

# Stakeholder Issue Assessment

Oxnard Subbasin and Pleasant Valley Basin

Developed by the Consensus Building Institute: Senior Mediator Gina Bartlett and Senior Associate Ekow Edzie

For June 12, 2020, Presentation, at the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency Special Meeting



# Today's Presentation

- Report Posted at [FCGMA.org](http://FCGMA.org)
- Part 1: CBI Present DRAFT Findings and Recommendations Report – Invite Feedback from All
- Part 2: CBI Recommendations and Next Steps for Forming a Stakeholder Committee for the Oxnard and Pleasant Valley Basins

# Consensus Building Institute

## About

- Founded in 1992
- Non-profit organization
- Provide facilitation and mediation services internationally
- 30+ Staff
- CBI.org

## Experience

- Water Resources and Groundwater since 2000
  - California Water Plan
  - State Water Resources Control Board
  - Sonoma County for 12 years
  - Salinas Valley, GSA Formation, Seawater Intrusion...
  - Southern California – San Luis Rey
- Skilled Facilitation
  - Assessments
  - Design Processes for Collaboration and Negotiation
  - Outcome-Oriented

# Consensus Building Institute Role

- Provide independent, impartial facilitation services
- Work with all stakeholders to structure a fair, credible process
- Funding via the California Department of Water Resources at Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency's request

