

EAST TURLOCK SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
FALL 2023 ETSGSA NEWS UPDATE



You're Invited to a Workshop – Prop 218 Benefit Assessment and Extraction Fees

When: Thursday, December 14th from 9:30 am – 11:30 am

Where: Cortez Hall - 12937 Cortez Ave. Turlock, CA, 95380 (near Ballico)

Attendance Options: In person or via Zoom

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81002331873?pwd=SDVMRC9xaWZLSUxUTklpTINtM2gyUT09;>

Meeting ID 810 0233 1873)

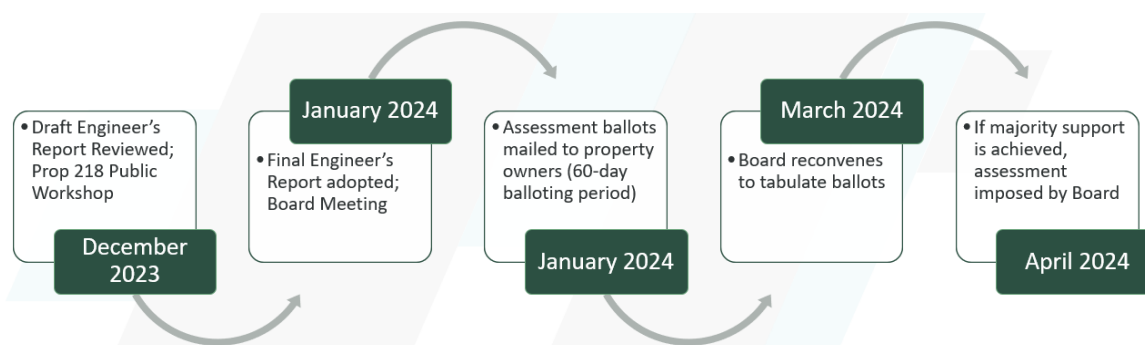
December 14, 2023, UPCOMING PROP 218 BENEFIT ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

We encourage you to attend our upcoming Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment Workshop on December 14 at Cortez Hall in Ballico. The topics covered will include the following:

- A description of California’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and ETSGSA’s strategy for compliance;
- An overview of East Turlock Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency’s (ETSGSA) projected operational and project implementation budget;
- An explanation of the options being considered and methodology used for developing a Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment, including the policies that define who would pay, the types of charges that would be implemented, how they are calculated, and projected rates;
- An overview of the implementation procedures, a prospective timeline, and the legal requirements for implementing a Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment; and
- An open discussion regarding the Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment, allowing participants to ask questions.

An Engineer’s Report that describes the benefits received by all ETSGSA members from the assessment will be discussed at the Workshop and presented to the ETSGSA Board for comment following the December Workshop. A Final Engineer’s Report will be adopted in January 2024 and made available to the public. Following the adoption of the Engineer’s Report, Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment Ballots will be mailed to property owners for a 60-day balloting period. If a majority of landowners support the assessment, the Board will begin imposing the assessment in spring 2024. Additional workshops covering the development of policies, rules, and regulations, as well as the development of tiered overdraft charges, will occur in early 2024.

Assessment Implementation Timeline



June 27, 2023, WORKSHOP #4 RECAP

Thank you to all who attended the Groundwater Pumping Reduction Framework Pilot Program Workshop. Your participation in these workshops is critical for ETSGSA's success in our efforts to comply with SGMA. During the workshop, ETSGSA provided attendees with an update on recent GSA activities, including:

- An overview of SGMA requirements and an explanation of our strategy to meet these requirements using an adaptive approach that incorporates both recharge projects and pumping management;
- An update on the approach for developing a Pumping Management Framework that will help the subbasin achieve sustainable groundwater extraction and allow operational flexibility;
- An explanation of the options being considered for groundwater extraction and land-based assessments/fees to fund our work, including an overview of the pathway and schedule for implementing an assessment/fee and how they would potentially be integrated into the Pumping Management Program; and
- An introduction and interactive walkthrough of the pilot phase of the GSA Groundwater Accounting Portal.



Sustainable Groundwater Management Strategy

Participants had many questions following the presentation and were interested in learning more about how the Pumping Management Program and potential assessment/fees will impact their operations. Since the workshop, we have provided access to a pilot version of the GSA Groundwater Accounting Portal to 15 growers, enrolling approximately 96 parcels throughout the subbasin that include a variety of crops and field sizes. During this pilot phase, ETSGSA is conducting individual meetings with pilot program participants to gather user feedback. This process will guide the development of a full-scale rollout of the GSA Groundwater Accounting Portal for the 2024 growing season. The full-scale portal is expected to be available to all growers in the GSA as part of an additional "dry run" rollout to gather more information before the portal is put to use to track pumping and allocations starting in 2025.

Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Grant Program

In June, ETSGSA was one of four subbasins awarded a \$8.89 million grant by the California Department of Conservation during their second round of the Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program (MLRP). MLRP's vision is to promote development of strategic and coordinated approaches to agricultural land repurposing that reduce groundwater demand while providing beneficial land use opportunities. Our focus will be on approaches that are integrated into working lands that allow agricultural activities to continue. This grant will provide funding over the next 3 years for ETSGSA to develop and begin implementing a MLRP Plan to meet our groundwater demand reduction goals, avoid state intervention, and ensure a robust regional agricultural economy for the future. Please stay tuned for announcements of future workshops to learn how this program can benefit you.

Stay Current on ETSGSA News and Events

Please provide your email to Karen Whipp kareneastsidewater@att.net to stay current on all ETSGSA news and events.