

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD), acting as the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the non-adjudicated portions of the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin (SJGB), has developed this Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in compliance with the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), which is codified in California Water Code (CWC), Part 2.75 (Sustainable Groundwater Management), Section 10720 et seq.¹ This GSP has been developed in accordance with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) GSP Regulations² to apply to the entirety of the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin (DWR Basin 8-005) that is not adjudicated³ (Plan Area) and incorporates data and conditions in the adjudicated portions of the SJGB, as appropriate, for understanding groundwater conditions within the Plan Area (Figure 1-1). Approximately 95% of the Plan Area lies within EMWD’s service area, while the remaining 5% of the Plan Area is under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. The portion of the Plan Area that is within EMWD’s jurisdictional boundary is referred to in this GSP as the West San Jacinto GSA Area (Figure 1-1).

SGMA defines sustainable groundwater management as the management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained over a 50-year planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results. Under SGMA, undesirable results occur when significant and unreasonable effects for any of six sustainability indicators are caused by groundwater conditions occurring throughout the basin.⁴ The definition of significant and unreasonable effects is left to each GSA to define. Because approximately 39% of the area within the SJGB is adjudicated, this GSP focuses on sustainable groundwater management within the Plan Area, and defines undesirable results related to the six sustainability indicators within the Plan Area. The six sustainability indicators defined in SGMA are:

- Groundwater levels
- Groundwater in storage

¹ Specific Sections of the CWC are cited in this GSP as “CWC Section [...]”

² GSP Regulations refers to the emergency regulations adopted by DWR as California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 23 (Waters), Division 2 (Department of Water Resources), Chapter 1.5 (Groundwater Management), Section 350 et seq. Specific Sections of the CCR are cited in the GSP as “CCR Section [...]”

³ CWC Section 10720.8 states that SGMA does not apply to adjudicated basins. There are three adjudicated basins that are wholly or partially within the physical boundaries of the SJGB. This GSP therefore consists of a “single plan covering the entire basin developed and implemented by one groundwater sustainability agency,” per CWC Section 10727(b)(1), with EMWD acting as the single-agency GSA.

⁴ As defined in SGMA (CWC Section 10721), “basin” means a groundwater basin or subbasin identified and defined in Bulletin 118, or as modified pursuant to basin boundary modification approved by DWR.

- Seawater intrusion
- Water quality
- Land subsidence
- Depletions of interconnected surface water

These sustainability indicators are used to identify undesirable results in the Plan Area.

As described in Chapter 3, Sustainable Management Criteria, of this GSP, undesirable results within the Plan Area are not currently occurring with respect to any of the sustainability indicators. The Plan Area has experienced rising groundwater levels and an increase in groundwater in storage over the past 35 years. Seawater intrusion is not a threat to the Plan Area, which is located over 30 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Portions of the Plan Area have experienced, or are under threat of experiencing, degraded water quality. Land subsidence resulting from groundwater withdrawals has occurred historically in the SJGB as a whole, but only occurred within the Plan Area in the vicinity of Mystic Lake. The subsidence that occurred outside the Plan Area resulted from groundwater production that occurred outside the Plan Area. Currently, subsidence in the Mystic Lake area is related to tectonic forces not groundwater withdrawal. Depletions of interconnected surface water have not occurred historically in the Plan Area, where ephemeral streams provide recharge to the basin, and surface flows are generally separated and disconnected from the underlying groundwater aquifer.

The purpose of this GSP is to define the conditions under which the groundwater resources of the Plan Area, which support agricultural, domestic, municipal and industrial (M&I), and environmental uses, will be managed sustainably in the future. The adoption of this GSP represents the commitment of the West San Jacinto GSA to maintain long-term, sustainable use of groundwater resources within the Plan Area, as required by SGMA. Over the next 20 years, data will continue to be gathered, analyzed, and used to refine the estimated sustainable yield and understanding of the sources of and influences on degraded water quality discussed in the following chapters. As the understanding of the Plan Area improves, the findings of this GSP will be evaluated and updated as necessary. This GSP documents a viable approach, determined by the GSA in collaboration with stakeholders and informed by the best available information, to maintaining the long-term sustainability of the groundwater resources within the Plan Area.

Appendix A includes the *Preparation Checklist for GSP Submittal*, which identifies where in this GSP each of the statutory requirements under SGMA are addressed.

1.2 SUSTAINABILITY GOAL

The sustainability goal for the Plan Area is to manage groundwater production in a way that facilitates long-term sustainable management of the groundwater resources of the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin. Long-term sustainable management includes:

- Maintaining sufficient groundwater in storage to allow for ongoing groundwater production that meets the operational demands of groundwater users in the Plan Area.
- Protecting beneficial uses such as municipal and domestic supplies of fresh groundwater resources in the Lakeview and Perris North Groundwater Management Zones (GMZs) to the extent possible, by minimizing the northward and eastward migration of brackish groundwater from the Perris South GMZ.
- Avoiding subsidence related to groundwater production that substantially interferes with surface land uses.
- Ensuring that groundwater production does not result in significant and unreasonable loss of groundwater dependent ecosystems.