# Findings and Key Themes

Spring 2020

22 Confidential Interviews with 45 People in Oxnard / Pleasant Valley

Interviewees provided Courtesy Review of Preliminary Draft Findings

# Themes

Certainty &  
Sustainable Yield

Public Resource

Data and  
Management

Ramp Down

Equity & Burden  
Sharing

Allocation & Base  
Period

Conjunctive Use

Project  
Development

Regional Approach

Governance &  
Administration

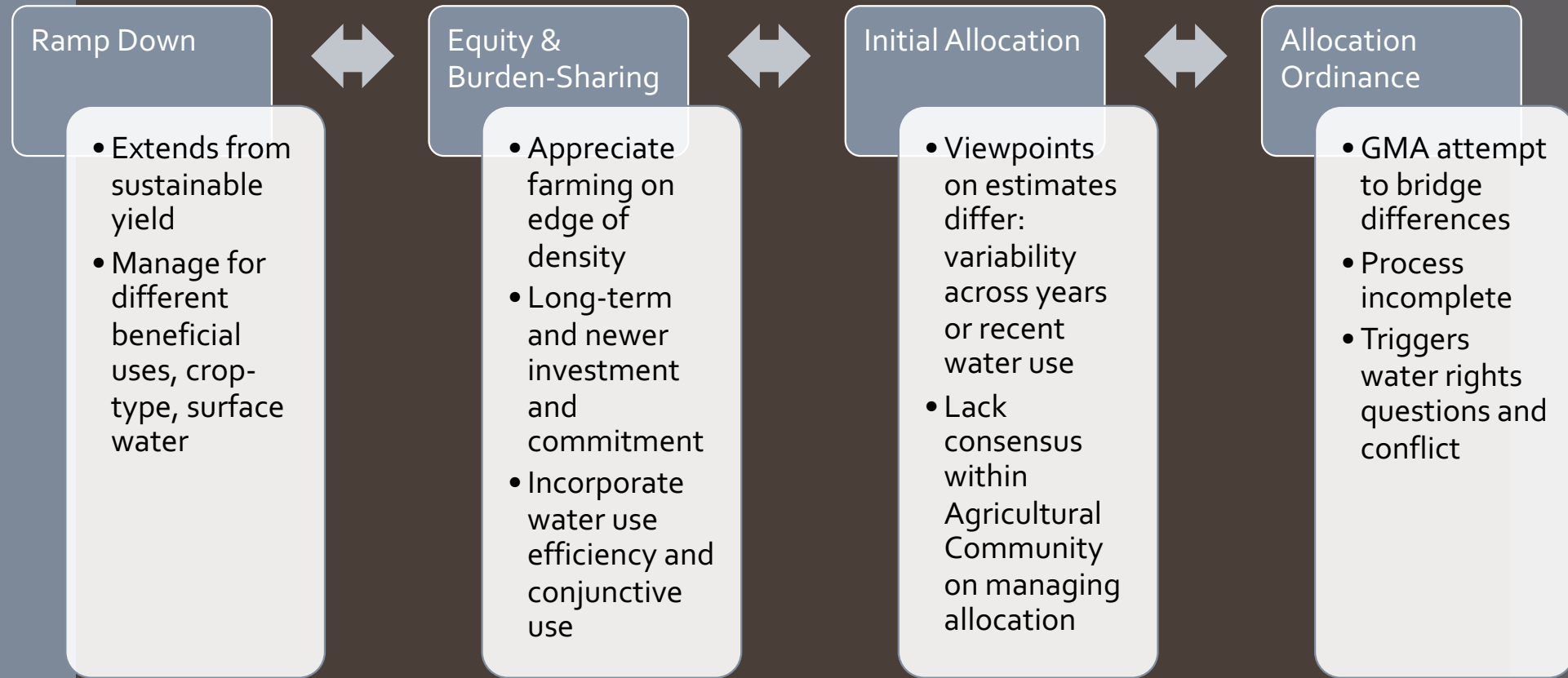
Stakeholder  
Engagement &  
Trust

Stakeholder  
Process  
Recommendations

# Certainty and Sustainable Yield

- Certainty for Long-Term Planning
  - 6-20 years ahead for business certainty and fulfilling mandates
  - Lack of certainty jeopardizes willingness to fund projects
- Public Resource and Benefit
  - Compelled to manage
  - Health of local agriculture economy links directly to cities and residents' prosperity
- Sustainable Yield
  - Shapes end-goal and slope of water reduction path
  - Requires transparent scientific process
- Transparency, Data, Management
  - Increase transparency via AMI, accounting, water market
  - Frustration with inaccurate reporting, inadequate infrastructure / systems, and over-pumping

# Allocation





# Water Resources Management

- Regional Approach
  - Stakeholders advocate for regional approach, “one-water” concept
  - Develop projects with regional benefit to scale solutions
- Robust Conjunctive Use
  - Manage surface and groundwater together
  - Challenge is crediting, managing historic practices and overall cost / benefit
  - Flexibility necessary to steward farms and cities
- Proactive Project Development
  - Recognize water demand exceeds available resource
  - Hopes are great to supplement supply with new or under-utilized projects
  - Unclear on governance structure appropriate to maximize value of projects
  - Financing strategy necessary, cost and who pays are factors

# Governance + Administration

## Governance

SGMA designated GMA as GSA, lost opportunity to explore fit / options

Link to County, originally a benefit, now questioned

Worry articulating concern could create backlash

## Administration

Staffing capacity to meet challenge

Funding for additional staffing lacks support

## Regional Leadership

Significant role to advance sustainability and regional collaboration

Clear focus on water management

Meaningful stakeholder engagement

# Stakeholder Engagement and Trust

Low trust is significant barrier to reaching agreements on groundwater management

Invested lots of energy and resources

Perceive input not valued or incorporated into policy

Manage time constraints, sometimes time used to curtail decisions when it may have been preferable / helpful to proceed

Hope for future collaboration on all aspects of groundwater planning

# Stakeholders' Process Suggestions

- Stakeholders represent themselves (rather than attorneys)
- Grapple with range of issues: allocation / ramp down, sustainable yield, projects
- Consider independent technical / policy staff to support facilitated process
- Check in regularly with affected parties to increase understanding and build support over time

# CBI Recommendations

Facilitated Process for Fox Canyon Groundwater  
Management



# Conditions

- Conditions Present to Proceed
  - Potential areas for agreement
  - Parties willing to participate
  - Parties do not have assurance of a much better deal elsewhere
  - External pressures to reach agreement
- Trepidation -- here we go *again* ..... “last best hope”

# Facilitated Process toward Sustainability

Create a Transparent Facilitated Process

Convene a Representative Stakeholder Group  
and Build in Broader Engagement (Briefings,  
Caucus Meetings, Public Workshops)

