



Submission and Evaluation of Projects for Inclusion on the FCGMA Project Prioritization List

Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA or Agency) is the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Las Posas Valley Basin, Oxnard Subbasin, and Pleasant Valley Basin. More groundwater is being extracted than can be replenished. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires that the basins are brought into sustainable groundwater management by 2040. Water-supply and infrastructure projects are critical to achieving sustainable groundwater management while minimizing the need to reduce groundwater extractions.

Projects were identified and those likely to be implemented were included in the Agency's December 2019 Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) developed for the basins. SGMA requires evaluation of the GSPs at least every five years and the Agency is beginning this process including a new evaluation of the projects that may be implemented by 2040. Additionally, the Agency aggressively pursues grant funding and in 2022 obtained \$15.2 million in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Implementation Grant, Round 1, funds for projects in the Oxnard and Pleasant Valley (OPV) Basins.

The Agency Board of Directors established a process and criteria for evaluating and prioritizing projects for inclusion in GSP updates and for potential funding through future grant opportunities and/or development of fees for funding by basin operators. The purpose of project ranking process is to rank and prioritize the projects on the lists of projects adopted by the Board for the GSP for each of the basins. This will create a ranked Project Prioritization List of projects to be implemented by FCGMA and/or other agencies. The prioritization will be used to recommend to the Board which projects should be included for funding by potential replenishment fees and/or in the Agency's applications submitted in response to grant opportunities. Additionally, the prioritization will help to inform which projects should be included in future-scenario modeling for the five-year GSP evaluations based on the likelihood that the project will be implemented by the 2040 deadline for bringing the basins into sustainable groundwater management.

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION PROCEDURES

The *Project Prioritization List* will be reviewed, re-scored, and re-prioritized on an annual basis. Updated information will be solicited for projects currently on the list for updated scoring and new projects can be considered for addition to the list at this time. Updated project information and new projects must be submitted by September 30 each year. Agency staff will review updated and new project information and prepare draft ranking of the projects using the *Project Ranking Sheet*. The Operations Committee will review the new information, draft project ranking, and update the *Project Prioritization List* at one or more meetings. The Operations Committee will then refer the updated *Project Prioritization List* to the Board for adoption as part of GSP Annual Report approval process.

PROJECT RANKING SHEET

The *Project Ranking Sheet* includes the criteria on which submitted projects will be evaluated and ranked (Attachment A). The criteria are organized into following categories:

- **Water Supply** – This category is to establish the projected benefit to the groundwater basin by increasing the sustainable yield, producing supplemental water to meet demand in lieu of groundwater pumping, or reducing groundwater demand. Scoring is based on the annual volume of increased sustainable yield or reduced groundwater demand provided by the project and the extent of the studies and documentation supporting the estimated quantification. The total possible Water Supply score is 50 points.

FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY



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- **Timing / Feasibility** – This category addresses the timing and uncertainty of the project. The basins are mandated to achieve sustainable groundwater management by 2040, so projects with greater certainty that they can be implemented and online prior to then will score higher. Projects with more uncertainty and longer implementation times will score lower. The total possible Timing / Feasibility score is 50 points.
- **Cost / Funding** – This category evaluates the cost / benefit of the project and the amount of capital and operations and maintenance (O&M) of non-FCGMA funding that is committed to the project. The total possible Cost / Funding score is 50 points.
- **Additional Benefits** – This category provides additional points if the project benefits disadvantaged or underrepresented communities. The total possible Additional Benefits score is 5 points.

PROJECT SUBMITTAL

New projects and updated information for existing projects **must be submitted to FCGMA by September 30** each year to be evaluated for inclusion on the updated *Project Prioritization List*. Project submittal packages should be emailed to fcgma-gsp@ventura.org.

Project submittal packages must include a complete *Project Evaluation Checklist* (Attachment B). The *Project Evaluation Checklist* identifies the criteria for evaluation of the *Project Ranking Sheet* and to confirm the project meets the requirements of GSP Emergency Regulations Subarticle 5. Project submittal packages should include supporting information and documentation for evaluation and ranking of projects. Submittals may include links to large documents such as feasibility studies and project plans. Submitters are encouraged to self-rank their projects based on the *Project Ranking Sheet* to confirm that their submittal includes sufficient information and documentation to evaluate and rank the project. Following is an explanation of the *Project Evaluation Checklist* fields:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **Project Name** – Enter the name of the project.
- **Purpose of Project** – Enter the purpose of the project, e.g., Water Supply, Infrastructure, Water Quality management, etc.
- **Project Type** – Select *New Project* if this is the first submission for this project or *Project Update* if the project was previously submitted to the Agency.
- **Sponsoring Agency** – The name of the agency sponsoring or submitting the project.
- **Groundwater Basin** – Enter the groundwater basin and management area, as applicable.
- **Location** – Enter the location of the project.
- **Project Description** – Enter a brief description of the project.
- **Implementation Trigger** – Enter the implementation trigger if applicable (see GSP Emergency Regulations section 354.44.(b)(1)(A)). This will not apply to most projects.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Water Supply

- **Annual increase in Sustainable Yield** – Enter the projected annual increase in sustainable yield of the basin if the project is implemented in acre-feet per year (AFY).
- **Annual increase in supplemental water in lieu of pumping** – Enter the projected annual increase and corresponding reduction in groundwater extraction if the project is implemented in AFY.



