

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Standing Advisory Committee Meeting

June 28, 2018

Meetings Minutes

Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center, 4689 CA-166, New Cuyama, CA 93254

PRESENT:

Jaffe, Roberta – Chair
Kelly, Brenton – Vice Chair
Alvarado, Claudia
DeBranch, Brad
Draucker, Louise
Furstenfeld, Jake
Haslett, Joe
Post, Mike
Valenzuela, Hilda Leticia
Beck, Jim – Executive Director
Hughes, Joe – Legal Counsel

ABSENT:

None

1. Call to order

Chair Roberta Jaffe called the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) to order at 4 pm.

Chair Jaffe let the SAC know that they want a good discussion at the meetings, but need to follow a protocol where the Committee has a discussion first and then the audience can engage.

2. Roll call

Hallmark Group Project Coordinator Taylor Blakslee called roll of the Committee (shown above).

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was led by Chair Jaffe.

4. Approval of minutes

(CBGSA) Executive Director Jim Beck presented the May 31, 2018 SAC minutes. A motion was made by Committee Member Mike Post to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Brenton Kelly and passed unanimously.

5. Report of the General Counsel

Nothing to report.

6. Groundwater Sustainability Agency

a. Report of the Executive Director

CBGSA Executive Director Jim Beck reported that the second assessment has been distributed to CBGSA members.

Mr. Beck reported that to reduce printing costs, the hardcopy of the SAC packet did not include the Description of the Plan Area or Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model. He reported that as the volume of the packets have increased, the estimated monthly costs to print documents for the SAC and Board would exceed \$2,500 in direct printing costs. He said we will discuss with the Board on July 11, 2018 how to manage printing costs to remain within the budget. Chair Jaffe asked if one copy could be available at the Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center as a resource copy. Mr. Beck said this is a good idea and that we can do this.

Committee member Brad DeBranch asked if these costs have been billed. Mr. Beck reported that Hallmark did not anticipate printing costs to be so extensive and Hallmark bore these costs to date.

Mr. Beck reported that Mary received a request from members of the community to upload a video of the educational portion of the meeting on the website. Mr. Beck confirmed that there will not be a video of the whole Committee meeting, but just the educational component.

b. SGMA Educational Item: What is a Management Area? What Makes a Good Monitoring Network?

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Consultant Woodard & Curran (W&C) Project Manager Brian Van Lienden provided an update on the educational items entitled "What is a Management Area? What Makes a Good Monitoring Network? What Does SGMA Require for Groundwater Quality?". His presentation included an overview of what a management area can be used for, and the rationale for wanting to form a WMA, including regional boundaries and physical conditions.

Vice Chair Brenton Kelly asked if setting different minimum thresholds for different parts of the valley without a Water Management Area (WMA) is possible. Mr. Van Lienden confirmed that this is possible and will be discussed more during the monitoring network discussion.

Committee member DeBranch asked how it is anticipated WMAs will be set up. Mr. Beck stated that he was under the impression that the first recommendation will come from the W&C based on the modelling results. The objective report will come from the modelers from a technical approach, followed by a policy discussion with the Committee and Board regarding jurisdictional boundaries.

Vice Chair Kelly commented that a clear differentiation between what can and cannot be done with a WMA is important to better understand its value. Mr. Beck replied that in larger areas with multiple districts, recognizing management actions is essential because of hydrologic differences and cost savings from implementing monitoring as a group. WMAs are not prohibited under SGMA from setting target water levels.

Chair Jaffe asked if each WMA will have separate water budgets. Mr. Beck replied that separation of WMAs could be a possibility based on the discrete need to do so, however coordination has to occur across the basin. Chair Jaffe asked how the reconciliation between WMAs occurs. Mr. Beck replied that the reconciliation is a part of the stakeholder process and discussions within the SAC and Board.

Committee member Jake Furstenfeld asked if different commodities will affect how the boundaries are separated. Mr. Van Lienden replied that they do not have to be regulated the same.

Vice Chair Kelly asked what kind of multiplier it is to the GSP budget to add WMAs. Mr. Van Lienden replied that the effect on the budget is not substantial from a model perspective. Mr. Beck responded that he anticipates the number of WMAs to be no more than eight.

