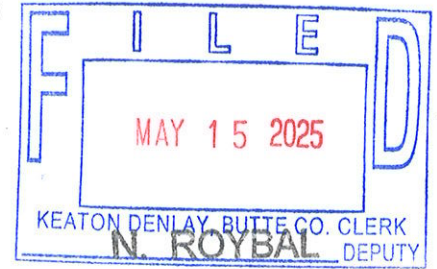


ANOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: X Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Vina GW Sustainability Agency
308 Nelson Avenue
Oroville, CA 95965

☒ Office of the County Clerk-Recorder
Butte County
155 Nelson Avenue
Oroville, CA 95965



Project Title:

Vina Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation Project in the Vina Subbasin.

Project Location - Specific:

Vina Subbasin per DWR Bulletin 118. See attached.

Project Location – City:

Chico, CA

Project Location – County

Butte County

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency (VGSA) is implementing their Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), submitted to DWR in 2022 and approved in 2025, to achieve and maintain groundwater sustainability within the Vina Subbasin in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (2014). This action covers the construction-related activities for expanding monitoring networks and filling data gaps through calendar year 2026 associated with implementation of the approved Vina GSP.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency.

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 4, Section 15304, Title 14 CCR; Class 6, Section 15306, Title 14 CCR; and Class 1, Section 15301, Title 14 CCR.
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why the project is exempt:

The construction activities consist of nonsignificant impacts to the condition of the land. The proposed project consists of basic data collection and resource evaluation activities that do not have any significant impact to an environmental resource. And construction activities may occur at existing facilities (e.g. existing wells or stream gauges) consisting of nonsignificant impacts on those facilities.

Lead Agency Contact Person:

Dillon McGregor, GSA Program Mgr.

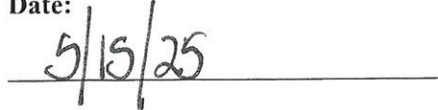
Area Code/Telephone/Extension:

530-552-3589

Signature:


Dillon McGregor, GSA Program Mgr.

Date:



Signed by Lead Agency

Date received for filing at OPR:



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2024 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE
CASH RECEIPT
DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/24) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT NUMBER:

04-05152025-041

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (If applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY

VINA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

LEAD AGENCY EMAIL

DATE

05/15/2025

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING

BUTTE

DOCUMENT NUMBER

237

PROJECT TITLE

VINA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT IN THE VINA SUBBASIN

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME

VINA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL

PHONE NUMBER

(530) 552-3589

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS

308 NELSON AVE

CITY

OROVILLE

STATE

CA

ZIP CODE

95965

PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box)

☒ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR) \$4,051.25 \$ _____
☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND) \$2,916.75 \$ _____
☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW \$1,377.25 \$ _____

☒ Exempt from fee

☒ Notice of Exemption (attach)

☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)

☐ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)

☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only) \$850.00 \$ _____
☒ County documentary handling fee \$50.00 \$ 50.00
☐ Other \$ _____

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☐ Check ☒ Other

TOTAL RECEIVED \$ 50.00

SIGNATURE

x N. Roybal

AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

Nancy Roybal, Deputy County Clerk-Recorder

DECLARATION OF FEES DUE

(California Fish and Wildlife Code Section 711.4)

FOR CLERK USE ONLY

NAME AND ADDRESS OF LEAD AGENCY/APPLICANT

Vina Gw Sustainability Agency

308 Nelson Avenue
Oroville, Ca 95964

Project Title: Vina Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Implementation Project in the Vina Subbasin

FILING NO.

CLASSIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:

1. NOTICE OF EXEMPTION/STATEMENT OF EXEMPTION

☒ A. Statutorily or Categorically Exempt

\$50.00 (Fifty Dollars) Butte County Clerk's Fee

2. NOTICE OF DETERMINATION - FEE REQUIRED

☐ A. Negative Declaration

\$2968.75 (Two Thousand Five Hundred and Forty Eight Dollars)

State Filing Fee

\$50.00 (Fifty Dollars) Butte County Clerk's Fee

B. Environmental Impact Report

\$4123.25 (Three Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Nine Dollars and Twenty-Five Cents) State Filing Fee

\$50.00 (Fifty Dollars) Butte County Clerk's Fee

3. OTHER (Specify) General Rule Exemption

☐ \$50.00 (Fifty Dollars) Butte County Clerk's Fee

This form must be completed and submitted with all environmental documents filed with the Butte County Clerk's Office.

