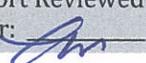


Agenda Report Reviewed by:  
City Manager: 

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
CITY COUNCIL  
STAFF REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** January 19, 2016  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** Engineering Manager Henry J. Mikus  
**Subject:** Sustainable Groundwater Act Compliance: Basin Boundaries Briefing  
**Recommendation:** Accept Report and Direct Staff to Continue with this Project  
**Funding:** Currently Budgeted: \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_xxx\_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A  
Net General Fund Cost: none yet  
Amount: \$  
If Cost to Other Fund(s):

**Introduction:** The collaborative regional effort to get set for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) compliance is progressing. However, there is a technical issue the SGMA Work Group is addressing related to the Basin Boundary and whether the boundary needs to be modified.

The issue is the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Sub-Basin boundary as previously established by the State Department of Water Resources (DWR). As currently delineated the boundary is set to match the edges of the sub-surface basin, and serves to show the limits of where water collects. However of perhaps more utility would be the watershed boundary, which is topographical at the ground's surface, and shows the area from which water is accumulated and collected to drain into the basin.

At the last SGMA Work Group meeting much of the discussion revolved around whether or not the basin boundary should be submitted for adjustment now. As background, the process for boundary adjustments looks to be very involved and difficult. Also any boundary submittals must be complete and submitted to DWR by this coming March 1.

**Discussion:**

DWR is developing guidelines for adjusting formal basin boundaries (and has just shared them publicly), such as in this case where showing the boundary as matching the watershed would provide greater flexibility in managing the basin. Having influence/control over the incoming/recharge water could be vital to successfully managing the basin sustainably.

The City of Sebastopol's location is unique relative to any boundary discussion, as the City boundaries are neither completely inside nor totally outside either the basin or watershed boundaries. If the current basin boundary is applied, the northeastern corner of the City is within the current basin boundary while the rest of the City is not. If the basin boundary is adjusted to match the watershed boundary, more of the City would be included, yet the City areas west of the "Atascadero hill crest" along Bodega Avenue still would be outside the boundary. Thus no

boundary adjustment would help simplify how the City sits relative to the basin.

It was determined that the basin boundary could be adjusted in the future with no or minimal negative impact; two events where adjustment would be feasible would be at establishment of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency or during compilation and submittal of a required Groundwater Sustainability Plan. There may be other junctures where boundary adjustment could be appropriate.

In considering the entire basin, two areas of interest for boundary adjustment are at play. One section is to the east of Santa Rosa and involves the Rincon Valley and Kenwood sub-basins plus the west slopes of the Mayacamas Mountains where sheet flow off the slopes provides a sizable volume of recharge. The second area of interest is the basin's west side, such as around Sebastopol, where the Wilson Grove Formation (a separate not-at-risk groundwater basin) abuts and provides some recharge for the Santa Rosa basin. It turns out the DWR regulations on boundary adjustment technically preclude adjusting the east side boundary. To the west (around Sebastopol), the rules would at least entertain a boundary adjustment submittal.

The Work Group concluded that it would not make sense to make any adjustments now, given the level of effort and expense required, plus the very short time line. This is basically a "non-decision" to not apply for a boundary adjustment. Engineering Staff is in complete agreement with this course of action.

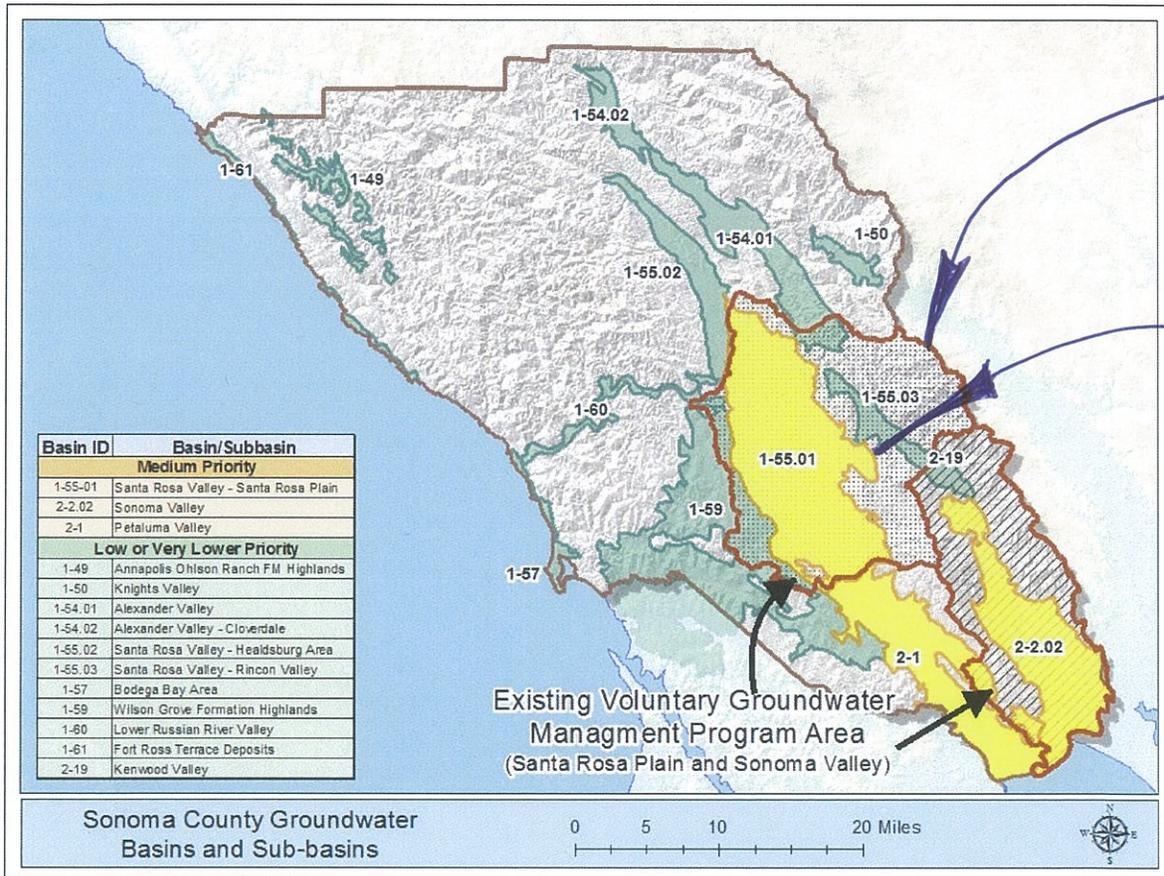
But, a "non-decision" is still really a decision to follow a certain path. Three of the local government entities that are participating in the SGMA Work Group would be affected by any west side adjustment: the City of Sebastopol, the County of Sonoma, and the Sonoma County Water Agency. Work Group members from each of these local entities are in agreement that this planned course of action, to not apply for boundary adjustment now and deferring that action, should be explained to each of the three governing bodies.

**Recommendation:** Accept the Staff Report and direct staff to continue involvement on behalf of the City of Sebastopol on the regional effort to achieve SGMA compliance by the dates required by law.

**Attachments:**

Map of Medium Priority Basins

### Medium-Priority Groundwater Basins in Sonoma County



Watershed Boundary

Basin Boundary

Basin Number	Basin Name
1.55.01	Santa Rosa Plain
2-2.02	Sonoma Valley
2-1	Petaluma Valley

### NOTES

 CURRENT BASIN BOUNDARY (ORANGE OUTLINE)

 WATERSHED BOUNDARY (RED OUTLINE)