Ann Myhre stated that the SAC and Board may want to consider the Cuyama Community Service District as a WMA, but she also pointed out that the GSP is a living document and can be updated as we progress.

Byron Albano asked if it is a possibility to form a WMA based on many non-connected fingers (narrow canyons). Mr. Beck confirmed that this is possible.

UC Santa Barbara Associate Professor of Sociocultural Anthropology Casey Walsh said there might be jurisdictional and technical conflicts with adjacent WMAs; however, Mr. Beck said that he does not expect there to be overlapping WMAs.

Chair Jaffe asked if the current monitoring, such as CASGEM, will be our baseline and then we determine what is needed from there. Mr. Van Lienden confirmed this approach and informed the SAC that the DWR grant money includes funds to install some monitoring equipment.

Committee member Joe Haslett asked what the monitoring technique W&C planned to use and suggested remote sensing equipment to capture more data. Committee member Mike Post said that Santa Barbara is monitoring groundwater on a quarterly basis and Vice Chair Kelly reported that the USGS is reporting on a quarterly basis as well.

WellIntel Network Specialist Lee Knudtson introduced himself and informed the SAC and attendees that he represents the groundwater remote sensing company WellIntel. Mr. Knudtson said the CEO of WellIntel gave a presentation to the W&C offices and let the SAC know his company is ready to provide remote sensing equipment needs the CBGSA may have.

UC Santa Cruz Professor and Condors Hope Farmer Steve Gliessman said if water levels are not being met, he thinks groundwater pumping numbers are a critical component of verifying the model. Mr. Beck stated that he expects the SAC and Board to decipher a way to monitor pumping. Mr. Van Lienden said the GSA can decide pumping limits, but DWR does not require any pumping data.

Local resident Sue Blackshear said if groundwater dependent vegetation is negatively impacted by diversions we should monitor those areas as well.

Family Resource Center Executive Director Lynn Carlisle asked if the SAC can put a caveat in the GSP to add monitoring areas that are not currently monitored if changes in water use occur. Mr. Beck said this can be updated during the 5-year update cycle, or during the annual review of the monitoring data.

Ms. Carlisle said there is confusion in the community on the difference between monitoring wells and a monitoring network. Chair Jaffe suggested adding this as an educational item in the newsletter.

Mr. Van Lienden presented on what SGMA requires for groundwater quality. Committee member Louise Draucker asked what the protocol is for wells that experience regular contamination. Mr. Van Lienden replied that the well may have to be relocated, or drilled deeper.

Cuyama Orchards Farmer Bryon Albano asked what maximum limits are referenced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in relation to a threshold. Mr. Van Lienden said that it all depends on the usage of the water.

c. Board of Directors Agenda Review

Mr. Beck provided an overview of the July 11, 2018 CBGSA Board of Directors agenda. He reminded the SAC and attendees that the Board meeting has been moved to July 11, 2018 due to the July 4th Holiday. Mr. Beck informed the SAC that DWR's Anita Regmi will make a presentation at the July 11, 2018 Board meeting to provide an update on SGMA and grant funding.

7. Groundwater Sustainability Plan

a. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Update

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on GSP activities, which is included in the SAC packet.

Chair Jaffe asked Mr. Van Lienden if any groundwater pumping data has been made available to W&C, and he replied that it has not. Mr. Van Lienden said that W&C is building a module in the model to determine how much pumping can occur.

Mr. Beck informed the SAC that other basins have gone to satellite imagery due to the difficulty of obtaining groundwater pumping data. He reported that mechanical monitoring pieces break and need someone to monitor them regularly.

Ms. Carlisle asked if community members are unaware of their current pumping rate, how will they know if they go over their limit. Mr. Beck said we will have to determine how landowners report on their data.

Committee member Furstenfeld said that he uses meters on his property, and they are a costly expense when malfunctioning and need calibration regularly. He said he spent \$8,000 on monitoring costs just this past year.

Mr. Van Lienden reported that W&C plan on using the Grimmway / Bolthouse data where it is applicable since they believe it to be more reliable than the DWR/LandIQ data. W&C will use the satellite imagery to fill-in the data.

Mr. Van Lienden said the satellite data matched the land use data provided by Bolthouse and Grimmway by approximately 90%; therefore, W&C is confident in using the satellite data for periods outside the data received by Bolthouse and Grimmway.