All applicable fees must be paid at the time of filing any environmental documents with the Butte County Clerk's Office.

One original and two (2) copies of all necessary documents are required for filing purposes.

The \$50.00 (Fifty Dollars) handling fee is required per filing in addition to the filing fee specified in Fish and Game Code Section 711.4 (d).

Make checks payable to Butte County Clerk-Recorder.

Attachment A

Butte County

Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Vina Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation Project

Notice of Exemption – For All Monitoring Network and Data Gap Construction Activities



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ABOUT US

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[STAKEHOLDER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE](#)

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COMMITTEE](#)

[TRANSPARENCY
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About the Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Vina GSA)

Introduction

Groundwater is a critical resource in California, serving as a lifeline for communities, agriculture, and the environment. It provides between 40 to 80 percent of the state's water supply, making responsible management essential for California's long-term economic and environmental sustainability.

The passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in 2014 established a forward-thinking, statewide framework aimed at safeguarding California's groundwater resources. SGMA mandates that high- and medium-priority basins establish Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to develop and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). These locally governed GSAs are empowered by SGMA with the authority to manage groundwater resources within their jurisdictions.

By emphasizing local control, SGMA allows GSAs to customize their sustainability plans to address the unique challenges and needs of their respective basins, fostering a more effective and community-driven approach to groundwater management. These plans focus on resolving critical issues such as overdraft and other undesirable results, ensuring that groundwater conditions remain sustainable through 2042 and beyond.

To support local SGMA implementation, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) provides regulatory oversight, evaluates GSPs, and offers ongoing technical, financial, and planning assistance. DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Grant Program further supports local efforts by funding projects that promote long-term groundwater sustainability and help fulfill SGMA's groundwater management requirements.

The Vina GSA

The Vina Groundwater Subbasin is a portion of the larger Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin covering approximately 184,917 acres. The Vina Subbasin is a portion of the larger Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin and is bounded by Tehama County to the north, the county line along the Sacramento River to the west, the foothills to the east (as defined by Bulletin 118), and the Western Canal Water District to the south.

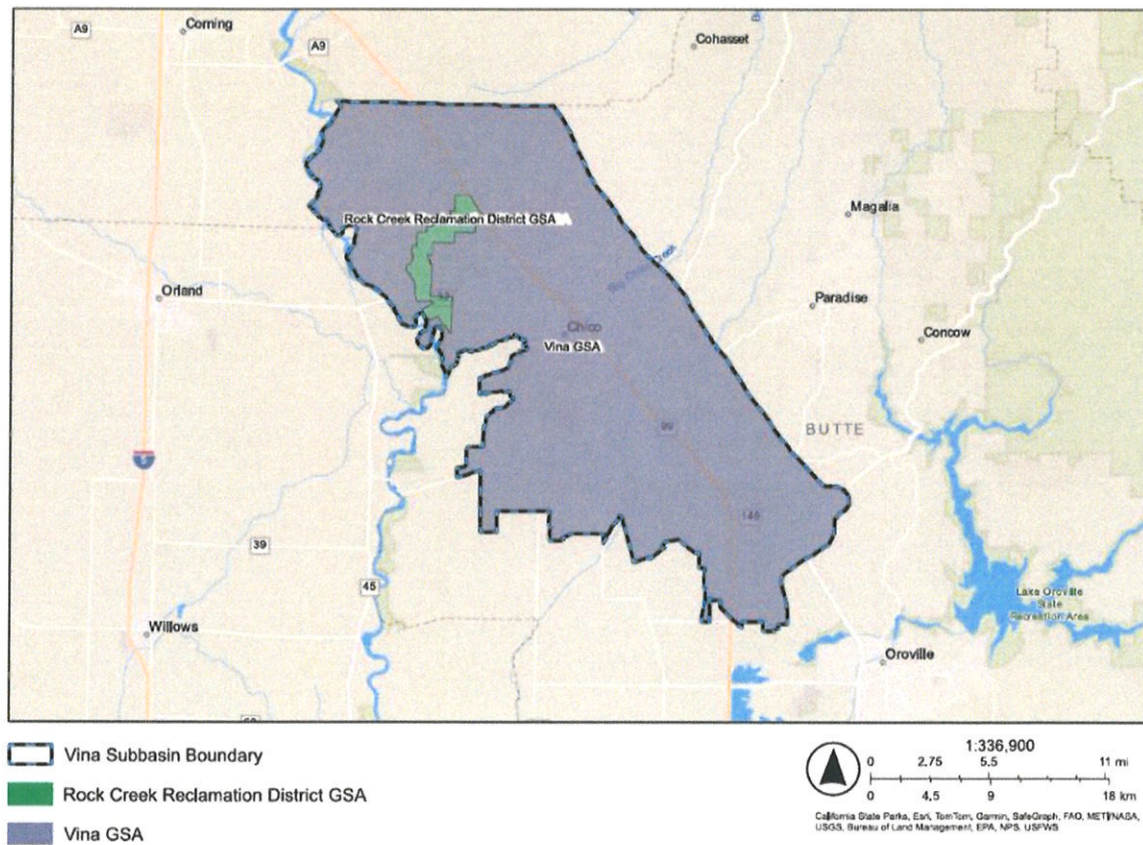
Designated as a high-priority basin by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Vina Subbasin is jointly managed by two Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs): the Vina GSA and the Rock Creek Reclamation District GSA. The Vina GSA was established through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between the County of Butte, the City of Chico, and the Durham Irrigation District (DID). This collaborative governance structure ensures diverse representation and comprehensive management of the subbasin's groundwater resources.