- **Groundwater demand reduction** – Enter the projected annual decrease in groundwater extraction if the project is implemented in AFY.
- **Sustainability indicators addressed** – Enter one or more of the SGMA sustainability indicators that will be addressed by the project.
- **Project documentation included?** – Selected *Yes* if additional project documentation is being submitted with the *Project Evaluation Checklist*, otherwise select *No*.

Timing/Feasibility

Project Implementation Timeframe

- **Current Project status** – Select the current project status from the dropdown, e.g., *Feasibility Study in Progress*.
- **Estimated time to Project completion** – Enter the estimated time to complete the project in years.
- **Timeline / feasibility documentation included?** – Select *Yes* if timeline and/or feasibility documentation is being submitted with the *Project Evaluation Checklist*, otherwise select *No*.

Environmental

- **CEQA/NEPA type** – Select the type of environmental permitting required from the dropdown, e.g., *Both CEQA/NEPA*.
- **Status of CEQA/NEPA review and permitting** – Select the status of environmental review permitting from the dropdown, e.g., *Expected to take less than 5 years to complete*.
- **Will the Project likely be permitted?** – Select *Yes* or *No* as applicable to the project.

Permitting

- **Permits required** – List the permits required for project completion.
- **Status / time required** – Enter the current status of permitting and projected time for completion and issuance of required permits.
- **Likelihood of Project being permitted** – Select the likelihood that the project will receive final permit approvals from the dropdown, e.g., *High, Medium, or Low*.

Project Complexity

- **Does the Project use new technology** – Select the *Yes* from the dropdown if the project uses new technology, otherwise select *No*.
- **Does the Project require land acquisition** – Select *Yes* from the dropdown if the project requires acquisition or easements, otherwise select *No*.
- **Status of the land acquisition process** – If the answer to the above question was *Yes*, select the status from the dropdown, e.g., *Process started, less than 25% complete*.
- **Is the Project dependent on other unbuilt or unfunded projects** – Select *Yes* from the dropdown if the project is dependent on other unbuilt or unfunded projects, otherwise, select *No*.
- **Is the Project dependent on funded projects currently under construction** – Select *Yes* from the dropdown if the project is dependent on other projects which are currently funded or under construction, otherwise select *No*.
- **Description of Operation and Maintenance** – Enter a brief description of the required operation and maintenance (O&M) that will be required when the project is completed, if applicable.

Project Lifespan

- **What is the projected lifespan of the Project** – Enter the projected lifespan of the project in years.



Project Phasing

- ***Does the Project require multiple phases of construction?*** – Enter Yes from the dropdown if the project consists of more than a single phase of construction. **If the answer is Yes, please include documentation of anticipated project phasing including schedules and both capital and O&M costs for each phase as an attachment to this form.**
- ***No. of anticipated construction phases*** – Enter the number of anticipated construction phases.
- ***Description of phases*** – Enter a brief description of the phases. Detailed information on the phases should be attached to this form.
- ***Phasing timeline*** – Enter a brief description of the timeline of the phases. Detailed information on the phasing timeline should be attached to this form.
- ***Total cost per phase*** – Enter the total cost per phase. Detailed information on the costs per phase should be attached to this form.
- ***Project phasing documentation attached?*** – Select Yes from the dropdown if documentation on the project phasing is attached, otherwise select No.

Cost and Funding

- ***Total capital cost*** – Enter the total capital cost of the project.
- ***Total annual Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Cost*** – Enter the total annual O&M cost of the project.
- ***Is the project Proponent providing a funding match to construct the project?*** Enter whether the project proponent (applicant) is providing a funding match to construct the project.
- ***Is there a funding source other than FCGMA for ongoing operation and maintenance costs?*** Enter whether there is a funding source other than FCGMA for ongoing O&M costs and identify the source.

Additional Benefits

- ***Does the project benefit disadvantaged or under-represented communities*** – Select Yes if the project benefits disadvantaged or under-represented communities as identified by DWR, otherwise select No.
- ***If yes, please describe the benefit(s)*** – If the above question is Yes, then briefly describe the benefits to these communities.

PROJECT PROPONENT CONTACT INFORMATION

- ***Name*** – Enter the name of the project proponent (applicant) contact.
- ***Title*** – Enter the contact's title.
- ***Organization*** – Enter the contact's organization (typically the sponsoring agency).
- ***Email*** – Enter the contact's email address.
- ***Phone*** – Enter the contact's phone number.
- ***Date*** – Enter the date that the *Project Evaluation Checklist* was completed.

Attachment A – Project Ranking Sheet

Attachment B – Project Evaluation Checklist