

MADERA

ESTABLISHED 1893

COUNTY

HEART OF CALIFORNIA



Background

Madera County GSAs developed in 2017 for lands that no other agency represented

In 2018 and 2019, projects and management actions were developed in collaboration with growers'/residents':

- Domestic Well Mitigation
- Recharge Infrastructure
- Land Repurposing
- Purchases of Water
- Allocations



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Public Engagement for Rate Study

Groundwater Recharge Facilities Workshops

- February 4, 2021
- May 3, 2021
- June 16, 2021
- February 25, 2022

Sites Reservoir

- November 2, 2021 -- Presentation at GSA Update at Board of Supervisors
- February 25, 2022 -- Public Workshop

Domestic Well Mitigation

- June 16, 2021 -- Madera County GSAs Workshop
- June 28 and September 27, 2021 - - Regional Water Management Group
- February 25, 2022 -- Public Workshop

Sustainable Agriculture Land Conservation Workshops

- January 14, 2021
- March 23, 2021
- June 16, 2021
- February 25, 2022

Rate Study

- Board of Supervisors Update – August 17, 2021
- Public Workshop on Preliminary Rates - November 30, 2021
- Board of Supervisors Update – December 9, 2021
- Board of Supervisors Update – February 8, 2022
- Public Workshop on Revised Rates – February 25, 2022
- Board of Supervisors Update – March 1, 2022
- Board of Supervisors Update – March 9, 2022
- Board of Supervisors Update – March 29, 2022
- Board of Supervisors – April 12, 2022
- Board of Supervisors – June 21, 2022



Current Outreach

- Monthly e-newsletter (end of the month)
- Growers e-newsletter (mid-month)
- Office hours in person and on-line
- On-farm visits (verification program, following assessment)
- Small group meetings
- Large group meetings (workshops)
- Webinars
- GSA Meetings
- Website updates
- Surveys
 - Programs and Communication
 - Multi-benefit Land Repurposing
 - Programs, Measurement and Communication
 - Rate Alternatives



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Survey

- What is a survey?
 - A place to share an opinion
 - Non-binding and voluntary
- What are the benefits of a survey?
 - Draw from a large pool
 - Low amount of effort for respondent
- What are the drawbacks of a survey?
 - Tends to attract those with strong feelings
 - Survey exhaustion is real
- What is the information used for?
 - Gathering data on opinions



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We Have Learned from Surveys

- Programs and Communication
 - More than 80% familiar with the GSP
 - Email and e-newsletter preferred communication method
 - Recharge, allocation, land repurposing preferred solutions to overdraft
- Multi-benefit Land Repurposing
 - Most desired project type: recharge, solar, less water intensive crop
 - Most desired multi-benefit: water quality, air quality
- Programs, Measurement and Communication
 - Overwhelming support for multiple measurement methods
 - Majority had not encountered issues with their measurement
 - Preferred communication was with their Water Resources Specialist



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Survey of GSA Rate Alternatives

- County conducted informal survey to gauge grower interest in alternative rates
- Aug 10 - Surveys were mailed to 230 growers
- Aug 20 and 27 – All growers were emailed to remind them to submit survey; follow up phone calls made
- Respondents were asked to return surveys by August 31



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County of Madera
Groundwater Sustainability Agency
200 W. 4th Street, Madera, CA 93637

Dear Valued Farmer:

The Board of Supervisors (acting as the Board of Directors for the County GSA) is exploring ways to reduce your groundwater rates in the County GSA, Madera Subbasin, including pursuing grants, looking for cost-saving measures, and evaluating partnerships. If a temporary injunction on groundwater rates is lifted, the Board may assess a lower alternative rate for projects in addition to the GSA Admin Fee. Along with a potential reduction in rates comes a smaller scale of projects and a corresponding reduction in expected 2040 allocations. Below is a table of potential rates. All alternatives are subject to additional review. Please indicate your preference and then tear off and mail the postcard back or take a picture and email it to the address provided. Results of this survey will be presented to the Board of Supervisors acting as the Board of Directors in September 2024.

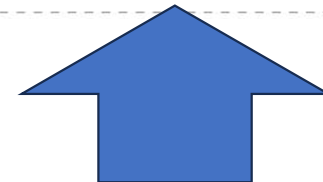
Sincerely,
Stephanie Anagnoson
Director of Water and Natural Resources

Allocations at 2025 and 2040

	Approximate Rate (\$/acre)	Adopted Allocation in 2025	Expected Allocation in 2040
Adopted Rate	\$246	27 inches	23 inches*
Alternative #1	\$65	27 inches	13 inches
Alternative #2	\$95	27 inches	15.5 inches
Alternative #3	\$170	27 inches	18 inches

*Based on analysis accompanying the 2022 Rate Study and presented in the Looking Forward Public Workshop/Webinar dated June 10, 2022

For more information on the alternatives, visit MaderaCountyWater.com/Alternatives





Survey Results

	Alternative #1	Alternative #2	Alternative #3	Adopted Rate
Approximate Rate	\$65	\$95	\$170	\$246
Responses	17	4	4	8
Responses (%)	52%	12%	12%	24%



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Survey Results + Written Responses

	Alternative #1	Alternative #2	Alternative #3	Adopted Rate
Approximate Rate	\$65	\$95	\$170	\$246
Responses	29	4	4	8
Responses (%)	64%	9%	9%	18%



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Conclusions

- The survey is not intended to be a statistical analysis, but instead to gather information and gauge grower interest in alternative rates
- Low response rate among Farm Units in the Madera GSA
 - **One in five** Farm Units responded to the County GSA Survey
 - **Four in five** Farm Units did not respond to the County GSA Survey
- Preliminary analysis suggests respondents are not a representative sample and are skewed toward larger farms and operations
- We can come back with further recommendations if additional analysis is requested



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