The Vina GSAs Board of Directors consists of five seats, each holding equal voting rights. The composition includes elected representatives from each member agency (Butte County, City of Chico, DID), alongside an agricultural groundwater user and a domestic well user who does not engage in agricultural activities. The latter two positions are appointed by the Butte County Board of Supervisors, ensuring input from key stakeholder groups.

The Vina GSP serves as the Subbasin's strategic roadmap for achieving and maintaining sustainable groundwater management. Developed through an inclusive and publicly engaged process, the GSP incorporates input from all beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the Subbasin. After being submitted to the DWR for review in January 2022, the GSP was officially approved in July 2023.

Vina Subbasin Sustainability Goal

The Vina Subbasin's sustainability goal is to ensure that groundwater is managed to provide a water supply of adequate quantity and quality to support rural areas and communities, the agricultural economic base of the region, and environmental uses now and in the future.



Information follows on the proposed construction activities associated with expanding groundwater monitoring networks and filling data gaps for implementation of the GSP in the Vina Subbasin within Butte County.

Attachment B

Vina Subbasin

Monitoring Network Enhancements and Data Gaps – Planned Construction Activities (2024-2026)

Description

COMPONENT 2: GSP UPDATES, DATA GAPS, AND OUTREACH SCOPE

Component 2 consists of the installation of monitoring sites and dedicated monitoring equipment, to expand the understanding of basin conditions in the Vina subbasin and address data gaps as identified in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). In aggregate, project tasks will help expand the understanding of the hydrogeology and hydrology in the Subbasin to support updates to the GSP and successful management of the subbasin.

Additionally, the project focuses on improving the understanding of the domestic well conditions in the Subbasin by performing an in-depth review of the domestic wells in the Subbasin and by creating a Community Monitoring Program with dry well tracking. In aggregate, project tasks will help expand the understanding of the domestic well conditions in the Subbasin. The project includes preparation of the five-year GSP Periodic Evaluation and tasks to address recommended corrective actions identified by DWR in the Determination Letter for the Vina GSP.

The public and interested parties will be informed of the activities associated with this project through regular Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings, meetings of the GSA Boards, public workshops, and regular email correspondence to the interested parties list, similar to the approach taken during GSP development. In addition, targeted outreach will be conducted to stakeholders near and around the monitoring sites.

Category (b): Environmental / Engineering / Design

Task 1: Landowner Access Agreement/Site Access

CONTRACTOR shall work with landowners to identify and secure site locations for new monitoring infrastructure or equipment. CONTRACTOR and GSA shall work together to acquire landowner access agreement(s) required to install monitoring wells, piezometers, and stream gages if applicable. Any access agreements obtained shall allow for adequate long-term, access for construction and maintenance of the well, piezometer, or stream gage.

