



Asian Business Institute and Resource Center

Southeast Asian Groundwater and Sustainability Advocacy and Outreach Program – Report 2.20.19

History

ABIRC was established in 2008 through a series of community meetings funded by Citibank and Wells Fargo. Topics of interest for the Asian community included access to resources, business and financial plans, marketing assistance, non-traditional loans, workshops conducted in various languages, networking, Advocate for the Southeast Asian Community and their small business, certifications for various contractual opportunities, and other means of building capacity within the Asian business community. Our Mission is “to build a strong network of Asian American Business owners to promote and advocate for the sustained success of Asian Businesses in the Central California region.”

Sustainable Groundwater Management Planning

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed in 2014. This gave an opportunity for the local agencies to form a Groundwater Sustainable Agency (GSA). By 2020, a plan would be layout and implemented; by 2040, each region is to reach a groundwater sustainability level. If the local agencies are not successful, then the state will come and take over the process.

The local region called the Kings Sub-basin is divided into seven GSA. ABIRC through funding from DWR (Department of Water Resource) is working in the North King GSA area. ABIRC’s role is to advocate for the small SEA farmers on the new groundwater regulations and disseminate information to the community. These efforts include community workshops and utilization of both ethnic media - Radio and Hmong TV. ABIRC partnered with Lao Veterans of America, Inc (LVA)., Special Guerrilla Unit (SGU), local Hmong Churches, and Hmong community leaders and has completed the following:

- ABIRC has completed six community workshops since July 2018.
- ABIRC have completed six community Hmong USA Network TV shows. This is a one-hour show that is called the ABIRC Hour. Topics of discussion included the works of ABIRC within the community, SGMA process, and issues that are important to the community.
- ABIRC has participated in five Radio shows with our partner at the UC Extension.
- ABIRC has been invited to speak at three community events on SGMA.

Over 99% of all the SEA farmers we spoke to have not heard or is aware of SGMA. It is predicted that over one-million acres will be fallowed once the new plan is implemented. The questions posed, “what can we do to mitigate the negative impact on our local small SEA farmers?” Many of our SEA small farmers live in the city sphere but may farm in the County area. In addition, most of the SEA small farmers are leasing, not landowners. Some are elderly, with little-to-no schooling, and rely solely on their farm to feed their family; and to send their children to college.

ABIRC would like to take this opportunity to publicly present their work to the public agencies that have written them a letter of support toward this project.