1.3 AGENCY INFORMATION

Appendix B contains documentation, in reverse chronological order, of the formation of the GSA and initiation of the GSP in compliance with SGMA. Appendix B includes the Notice of the GSA formation that was published in the Press Enterprise on October 30, and November 20, 2016, documentation of EMWD's public hearing on GSA formation, which was conducted on December 7, 2016, and notification of GSA formation provided to DWR, dated January 24, 2017. In addition, information on EMWD's basin boundary modification request is also included.

EMWD submitted Bulletin 118 basin boundary modification requests to DWR in 2016 and subsequently in 2018 to adjust the boundary to better represent the local groundwater aquifer. As part of the basin boundary modifications, areas of shallow bedrock on the southwestern boundary of the Plan Area were removed from the 2016 Bulletin 118 Groundwater Basin boundary, along with areas that fall under the jurisdiction of the Hemet-San Jacinto Watermaster. This GSP applies to the modified Plan Area boundary that was approved by DWR on February 11, 2019.

Updated information regarding the West San Jacinto GSA, and SGMA compliance, including public meeting agendas and minutes, can also be found on EMWD's website, at <https://www.emwd.org/post/sustainable-groundwater-management-act>.

The contact information and plan manager for this GSP are provided below:

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1.3.1 Organization and Management Structure of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency

The West San Jacinto GSA is governed by the EMWD Board of Directors, a five-member elected board. EMWD staff administers the GSA and has overseen the development of this GSP. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was established to advise the West San Jacinto GSA on matters related to the West San Jacinto GSP development. The TAC evaluated the sustainability indicators and recommended management criteria. Members of the TAC include representatives from EMWD, the Hemet-San Jacinto Watermaster, March Air Reserve Base, Western Municipal Water District, the City of Perris, Nuevo Water Company, Box Springs Mutual Water Company, and the California Department of Water Resources. Monthly TAC meetings were held throughout the development of the GSP to discuss the elements of the GSP. This format facilitated participation from entities with an interest in groundwater in the SJGB during development of the GSP.

1.3.2 Legal Authority of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency

EMWD notified DWR of its intent to become the GSA for the non-adjudicated portion of the SJGB in January 2017, following an extensive public outreach effort to ensure that the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater would be considered in the process of forming the GSA, and in the development and implementation of this GSP. EMWD initially established its authority over groundwater management in the SJGB in 1950 when it was established under the Municipal Water District Act of 1911. EMWD has been actively managing groundwater in the portion of the Plan Area within its jurisdiction under the West San Jacinto Groundwater Basin Groundwater Management Plan, which was adopted in 1995, in accordance with Assembly Bill 3030, as codified in CWC Sections 10750-10756. After EMWD staff conducted public workshops, reached out to stakeholder agencies (e.g., cities, counties, water districts, watermasters, and state agencies), and circulated notices in the press, the EMWD Board of Directors approved Resolution No. 2016-135 in December 2016, which formalized EMWD's intention to be the GSA for the West San Jacinto GSA Area.

The West San Jacinto GSA assumes the responsibility for ensuring ongoing sustainable management of the non-adjudicated portion of the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin within its jurisdiction, under the sustainable management criteria described in Chapter 3 of this GSP. In order

to manage groundwater conditions within its jurisdiction, the West San Jacinto GSA may require metering of all groundwater extractions, excluding *de minimis* wells. In this GSP *de minimis* wells are defined as wells from which 2 acre-feet per year or less of groundwater is produced.

Although the analyses conducted as part of this GSP suggest that the current and planned future groundwater production are within the estimated sustainable yield of the Plan Area, future demands not accounted for in the GSP may necessitate the adoption of measures to increase recharge or restrict groundwater production. These measures, which are authorized by SGMA, may include, but are not limited to, regulating, limiting, or suspending groundwater extraction from individual wells or wells in-aggregate, imposing extraction fees on groundwater producers in the GSA area, and/or developing a groundwater allocation. Prior to implementation of any of these actions, the West San Jacinto GSA Board of Directors would need to take appropriate board action and extensive outreach to stakeholders would be conducted prior to this action.