Deliverables:

- Landowner access agreement(s)

Assumptions:

- GSA staff will play a limited role in landowner contacts and coordination
- Landowner access agreements will be reviewed and approved by GSA legal counsel

Task 2: Multi-Completion Monitoring Wells, Shallow Wells and Stream Gages Planning

CONTRACTOR shall conduct planning and design activities associated with the multicompletion monitoring well installation, shallow well or piezometer and stream gage installation/maintenance within the Subbasin. Monitoring well planning will consider data gaps identified in the Vina Groundwater Sustainability Plan and monitoring needs of other projects that are underway in the Vina subbasin, including the Lindo Channel Project. Task 8 activities will be coordinated with overall monitoring well planning conducted under this task.

CONTRACTOR shall perform a technical assessment of potential monitoring well locations, associated costs, and landowner participation to determine the final number and location of monitoring wells to be installed, and the final number of completions to be included in each monitoring well. Locations for additional monitoring wells will be identified for inclusion in a DWR Technical Support Services application. CONTRACTOR shall draft application content and will coordinate well drilling/monitoring activities with DWR's Technical Support Services (TSS) Program, as feasible.

CONTRACTOR shall acquire necessary permits required for the installation of the wells, piezometers and gages and any additional permits, as required.

CONTRACTOR shall prepare the environmental documentation, as required, under CEQA with the County Clerk's Office and State Clearinghouse. CONTRACTOR shall submit the CEQA document(s) to the GSA who will work with the DWR Grant Manager for review and concurrence prior to beginning construction. Construction may not begin and no costs for Category (c) may be incurred until an exemption from CEQA is granted, or the State has reviewed the CEQA document(s), completed its CEQA responsible agency obligations and given its environmental clearance. CONTRACTOR shall wait for Notice to Proceed before construction begins.

Deliverables:

- Draft Application for DWR Technical Support Services Program
- Map of recommended locations for monitoring wells, piezometers and gages for GSA approval
- Required environmental documentation for CEQA compliance
- Copies of required permits

Category (c): Implementation / Construction

Task 3: Multi-Completion Monitoring Wells, Shallow Wells and Stream Gages Installation

CONTRACTOR shall conduct a competitive bid process, including develop bid documents, prepare advertisement and contract documents for construction contract bidding, conduct prebid meeting, bid opening and evaluation, selection of the contractor, award of contract for the selection of a contractor to install wells and gages, as applicable. CONTRACTOR shall coordinate with GSA to publicly advertise bid in accordance with the requirements for public bidding for construction and prepare an engineer's estimate. Received bids will be reviewed and a recommendation for award made. CONTRACTOR shall send a Notice of Intent to Award to the selected bidder(s) and submit a Notice(s) to Award.

CONTRACTOR shall manage the selected contractor to install a minimum of one (1) multicompletion monitoring well with a minimum of two (2) vertical zones per well. CONTRACTOR shall assess the Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM) to decide the number of screen intervals, water conditions, well locations, water trends and conditions, and access agreements. CONTRACTOR shall install a minimum of three (3) new surface water flow monitoring sites and install each stream gage with three (3) new shallow monitoring wells. CONTRACTOR will assess the HCM to decide the final well design including the depth and distance of the wells from stream gages, water conditions, data gaps, water trends and conditions, and access agreements.

Construction may not begin and no costs for Category (c) may be incurred until an exemption from CEQA is granted, or the State has reviewed the CEQA document(s), completed its CEQA responsible agency obligations and given its environmental clearance. CONTRACTOR shall wait for GSA to provide Notice to Proceed before beginning category (c) tasks. CONTRACTOR shall install stream gages and provide construction management support during well drilling. The GSA will contract directly with the well driller(s).

Any costs incurred for Category (c) prior to an exemption from CEQA is granted, or DWR gives its environmental clearance shall not be reimbursed and any such amounts shall be deducted from the total contract amount.

Deliverables:

- Bid documents
- Installation Plan for GSA approval
- Notice of award
- Well permits, if applicable
- Notice to Proceed (to well contractor)
- Photos of completed wells
- Well completion reports
- 100% Design, plans and specifications
- Surface and groundwater monitoring site summary report

Assumptions:

- GSA will provide Notice to Proceed to CONTRACTOR once DWR provides concurrence on environmental documentation and approval for category (c) construction activities to begin.