Develop Charter to Confirm Decision-Making  
and how Input will be used

Develop Work Plan to address Range of Issues  
with Check-In Points to Continue

# Issues for Discussion

Regional Water  
Resources Management

Allocation  
Plan

Sustainable  
Yield

Project  
Development

Costs, Fees,  
Equity,  
Benefits

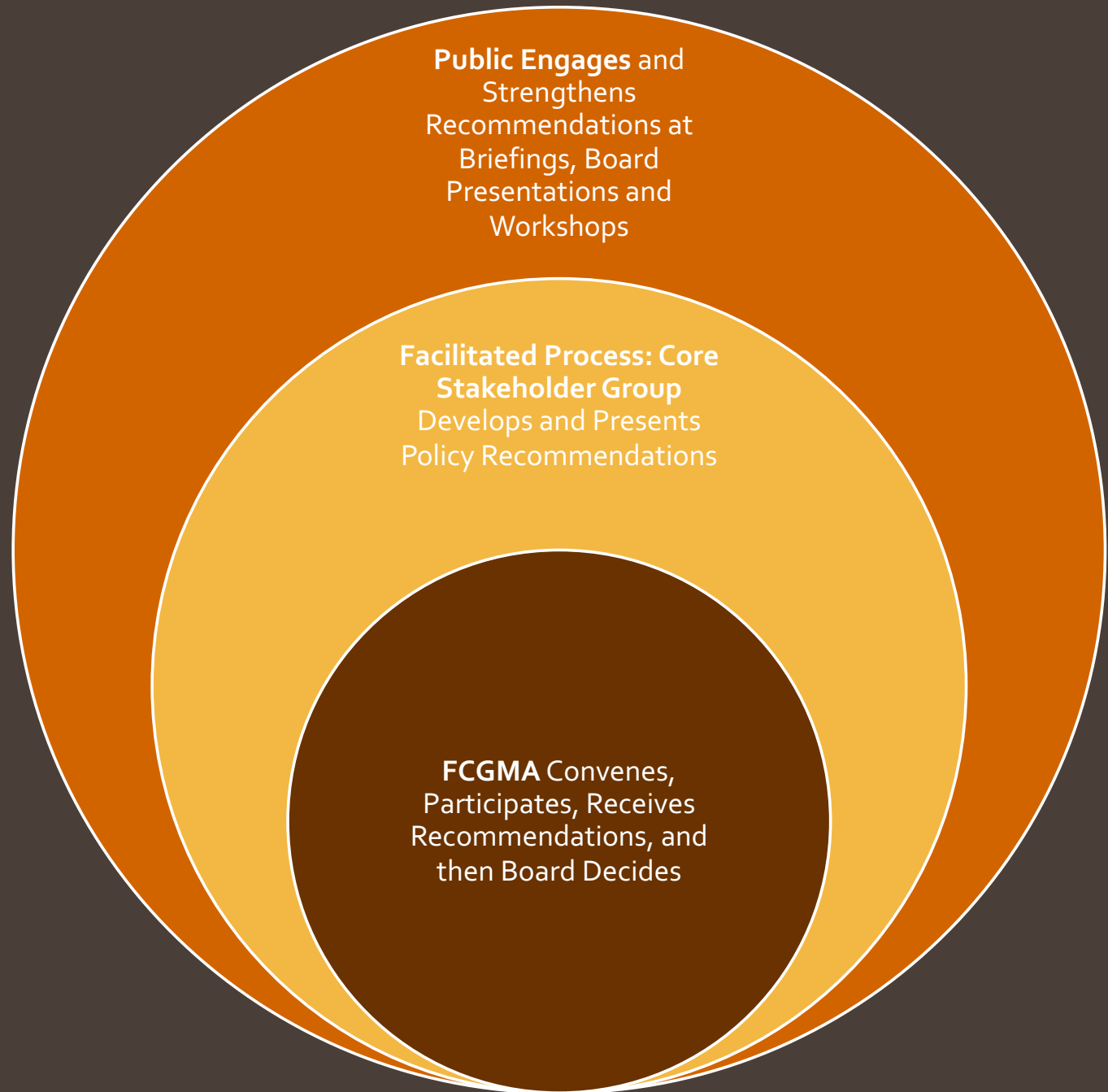
Governance &  
Administration

Approach

Ramp Down



# How? Initiate Facilitated Process

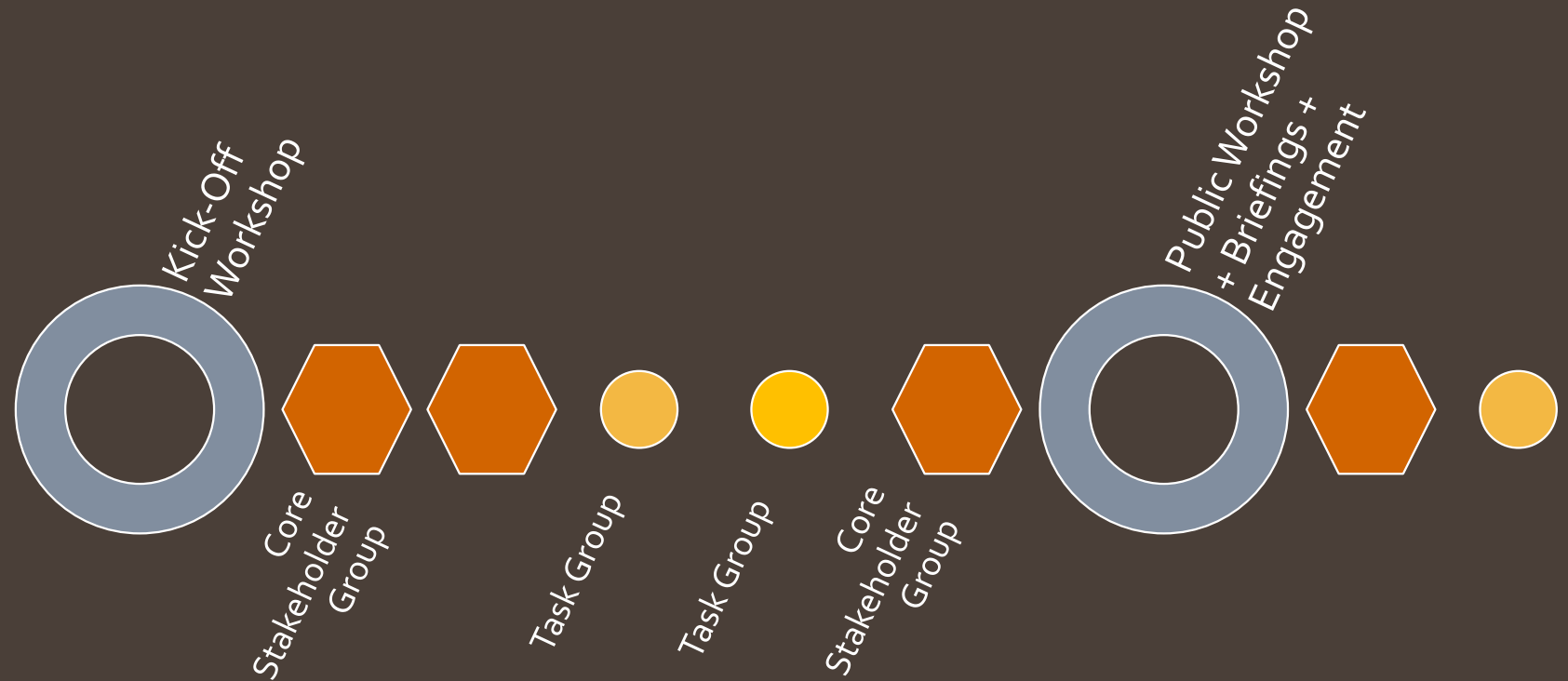


# Facilitated Process STRUCTURE

- Form a Core Stakeholder Group for Oxnard and Pleasant Valley Basins representing different interests
- FCGMA convenes and participates in facilitated process; **GMA interests represented in outcomes / policy recommendations**
- All meetings are **open to the public**
- Interests Groups meet as **caucuses** to vet proposals and understand stakeholder issues and concerns
- Small detailed **task groups** as needed to develop detailed proposals
  - Project development
- Process anchored in robust intentional **engagement at every milestone**
  - Public workshops
  - Constituent and board briefings
  - FCGMA board briefings
- Stakeholder group **representatives present recommendations** and outcomes directly to FCGMA board

# Facilitated Process Approach

Stakeholder Group develops proposals to vet broadly with constituents and in public workshops, then incorporates feedback



Task Groups when needed to develop Detailed Proposals for Stakeholder Group

- Projects
- Engagement to develop outreach materials

Key Elements

- ✓ Use people's time wisely
- ✓ Ongoing work punctuated by public input
- ✓ **Create widespread support and understanding**

# Decision Making



Form  
Recommendations

Board makes Final  
Decision

# Facilitated Process: Core Stakeholder Group

## Core Stakeholder Group Participation Criteria

- Strong effective advocate
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with others
- Open and flexible to problem solving and new ideas
- Able to commit time needed for ongoing discussions
- Collectively reflect diversity of interests
- Maintain group size to support focused deliberations

