

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

On January 19, 2022, Atascadero Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) voted to approve the Atascadero Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP; Plan) and to submit the GSP for approval by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The DWR provided a letter to the Atascadero Basin GSA on January 31, 2024 recognizing the submittal of the Atascadero Basin GSP even though the Basin is very low-priority. The letter noted that DWR prioritized the review of the GSPs in the medium and high priority basins and stated that the low and very low priority basin GSPs would be reviewed the and assessments and determinations would be made as soon as practicable. The letter also encouraged the Atascadero Basin GSA to continue implementing its GSP and providing information to DWR through its annual reports. A copy of the letter provided by DWR is included in **Attachment A**.

On May 10, 2024, DWR provided a letter (see **Attachment B**), that acknowledging they received the Atascadero Basin GSP Water Year 2023 Annual Report. The DWR letter and noted that it appeared to satisfy the requirements of the GSP Regulations (23 California Code of Regulations [CCR] § 356.2) and no additional information was required at this time regard the WY 2023 Annual Report. The letter also noted the Basin does not have a sustainability goal that is part of an approved Plan, thus the DWR cannot independently evaluate whether the information in the annual report indicates that the Plan is being implemented in a manner to achieve the sustainability goal for the Basin a this this time, but that determination will be included in the Department's forthcoming evaluation of the Plan.

This Annual Report has been prepared for the GSA to provide annual monitoring data for water year (WY) 2024 (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) consistent with the GSP and in accordance with GSP Regulations (356.2. Annual Reports) (**Attachment C**). Pursuant to DWR regulations, a GSP Annual Report must be submitted to DWR by April 1 of each year following the Adoption of the GSP. As with the prior annual reports submitted by the GSA, additional information for WY 2017 through 2023 are provided for reference purposes. DWR also released a guidance document for preparation of Annual Reports in October 2023 but did not prescribe specific methods GSAs must use. This report has been modified to incorporate portions for the suggested components compliant with SGMA.

1.2 Atascadero Basin

The Atascadero Basin (Basin) is identified by DWR in Bulletin 118 as Subbasin No. 3-004.11 (DWR 2016). The Basin is part of the greater Salinas Valley Basin in the Central Coast region of California. The Basin encompasses an area of approximately 19,735 acres, or 31 square miles. It includes portions of the incorporated cities of Paso Robles and Atascadero as well as the unincorporated census-designated places of Santa Margarita and Templeton.

The Basin is bounded to the east by the Paso Robles Subbasin, as shown on **Figure 1**. The shared boundary between the subbasins is the Rinconada Fault zone, which contains areas that are impervious and other areas that are considered to be a leaky barrier to groundwater flow.

The Paso Robles Formation makes up most of the water bearing sediments for the Basin. The lateral extents are defined primarily by the contact with the Monterey Shale (bedrock) while the southern end of the Basin is bounded by the Santa Margarita Formation, which impedes groundwater flow. The other major aquifer unit of the Basin is the Quaternary Alluvium, which overlays the Paso Robles Formation.

In 2018, DWR designated the Basin as a very low priority basin with no overdraft. Because of this designation, the Basin was not subject to the development of a GSP under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) regulations. However, the forming and participating parties, described below, developed the GSP to proactively manage the groundwater of the Basin to sustainable levels.