Category (d): Monitoring / Assessment

Task 4: Response to DWR GSP Determination

CONTRACTOR shall identify key aspects of the GSP to modify in response to DWR's determination letter received in July 2023. CONTRACTOR shall work with GSA staff, advisory committees, and with the Vina GSA and Rock Creek Reclamation District GSA Boards to

determine how corrective actions will be addressed and to develop amendments to the GSP. Corrective actions were listed that must be addressed by the time of the DWR's periodic review set to begin January 28, 2027. A Draft Amended GSP shall be made available for public review and comment prior to March 2026, or as mutually agreed upon.

Deliverables:

- Draft Amended GSP
- Map files and data sets developed for GSP amendments

Task 5: Draft Periodic Evaluation of the GSP

CONTRACTOR shall develop the Periodic Evaluation to accompany the amended GSP, for submittal to DWR before January 2027, as part of the required 5-year Periodic Evaluation. The draft Periodic Evaluation will be made available for public review and comment prior to March 2026, or as mutually agreed. CONTRACTOR shall work with GSA staff, advisory committees, and with the Vina GSA and Rock Creek Reclamation District GSA Boards to develop content for the GSP Periodic Evaluation.

Deliverables:

- Draft GSP Periodic Evaluation
- Board meeting presentations on GSP evaluations
- Map files and data sets developed for the GSP Periodic Evaluation

Task 6: Gather, Evaluate Data, and Develop Approach for Interconnected Surface Water (ISW) Sustainable Management Criteria

CONTRACTOR shall refine the sustainable management criteria for Interconnected Surface Water to address DWR comments on the Vina GSP related to the technical approach for the use of groundwater levels as proxies for measurable objectives and minimum thresholds. CONTRACTOR will use new data to fill initial data gaps and develop a refined approach to set the Interconnected Surface Water SMC for inclusion in the amended GSP.

CONTRACTOR shall use the Butte Basin Groundwater Model (BBGM), or similar tool mutually agreed upon, to assess ISW loss and gains. Model inputs/outputs will be refined/updated using the new data. An assessment of the loss/gain values will be conducted to determine if they represent the overall interaction between the surface water and groundwater system or if the quantity of depletion is due to groundwater pumping. Estimates of agricultural pumping will be derived using DWR's Statewide Crop Mapping Datasets, available evapotranspiration estimates (e.g., OpenET), and surface water diversion records. Proposed PMAs will be modeled to determine impacts to ISWs. This task will be coordinated with other GSA modeling activities.

Deliverables:

- Draft and Final Technical Memo or Updated Chapter in GSP
- A copy of the refined/updated BBGM files
- Map files and datasets developed or utilized to develop the SMC

Task 7: Domestic Well Survey

CONTRACTOR shall conduct activities to address the identified data gap related to domestic wells in the Vina Subbasin. CONTRACTOR shall perform a desktop survey of existing domestic well dataset to identify wells with poor construction information and wells with a high potential to go dry. Activities will include field visits to the wells identified to confirm use status and well video surveys on wells in-use with poor construction information. CONTRACTOR shall update current dataset of domestic wells with results of the survey including active domestic wells and their construction information.

Deliverables:

- Technical Memorandum
- Domestic well database

Task 8: Create Community Monitoring Plan and Equip Volunteer Wells with Monitoring Equipment

CONTRACTOR shall create a monitoring program plan for domestic well owners that will include methods for outreach and engagement, identifying and meeting education needs, identifying methods for data management, and how the plan will be implemented. CONTRACTOR shall purchase and install necessary monitoring equipment to track water levels in eight (8) domestic wells. CONTRACTOR shall support engagement with domestic well owners who volunteer to participate.

Deliverables:

- Map of installed equipment
- Summary of well characteristics

Task 9: Community Monitoring and Dry Well Data and Visualization

CONTRACTOR shall enhance the existing Data Management System (DMS) to house the water levels collected as part of the community monitoring program established under Task 8 and to track dry wells. CONTRACTOR shall coordinate task activities with County DMS development process. CONTRACTOR shall develop a system for verifiably reporting and tracking dry wells and will append community monitoring data to the County DMS.