## Interests Represented

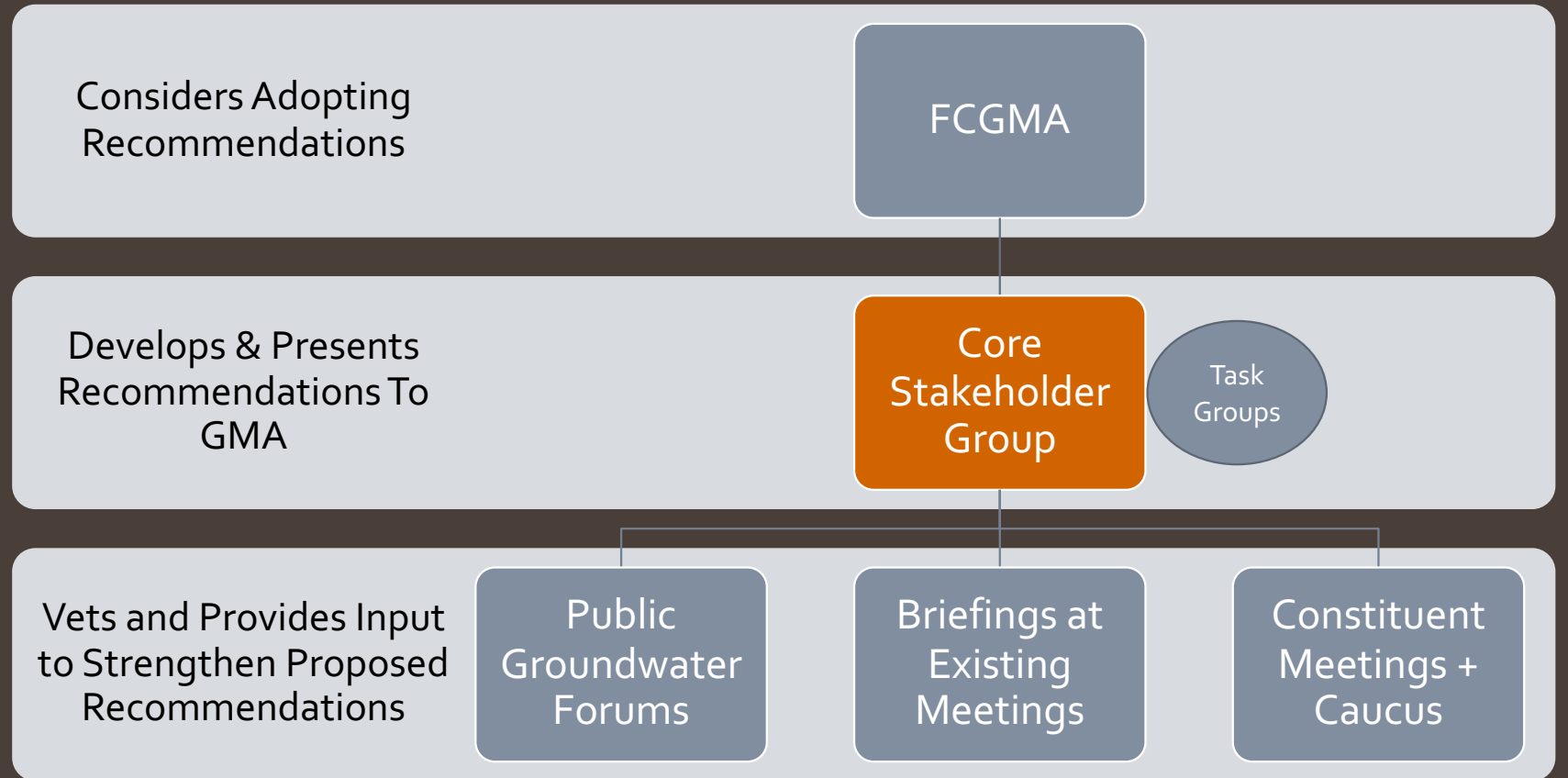
- Agriculture
  - Different crop types / water demand
  - Landowners and renters
  - Packers and shippers
- Environmental
- Governmental
- Municipal and Industrial
- Public Interest
- Water Resources Management

# CBI Next Steps for Report

- Feedback Welcome
  - Clarifications or Major Omissions
  - Send Comments to [Gina@CBI.org](mailto:Gina@CBI.org) by June 26

