PASO ROBLES AREA GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

TO: Board of Directors
Agenda Item No. 7

FROM: Taylor Blakslee, Hallmark Group

DATE: September 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Update on GSP Implementation

Recommendation
Board feedback requested.

Discussion
On July 22, 2026, the Paso Robles Area Groundwater Authority (PRAGA) Board discussed Project and Management Actions (PMAs) and Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation.

Staff convened an Informal Stakeholder Advisory Committee to review and provide feedback on PRAGA priorities through 2029, and staff's recommendation is provided in **Attachment 1** for board feedback/direction.

* * *

Update on GSP Implementation and 5-Year Strategic Plan

- **2025**: PRAGA formed to implement SGMA for four (4) GSAs.
- **2026**: Funding structure implemented to fund “minimal compliance” activities for Fiscal Year 2026-2027.
- GSP provides long-term implementation roadmap, but helpful to evaluate priorities and plan in smaller 5-year increments
- 5-year plans intended to inform basin priorities between periodic evaluation submittals and may assist in determining if GSP amendment needed.

Staff Recommendation: Continue required compliance activities through 2027-2029 while also planning for specific projects and pursuing grant funding as listed on the following slides.

Recommended PRAGA Priorities for 2027-2029

Compliance Activities

1. Submit Annual Reports
2. Address Monitoring Data Gaps
3. Perform Exceedance Investigations
4. Respond to DWR GSP Comments
5. Address Interconnected Surface Water BMPs
6. Implement Public Data Management System
7. Continue Public Engagement / Outreach

Key Projects / Management Actions

1. Implement Long-Term/Permanent Land Retirement Program (Fallowed Land Registry)
2. Implement Stormwater Capture Program
3. Address Ag Neutrality
4. Consider Nacimiento / City Recycled Water Project or Naci Water Sales Program
5. Update/Recalibrate Basin Model
6. Implement De Minimis Self-Certification
7. Consider Domestic Well Mitigation Program

1. Implement Long-Term/Permanent Land Retirement Program (Fallowed Land Registry)

- **Description/Purpose:** Build on the success of the fallowed registry program to implement long-term or permanent land retirement. Prioritize land retirement projects that are near areas with ongoing groundwater level impacts.
- **Timeline:** Pursue grant funding and begin implementation in 2028/29 if grant funding secured.
- **Funding:** Apply for DOC MLRP grant in early winter 26/27.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Program likely successful if incentives are meaningful. Conditions may not result in fallowed land being irrigated again in the foreseeable future.

2. Implement Stormwater Capture Program

Description/Purpose: Identify and develop projects to capture stormwater runoff for managed recharge, reducing reliance on groundwater pumping and increasing basin inflows. Target recharge near areas with ongoing groundwater level impacts.

- **Timeline:** To be developed in 2027 for implementation in winter 2027/28.
- **Funding:** Apply for DWR grant in early winter 26/27.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Priority project, pursue grant funding.

3. Address Ag Neutrality

- **Description/Purpose:** Evaluate and consider measures to ensure that the intention of the County ag offset ordinance (sunsets in 2028) to protect the Paso Basin from increased depletions are implemented.
- **Timeline:** Develop potential options in 2027 for implementation ahead of January 2028.
- **Funding:** PRAGA-funded.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Agree with guardrails on use given the finite resource of groundwater. Concerns with un-intended consequences of programs like the ag offset ordinance.

4. Consider Nacimiento / City Recycled Water Project or Naci Water Sales Program

- **Description/Purpose:** Evaluate expanding delivery or sales of Nacimiento surface water and/or city recycled water as an alternative supply to offset groundwater pumping within the basin, and potential delivery to areas with ongoing groundwater level impacts.
- **Timeline:** Update blended feasibility in 2027 with Nacimiento price of water and consider potential Nacimiento water sales program.
- **Funding:** Pursue grant funding for infostructure components if Nacimiento water price favorable to a project.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Reevaluate project costs by incorporating grant funding for projects previously deemed too expensive. Stakeholders need to be willing to invest in infrastructure to move forward with water supply projects.

5. Update/Recalibrate Basin Model

- **Description/Purpose:** Update and recalibrate the basin's hydrogeologic model using updated data to update the sustainable yield and evaluation of projects and management actions.
- **Timeline:** Update model by the end of 2027.
- **Funding:** Pursue grant funding or consider funding via PRAGA if not successful with grant funds.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Important project to understand basin conditions/assess sustainability and identify need for potential management actions.

6. Implement De Minimis Self-Certification

- **Description/Purpose:** Develop and establish a process for groundwater users extracting less than 2 acre-feet of groundwater to certify their de minimis status. Allows staff to exclude de minimis users from fees, if directed by the Board, and allows for more completed technical analyses of impacts to beneficial users in assessing projects and management actions and sustainability progress.
- **Timeline:** Implement prior to FY 27-28.
- **Funding:** PRAGA funded.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** General support.

7. Consider Domestic Well Mitigation Program

- **Description/Purpose:** Evaluate a domestic well mitigation program framework and determine next steps.
- **Timeline:** Evaluate a program framework in FY 26-27.
- **Funding:** Funded through existing DWR SGMA grant.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Concerns with implementing a program if a de minimis user might be charged a fee to account for the benefit.