



Mission Statement: Protect the long-term economic and environmental viability of Napa Valley by combating climate change through the preservation and the restoration of the natural environment and resources upon which the health of our vineyards, wineries and entire community relies.

Save Napa Valley Foundation advocates on behalf of Napa Valley, a national treasure, to assure its agriculturally based community endures into perpetuity.

Attn: Department of Water Resources

cc: Napa County GSA; LSCE; Interim County CEO; Planning Commission; David Morrison; David Graves; Jamison Crosby

**Napa County's Groundwater Sustainability Plan
Implementation Update**

August 8, 2022

To Whom it May Concern

As Napa Valley Subbasin groundwater resources stakeholders, we wish to bring the lack of management effectiveness by the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) to your attention. Since Napa's Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was submitted to Department of Water Resources (DWR) in early 2022, signs of groundwater scarcity have been evident and the drought has continued. Yet the Napa Valley Subbasin GSA has shown no indication that it intends to manage groundwater in a way that addresses the unprecedented conditions facing our community. We have no confidence in our GSA due to a history of inadequate leadership in resource management by the County of Napa. *We are thus encouraging DWR to apply all available mechanisms to safeguard our scarce groundwater resources by ensuring that our GSA acts decisively to protect the interests of all Napa County groundwater users.*

On March 22, 2022, County Staff reported to the GSA that thresholds have been exceeded for chronic groundwater decline, groundwater storage reduction, depletion of interconnected surface water, and land subsidence. Our basin has encountered an undesirable result in groundwater storage. All of this tells us that we must act, and that we must act now. However, in the nine months since our GSP was submitted to DWR, Napa County has not implemented any part of the plan, nor indicated when they intend to do so.

In November, 2021, the GSP Advisory Committee recommended formation of a technical advisory group for the GSA by unanimous vote. Members were to be objective, with relevant technical expertise. The following disciplines are specified in Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Bylaws, page three: Ecohydrology; Hydrogeology; Geomorphology; Fisheries; Aquatic Ecology; Botany; Viticulture and vineyard management; Potable water system operations; Natural resources monitoring; and Hydrology. The GSA has only recently seated five TAG members, who will meet for the first time on August 11th.

The GSA selection process, which spanned three months, did not follow the GSP Advisory Committee's clear guidance to include only apolitical technical experts with specialties covering the breadth of the GSP's content. To illustrate this, three of the five TAG members have specialties in agriculture, while there are no specialists in fisheries, aquatic biology, or botany. This has engendered a lack of trust from stakeholders, including portions of the agricultural sector, environmental users, and residents.

Water is our scarcest shared resource. In order to ensure that all members of our community continue to have access to sufficient water supplies, that our groundwater-dependent ecosystems are sustained, and that our community remains agriculturally viable, we must act now.

We call on the Napa Valley Subbasin GSA to prioritize groundwater conservation by (1) adjusting TAG composition to represent specified disciplines such that impartiality and trust is achieved, and (2) implementing strategies before year end to address our documented water-related problems.

Thank you!

Laurie Claudon

Laurie Claudon, on behalf of,
Save Napa Valley Foundation
Board of Director Members

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