# Part 2: Recommendations for Forming Stakeholder Group

# Facilitated Process Structure





# Form Core Stakeholder Group

## Policy and Technical Issues

- Allocation + Ramp Down
- Regional Water Resources Management
  - Sustainable Yield
  - Projects
  - Costs, Fees, Equity, Benefits
  - Governance + Administration

## Work Plan

- Sequence topics and discussions
- Build in **“Go” – “No-Go”** Check-in Decision Points

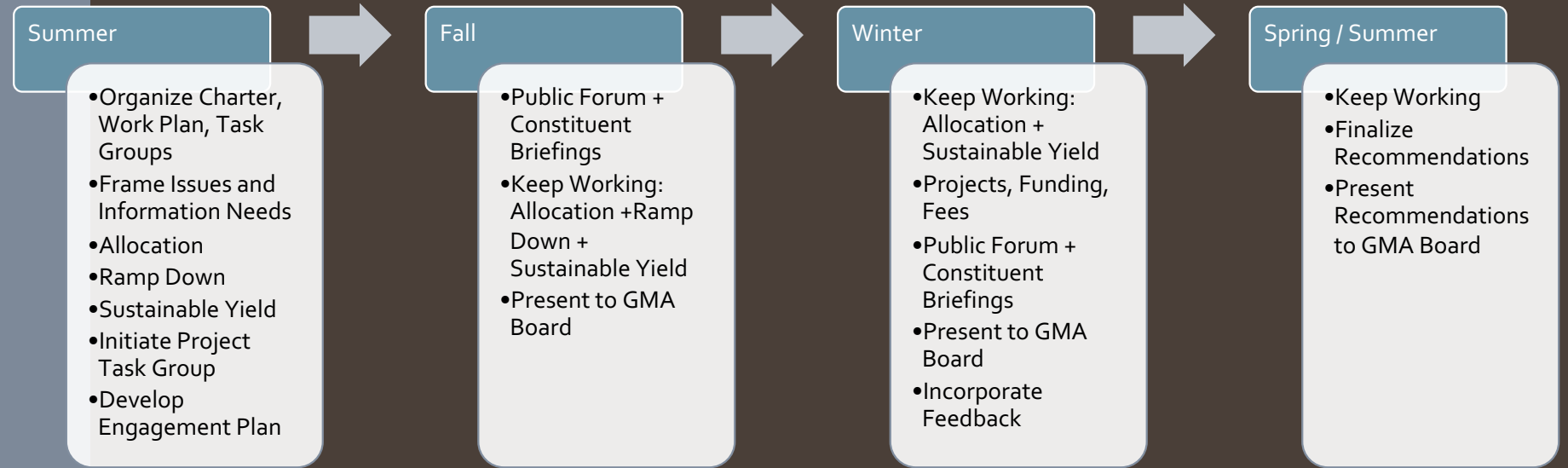
**Charter** to confirm all elements and process agreements

- Issues under Consideration
- Roles & Responsibilities
  - GMA
  - Core Stakeholder Group
  - Task Groups
  - Scientific Advisors
  - Legal Counsel
- Decision-Making
- Process Agreements
- Term: 2 Years

# Core Stakeholder Group Composition

Interests	10-15 Representatives
Agriculture	Different Crop Types / Water Demand
	Landowner and Renter
	Packer - Shipper
	Operations across both Basins
Environmental	Nonprofit Organizations
Governmental	County, Cities
Municipal and Industrial	<i>Overlaps with Governmental and Water Resources Management</i>
Water Resources Management	<i>Overlaps with Governmental, Municipal &amp; Industrial, and Agriculture</i> Water Districts and Agencies
Public Interest	<i>Exploring governmental reps and engagement with Disadvantaged Community Organizations</i>

# Preliminary High Level Work Plan



# Ways to Contribute & Opportunities for Public Engagement

- Contribute **Specific Expertise** in a Task Sub-Group
- **Speak with Core Stakeholder Group members** about issues and concerns
- Attend **public workshops** and **GMA Board** meetings
- Schedule a **briefing** for your organization or leadership
- Receive **email updates**
- Monitor the **web site**

# Immediate Next Steps

## Organize 1<sup>st</sup> Core Stakeholder Group Meeting

- Virtual
- All Meetings will be Announced Publicly and Open to the Public
- Composition, Charter, Work Plan

## Develop Charter

- Consult with Core Stakeholder Group on Charter & Work Plan
- Bring back to GMA Board to consider adopting Charter

## Create Work Plan and Independent Web Site