1.4 GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN ORGANIZATION

This GSP is organized according to the DWR guidance document for preparation of a GSP annotated outline (DWR 2016A – annotated outline) as follows:

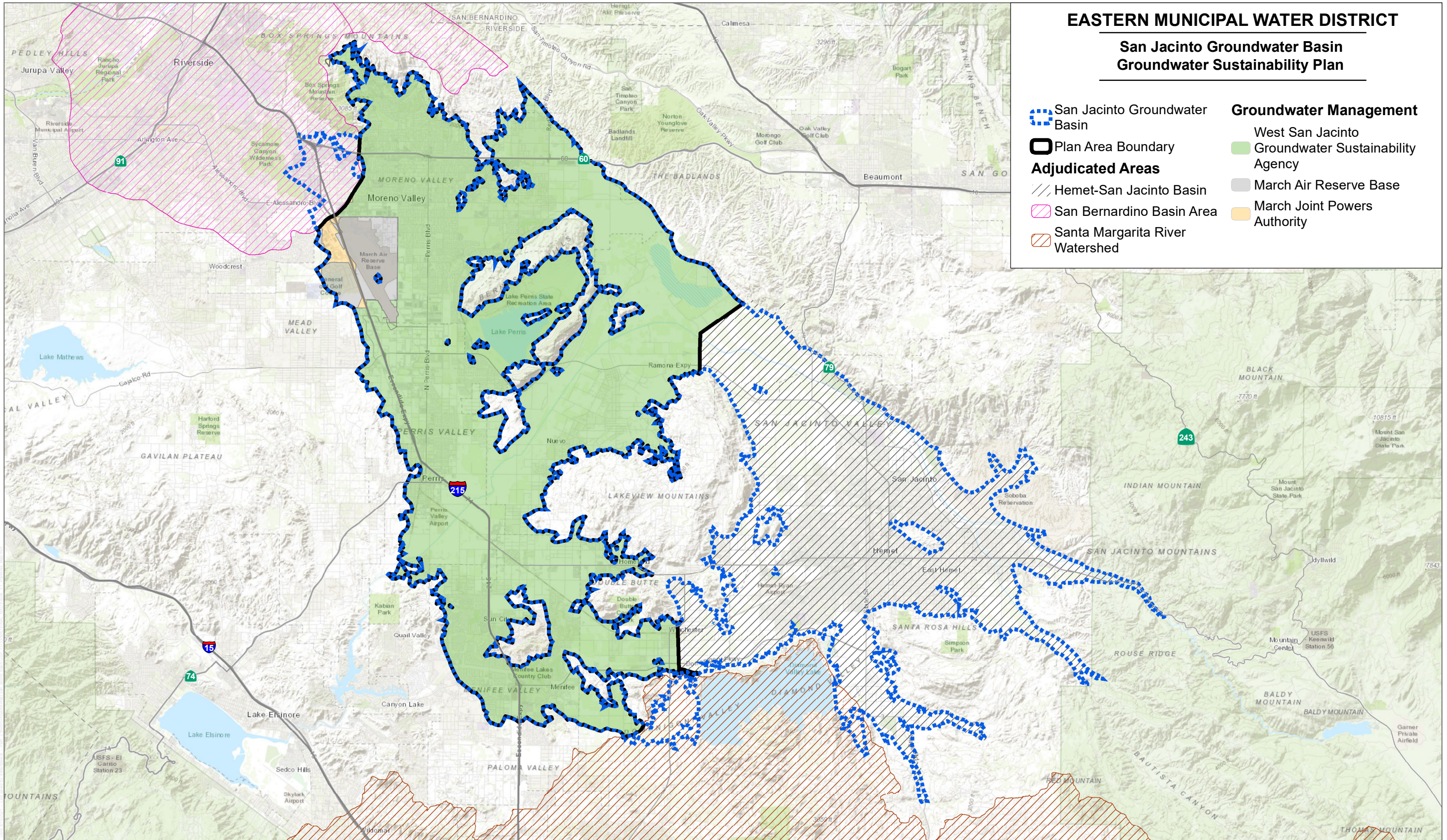
- Chapter 1 - Provides information on the purpose of the GSP, the sustainability goal for the Plan Area, and information on the West San Jacinto GSA.
- Chapter 2 - Provides information on the SJGB setting, the hydrogeologic conceptual model for the Plan Area, and the water budget for both the Plan Area, and the SJGB.
- Chapter 3 - Provides information on the sustainable management criteria and monitoring network in the Plan Area.
- Chapter 4 - Provides information on the projects and management actions that could be taken (if needed) to ensure continued sustainable management of the Plan Area as defined by the sustainability goal.
- Chapter 5 - Provides information on the plan implementation.

The Preparation Checklist for GSP Submittal can be found in Appendix A (DWR 2016B – preparation checklist).

1.5 REFERENCES CITED

DWR (California Department of Water Resources). 2016A. *Guidance Document for the Sustainable Management of Groundwater: Groundwater Sustainability Plan Annotated Outline*. December 2016.

DWR (California Department of Water Resources). 2016B. *Guidance Document for the Sustainable Management of Groundwater: Preparation Checklist for GSP Submittal*. December 2016.



SOURCE: Esri, Eastern Municipal Water District, California Department of Water Resource



FIGURE 1-1
 San Jacinto Groundwater Basin, Plan Area Boundary, and Groundwater Sustainability Agency
 San Jacinto Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan

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