Grapevine Capital Partners' Ray Shady commented that frost night protection is a key element to consider for water use computations.

Committee member Haslett said the rooting area for different crops can vary largely, and crops with a shallow rooting area will not experience extensive water percolation. Committee member

Haslett asked how W&C will reconcile this. Mr. Van Lienden said the model will take into account the type of crop and adjust the percolation amounts based on specific crop type characteristics.

W&C' Lyndel Melton said that there needs to be an understanding of the different types of irrigation practices in terms of efficiency and process.

Committee member Haslett asked how wind is factored into evapotranspiration rates. Mr. Van Lienden said he believes it is included, but will confirm and update the SAC.

b. Technical Forum Update

Mr. Van Lienden provided an overview of the June 8, 2018 technical forum call. A summary of the issues discussed is provided in the packet.

c. Description of the Plan Area

Chair Jaffe appreciates the effort provided to update the Description of the Plan Area with comments. She noted that figure 1-13 and 1-14 represent 2016, but do not show land use in terms of vineyards. Mr. Van Lienden stated that the vineyards are shown as idle. Chair Jaffe noted that on page 33, the new olive plantings are shown. Mr. Van Lienden said that the Description of the Plan Area is reflective of the data set that is available. Mr. Beck replied that W&C is presenting third party data that presents the land as idle and this is not data that can be altered. Mr. Beck stated that this data is not necessarily correct now, but it is the data used for these modules.

Chair Jaffe said the Description of the Plan Area needs to be as accurate as possible and there should be a change in the narrative to show that it reflects the available data. Mr. Van Lienden said that they will do this.

Local landowner Jane Wooster said that there should be a mention of what is reflected in the data sets and that there is new data not reflected on the Description of the Plan Area.

Chair Jaffe requested a modification in the narrative to represent that these are published reports used with original data. Mr. Beck said that there should be a general statement that calibration will show more granule alterations. He said this statement should be at the beginning of the Description of the Plan Area to let the audience know the report was made with available data.

Chair Jaffe asked if rangeland can be identified in the Description of the Plan Area, and Mr. Van Lienden said he could address this in the narrative and the development of the model.

Vice Chair Kelly asked if secondary water sources would be mapped in the Description of the Plan Area. Committee member Haslett mentioned that Cottonwood Creek should be included, and Jane Wooster said Aliso Canyon Creek should be named. Committee member Furstenfeld suggested Mustang Creek and Miranda Creek. Vice Chair Kelly mentioned Apache Canyon as being a fairly large creek in his area. Chair Jaffe recommended the acceptance of the Description of the Plan Area as amended through the discussion of the advisory committee. The motion was seconded by Committee member Furstenfeld and passed unanimously.

d. Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model

Mr. Van Lienden provided an overview of the Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM) and informed the SAC that W&C is accepting comments through July 20, 2018.

e. Stakeholder Engagement Update

GSP Outreach the Catalyst Group’s Mary Currie provided an update on stakeholder engagement activity.

Committee member Haslett commented that the Bolthouse/Grimmway land used data should be highlighted to those concerned about “mega-farming” expansion.

Mr. Van Lienden reported that W&C is developing an “undesirable results” narrative at a high level, and in a couple of months, they will start inputting some quantitative details.

Committee member Drauker said the latest USGS report claimed the subsurface soil structure has been damaged beyond repair in many areas.

Ms. Carlisle asked how the definition of sustainability will be decided, and Mr. Beck replied that the CBGSA Board will develop the definition with stakeholder input.

8. Items for Upcoming Sessions

Nothing to report.

9. Committee Forum

Nothing to report.

10. Public comment for items not on the Agenda

Dr. Casey Walsh reported that UC Santa Barbara is performing a 3-page water needs assessment survey for the Cuyama Valley. Dr. Walsh asked for a way to distribute surveys via email, or possible using a service like Survey Monkey or information in the CBGSA newsletter. He noted that this survey is voluntary and reports basic demographic information.

11. Adjourn

Chair Jaffe adjourned the meeting at 6:46 pm.

I, Jim Beck, Executive Director of the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a fair statement of the proceedings of the meeting held on Thursday, June 28, 2018, by the Cuyama Basing Groundwater Sustainability Agency Standing Advisory Committee.

Jim Beck

Dated: June 28, 2018