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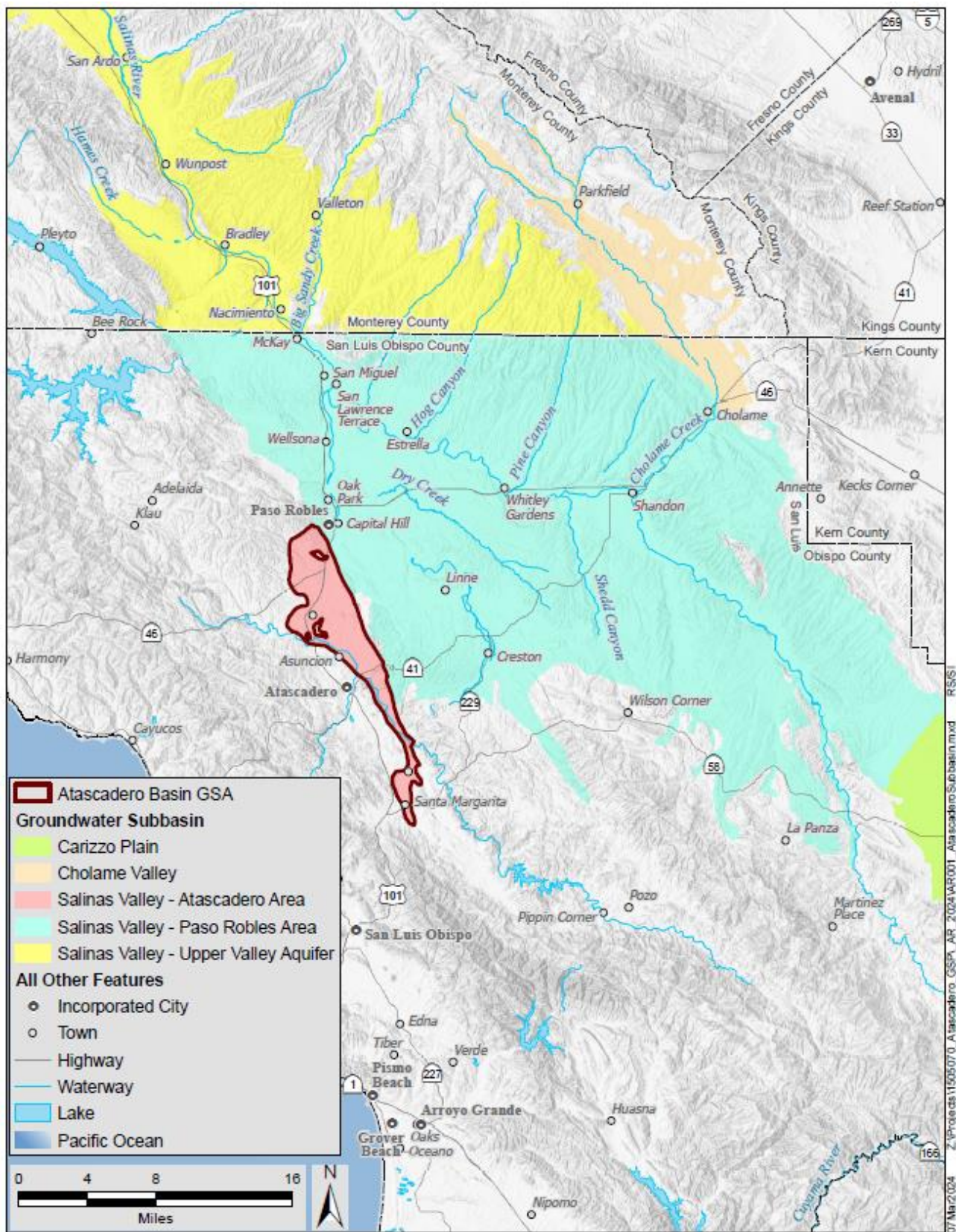


Figure 1: Atascadero Basin and Surrounding Subbasins

1.3 Atascadero Basin GSA

The Basin’s GSA is a single GSA covering the entire Basin and is comprised of four forming parties and six participating parties.

Forming Parties

- City of Atascadero
- City of Paso Robles
- County of San Luis Obispo
- Templeton Community Services District

Participating Parties

- Atascadero Mutual Water Company
- Atascadero State Hospital
- SMR Mutual Water Company
- Santa Ysabel Ranch Mutual Water Company
- Walnut Hills Mutual Water Company
- Garden Farms Water District

The GSA is governed by an Executive Committee which is described in the Memorandum of Agreement, dated May 30, 2017, which was included with submittal of the 2022 Atascadero Basin GSP (GEI 2022).

1.4 Organization of This Report

The required contents of an annual report are provided in the GSP Regulations (§ 356.2), included as **Attachment C**. Organization of the report is meant to follow the regulations where possible to assist in the review of the document. Sections of the WY 2024 Annual Report include the following:

- **Section 1. Introduction:** a brief background of the Basin’s GSA and a map of the Basin and surrounding basins.
- **Section 2. Atascadero Basin Setting and Monitoring Networks:** a summary of the Basin setting, Basin monitoring networks, and ways in which data are used for groundwater management.
- **Section 3. Groundwater Elevations (§356.2[b][1]):** a description of recent monitoring data with GWE contour maps for spring and fall monitoring events and representative hydrographs.
- **Section 4. Groundwater Extractions (§356.2[b][2]):** compilation of metered and estimated groundwater extractions by land use sector and location of extractions.
- **Section 5. Surface Water Use (§356.2[b][3]):** a summary of reported surface water use.
- **Section 6. Total Water Use (§356.2[b][4]):** a presentation of total water use by source and sector.
- **Section 7. Change in Groundwater in Storage (§356.2[b][5]):** a description of the methodology and presentation of changes in groundwater in storage.
- **Section 8. Progress towards Implementing the GSP (§356.2[c]):** a summary of sustainability of the Basin.
- **Section 9.:** References