Deliverables:

- DMS input tables

Category (e): Engagement / Outreach

Task 10: Community Monitoring Program Engagement and Education

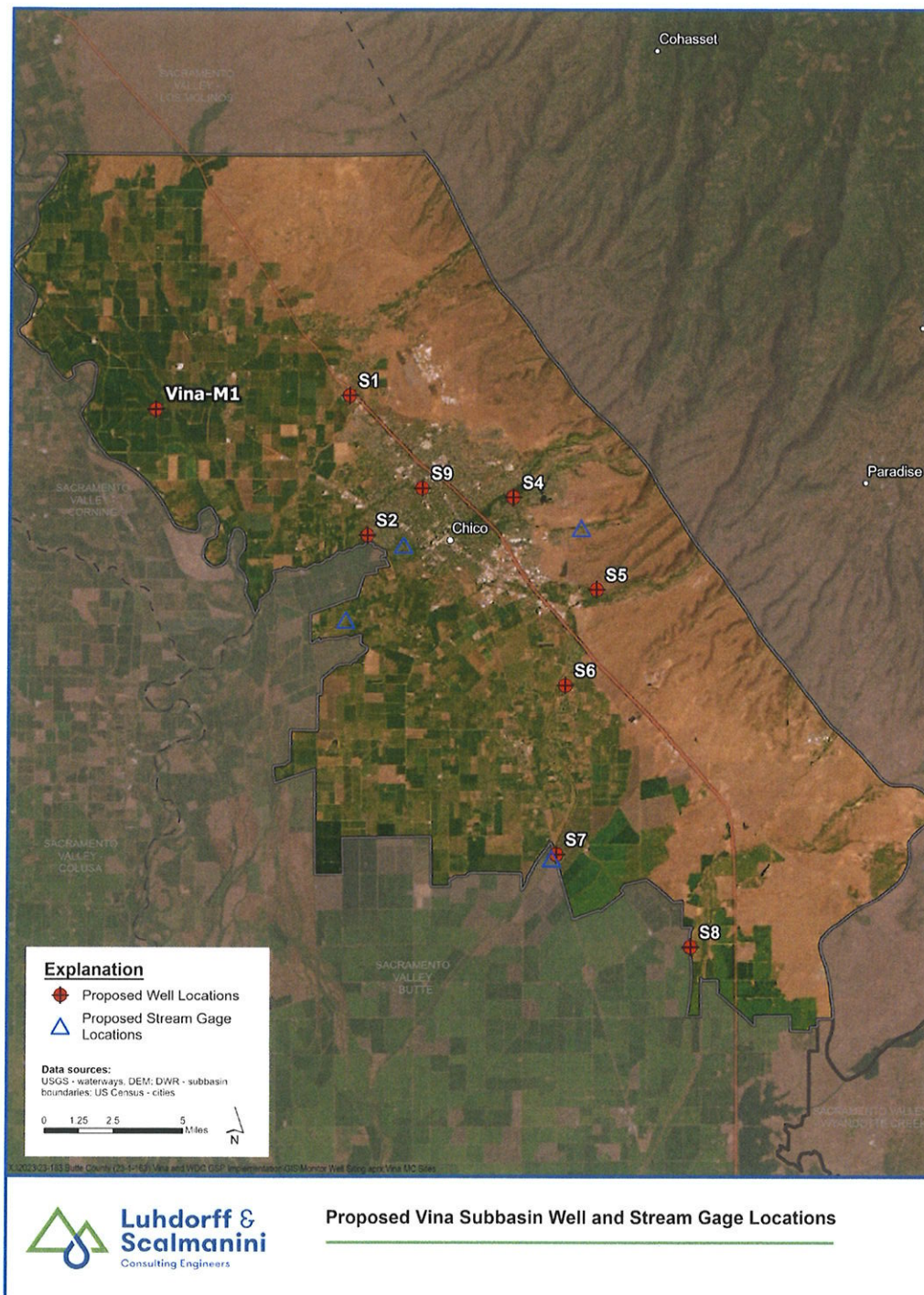
CONTRACTOR shall participate in public engagement through two in-person workshops designed to educate participants in the community monitoring program and instruct the GSA on how to use the installed monitoring equipment including how to upload the data to the DMS.

CONTRACTOR shall work with GSA to inform interested parties about implementation progress through continued GSP-related outreach, relevant reports, and data. Develop public information materials to be distributed informing the public of the program and how they can participate. Hold workshops to discuss the program and hear the suggestions, questions, and concerns of the community.

Deliverables:

- Informational handouts for up to two workshops

Butte County
Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Vina Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation Project
Notice of Exemption – For All Monitoring Network and Data Gap Construction Activities



Proposed construction activities associated with expanding groundwater monitoring networks and filling data gaps for implementation of the GSP in the Vina Subbasin within Butte County.