considered.

If pumping is limited in the future through groundwater pumping “allocations,” on what basis will pumping allocations be awarded?

The SABGSA understands the importance of any allocations imposed on future pumping from the Basin, and the desire for landowners and other stakeholders to have certainty to guide business planning and investments. The only document involving pumping allocations that has been formally adopted by the SABGSA’s Board of Directors is the GSP. The GSP includes a “Groundwater Basin Pumping Allocation (BPA) Program” as a Tier 2 management action.⁴ “Tier 2” management actions are those that are not included in the highest-priority Tier 1 management actions but will likely be implemented if a determination is made that degraded conditions in the Basin are a direct consequence of groundwater pumping in the Basin.

Any allocation program must be designed to avoid undesirable results in the Basin and achieve SGMA’s required goal of sustainability. Crafting an allocation program that effectively furthers these objectives requires better data than currently exists. Such data is currently being developed through specific measures to address data gaps as identified in the GSP⁵ (e.g., stream gage installation, well monitoring, etc.) and the implementation of the well registration and well meter installation programs, which are all identified as Tier 1 management actions in the GSP. Given the importance of any future allocation program for landowners and the likelihood of differing viewpoints, it is important that the SABGSA avoid a pre-determination of how any pumping allocations would be awarded, particularly before the necessary data is available.

The policies and actions discussed above will be all be reviewed and discussed in open sessions during Board meetings with an opportunity for public comment. Stay tuned!

How do I stay informed?

We encourage active participation and input from landowners, Basin stakeholders, and interested parties. To stay informed on the latest news, updates, policies, and board meeting notices, please join our e-mail communication list by contacting admin@sanantoniobasingsa.org or register as an

⁴ See GSP, Section 6, pp. 6-3, 6-5 & 6-43.

⁵ GSP, Section 6, p. 6-5.



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interested party through our communication portal at <https://portal.sanantoniobasingsa.org/>. The SABGSA has also created a [Metering Program page on our website](#) to house the latest information and presentations on the draft framework. Board meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6pm. Agendas and supporting documents can be found at: sanantoniobasingsa.org/meeting-agendas/.