

Guidance for Coordinating Entities Overseeing Groundwater Local Cooperative Solutions

This document provides guidance developed by State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) staff for Coordinating Entities¹ overseeing implementation of groundwater local cooperative solutions under the Scott River and Shasta River Watersheds Drought Emergency Requirements ([Emergency Regulation](#)), which went into effect on February 1, 2024. This guidance document is divided into the following sections:

- General Commitments of a Coordinating Entity
- Inspections
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Questions
- Sample Inspection Form

General Commitments of a Coordinating Entity

The primary responsibility of the Coordinating Entity is to verify water use reductions and implementation of the groundwater local cooperative solution for which they have entered into binding agreements. The groundwater local cooperative solution must be implemented during the entirety of the irrigation season, including prior to approval, unless the diverter withdraws the local cooperative solution.

The Coordinating Entity commits that:

- Local cooperative solution proposal evaluations and inspections will be conducted by representatives who lack a financial or close personal interest in the outcome; and
- Information collected on compliance with the local cooperative solutions will be provided to the State Water Resources Control Board monthly and upon request.

Inspections

The Coordinating Entity must perform inspections, by itself or in coordination with State Water Board staff, sufficient to ensure implementation of the local cooperative solutions it is overseeing, including inspections targeted within two weeks of completion of commitments to cease pumping as of a date certain (e.g., obligations under the graduated diversion cessation local cooperative solution, or cessation dates in a percent-based reduction LCS).

If a coordinating entity does not have capacity to perform sufficient inspections and ensure implementation of a groundwater local cooperative solution, the Coordinating Entity must coordinate with the State Water Board for assistance. To

¹ A Coordinating Entity refers to an entity that possesses the expertise and ability to evaluate and require performance of the commitments made in a local cooperative solution. Examples of potential Coordinating Entities include the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, Scott Valley and Shasta Valley Watermaster District, Siskiyou or Shasta Valley Resources Conservation Districts, a nonprofit organization with expertise and experience in water-savings transactions, or a similarly qualified public entity. (CCR, §875(f)(1)(G).)

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request assistance, please contact State Water Board staff by email to: ScottShastaDrought@waterboards.ca.gov or phone call to (916) 327-3113.

Data Collection and Reporting

The coordinating entity is responsible for evaluating and verifying implementation of the groundwater local cooperative solutions, as proposed and with any additional conditions associated with State Water Board approval of the groundwater local cooperative solutions. **The Coordinating Entity must provide the State Water Board with information on compliance with the local cooperative solutions monthly and upon request.** State Water Board staff request that Coordinating Entities provide monthly information by the 10th of each month for the preceding month. For example, information on compliance for the month of May would be submitted by June 10th.

General data and related information that should be collected for all groundwater local cooperative solutions is summarized below by category.

Inspections:

- Inspections should be documented by the Coordinating Entity. Inspections must be sufficient to show compliance with the LCS, which will generally involve documenting at least the following (example inspection sheet below):
 - Name of the Ranch or Farm and individual(s) Implementing the groundwater local cooperative solution;
 - Type of groundwater local cooperative solution;
 - Date and time field inspection was performed;
 - Who performed the inspection;
 - Any other individuals that were present during the inspection;
 - Status of diversions and irrigation at time of inspection;
 - Parcels, field description, and related equipment inspected;
 - Method of verification and documents;
 - Assessment of whether the groundwater local cooperative solution is in compliance with the proposal and any conditions of the Board's approval of the groundwater local cooperative solution.

- Inspections should verify groundwater meters are installed and operational. Specifically, the Coordinating Entity should:
 - Ensure applicant is recording extractions at the frequency approved by State Water Board and that metering or approved alternative water use data are reported at least monthly to the Board.
 - If meters are not installed, the user must have an alternative means to track water usage approved by the State Water Board as part of the groundwater local cooperative solution approval. Diverters should be implementing the alternative method proposed in their proposal if the Board has not yet acted on their groundwater local cooperative solution proposal.
 - If applicable, verify additional site-specific metering or approved alternative water use requirements identified in Board's approval of a groundwater local cooperative solution are being implemented.

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In addition to the information listed above, **specific data and information that are relevant to demonstrating compliance for specific groundwater local cooperative solution types are summarized below.** The Coordinating Entity should review the groundwater local cooperative solution proposal and any conditions associated with the Board's approval, if the Board has acted on the proposal.

Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- Verification of use of a low-energy precision application (LEPA) system on all irrigated acreage, including there is no irrigation of corners after June 15 and no use of end guns during the irrigation season.
 - Verification of operational LEPA system for all applicable field(s).
 - Verification that corners are not irrigated after June 15th
 - Verify end guns are not being used.
- Verification of the use of soil moisture sensors to inform irrigation timing.
 - Applicant shall maintain records of soil moisture sensors (e.g., readings) and have them available for inspection by the coordinating entity.
 - Coordinating Entity will record information on the number and general location of soil moisture sensors (e.g., fields where installed), and provide the information to the State Water Board.

Graduated Cessation:

- Verification of cessation of irrigation by dates associated with the option selected in the groundwater local cooperative solution proposal. The two options are summarized at the end of this section for ease of reference. Examples of data and information that a Coordinating Entity should track, and document include:
 - Dates when irrigation ceases on specific fields – these should be provided in each LCS.
 - Documentation that of cessation of irrigation. Photographs are a simple and inexpensive means to demonstrate that irrigation has ceased.
 - Pumping records or electricity bill
 - Meter readings, where available.

Summary of Graduated Cessation Options:

- Option 1:
 - Cease irrigation on 15 percent of irrigated acres by July 15;
 - Cease irrigation on 50 percent of irrigated acres by August 15; and
 - Cease irrigation on 90 percent of irrigated acres by August 31, with a maximum of 8 inches of water to be applied to the remaining 10 percent of irrigated acres during the remainder of the irrigation season. This 10 percent can be used on land previously fallowed.
- Option 2:
 - Cease irrigation on 20 percent of irrigated acres by July 20;
 - Cease irrigation on 50 percent of irrigated acres by August 30; and
 - 95 percent by September 5, with a maximum of 6 inches of water to be applied to the remaining 5 percent of irrigated acres during the remainder of the irrigation season. This 5 percent can be used on land previously fallowed.

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Percent Reduction:

- The percent reduction requires a net reduction in water use of at least 30 percent throughout the irrigation season (April 1 – October 31), with a monthly reduction of at least 30 percent in the July through October time period. The Coordinating Entity shall review the applicants LCS plan and if needed, work with the State Water Board on what actions need to be verified during the initial site inspection and throughout the irrigation season. Verifying actions taken to reduce groundwater pumping may include but is not limited to:
 - Photos, logbooks, or other methods to document changes in irrigation methods and set times;
 - Photos to document changes in crops;
 - Fallowing;
 - Pumping records or electricity bills.
 - Meter Readings where available.

Questions

For questions related to the Local Cooperative Solutions program, Coordinating Entity role, or this guidance document, please email: Shay.Richardson@waterboards.ca.gov or leave a message at our dedicated phone line at: (916) 327-3113.

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EXAMPLE

Groundwater Local Cooperative Solution (LCS) Compliance Check Reporting Form

(Sample responses are shown in italics.)

Farm or Ranch: *John Doe Ranch*

Name of Individual(s) implementing Groundwater LCS: *John Doe*

Groundwater LCS Type: *30% Reduction*

Inspection Date and Time: *June 18, 2024; 1:30 pm*

Inspector: *Frank Smith*

Other Individuals Onsite: *Jane Doe, John Doe*

Status of diversions and irrigation:

The Murphy POD under water right SG999999 was diverting at an estimated 1.2 cfs for Alfalfa Irrigation located in field M-14.

Land Identifier (Field Name /APN)	Field Description (Irrigation method)	Conservation Method	Verification Method	Verification Documents	Notes
<i>M-14</i>	<i>100 acres alfalfa (pivot; LEPA system)</i>	<i>LEPA</i>	<i>Physical Inspection of LEPA system</i>	<i>Photos of LEPA system taken on 6/23/2024</i>	<i>Diverter has installed LEPA system.</i>
<i>F-13</i>	<i>40 acres grain (pivot)</i>	<i>Nozzles change to MEPA on 6/15/2024 to reduce applied water</i>	<i>Checked nozzles on 6/18/2024</i>	<i>Photos of new nozzles taken on 6/18/2024</i>	<i>Nozzles were changed and field is in compliance with LCS.</i>
<i>203-233-234</i>	<i>10 acres pasture (flood)</i>	<i>Fallow on 6/15/2024</i>	<i>Power Records for Well 1.</i>	<i>Power records were reviewed for Well 1 and are attached.</i>	<i>The power records show the well did not turn on after June 14th. Will take photos of field during next inspection to</i>

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					<i>document followed land.</i>
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Status of groundwater metering:

No current groundwater metering is installed and operational. Applicant certified they will install by the agreed upon date with the State Water Board of November 20, 2024.

Assessment:

Diverter is in compliance with LCS.

List of Attachments:

Power Records

Photos of Nozzles

Photos of LEPA system

Approximate Date for Next Inspection: *July 18, 2024*