

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board of Directors Meeting

September 7, 2022

Meeting Minutes

PRESENT:

Yurosek, Derek – Chair
Chounet, Paul – Vice Chair
Bantilan, Cory – Secretary
Vickery, Matt – Treasurer
Albano, Byron
Anselm, Arne
Elliot, Darcel – Alternate for Das Williams
Klinchuch, Matt – Alternate for Lorena Stoller
Scrivner, Zack
Wooster, Jane
Beck, Jim – Executive Director
Hughes, Joe – Legal Counsel

ABSENT:

Compton, Lynn

1. Call to Order

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (CBGSA) Chair Derek Yurosek called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

CBGSA Executive Director Jim Beck reminded meeting attendees to use the Microsoft Teams chat for indicating to staff that they have a question.

2. Roll Call

Mr. Blakslee called roll (shown above) and informed Chair Yurosek that there was a quorum of the Board.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was led by Chair Yurosek.

4. Standing Advisory Committee Meeting Report

SAC Chair Brenton Kelly provided a report on the September 1, 2022, SAC meeting and is included below:

Standing Advisory Committee Report

Meeting Date: September 1st, 2022

Submitted to the CBGSA Board on September 7th, 2022

By Brenton Kelly, SAC Chairperson

The Standing Advisory Committee met at the Cuyama Valley Rec. Center in a hybrid format, with six of our seven committee members present in-person. GSA Staff Taylor Blakeslee, Joshua Montoya, and Alex Dominguez were in the room joined by Jim Beck and Brian Van Lienden on the call, and some public both in the room and on the teleconference. A complex series of discussions ensued as the Committee shared with staff our local perspectives and offered constructive and thoughtful feedback on the 120 pages of material for our agenda. Averaging ½ minute a page, the SAC meeting wrapped up in under five hours. It is certainly this Committee's hope that both the GSA and Staff can benefit from the thoughtful and constructive feedback from these beneficial users of groundwater in our Basin. The SAC does however, continue to lack the perspective of the Latino Community for whom we reserve two seats on our Committee and continue to welcome applicants.

This meeting engaged in several substantial policy issues involving the management of pumping reductions in the GSP to achieve Sustainability. This Committee is encouraged that these difficult policy details are finally coming to the fore. These discussions must happen for the decisions that have to be made. And for many reasons, we must continue making these decisions with less than perfect data. One agreement among the SAC participants was that the facts, tables, and charts presented in this packet clearly depict a Basin in rapid groundwater depletion with limited available remedies anytime soon. On behalf of the SAC, I submit this report in hopes that the GSA Board will seriously consider our comments, concerns and recommendations.

#9 Direction on GSA Well Permit Policy

The SAC dove into several of the details of this policy. The specific requirements of safely decommissioning abandoned wells were emphasized. Provisions for downgrading an old well to de minimis, domestic use or for monitoring purposes was suggested for consideration. The SAC asked what specific criteria were required for the Hydrological Report from any new well applicants. Several Committee members asked that the GSA define the criteria rather than expecting each applicant to review the entire GSP. Several Committee members and public participants endorsed a zoned area overlay approach that could recognize the various degrees of impact vs. benefit this and other policies have within each Threshold Region. In addition it was recommended that the policy clearly identify the process including review by GSA hydrological consultants. This item is seen as the first available policy to immediately control the development of new or additional groundwater extraction operations in our already critically overdrafted Basin. This is an authority that this GSA has and should continue to develop the procedural details thoroughly.

Option 2 was generally agreed on, that the GSA Board should approve or deny all new well applications after being reviewed by staff and a GSA committee.

#10 Direction on Administration of Pumping Reductions in the Central Management Area

Committee Member Haslett continued to encourage a 'tiered' approach to the methodology of administering pumping reductions. He noted some operations waste

more water in overspray daily than most small farmers in the valley use in a season. Low water use practices should be recognized and encouraged while waste should be discouraged or penalized. Brad Debranch pointed out that the GSA does not yet know who the big or small pumpers are, because we do not have the comprehensive information for the 'Farm Unit' with all its APNs tied to the production wells and their conveyance infrastructure. The need to understand where water is being pumped into and out of the CMA was recognized. The information that could fill this data gap is now being solicited by the GSA, as each landowner must list the APNs their well(s) serve and how many acre-feet of water was used on each APN when reporting their monthly groundwater use for each well. In the public comment, Casey Walsh expressed the need for an inventory of conveyance pipelines across APN's, and Lynn Carlisle pointed out the QA/QC needs for some spot check verification of the self-reported data. The SAC recognises both the challenges and the value in having a water accounting budget at the farm scale such as is being proposed for this next year.

#11 Direction on Basin-Wide Water Management Policies

The SAC has received no evidence of increased water use outside the Central Management Area. While Joe Haslett promoted the use of the original 6 Threshold Regions for a finer detailed analysis and consistency with the GSP, Brad Debranch stressed that until somehow proven otherwise, the Cuyama Basin should be considered all one linked basin. Jean Gaillard pointed out that the pumping restrictions in the CMA alone would not be enough to reach sustainability. Robbie Jaffe observed that all the pumping imbalance west of the Russell Fault is due to one irrigated farm operation, the rest is mostly unirrigated rangeland. From the public comment, Ann Myhre pointed out that most of the valley is open range land that only uses 1-inch of water per acre for cattle, and is therefore not a part of the overdraft problem. Committee Chair Kelly recommended that land-use data be added to the table. What % of these three regions are unirrigated? How much, or little area of the Basin is using too much water? This led to the ongoing discussion of a 'tiered' approach. If the model can be used to generate a predicted drawdown contour for management purposes, then the bullseye of drawdown contours could be used to indicate where the gradient of overdraft could inform the tiered gradient of pumping reductions. Every landowner would be treated equal to the degree of drawdown in their area. All but one Committee member agreed to the need for a more nuanced and targeted approach to implementing pumping restrictions if they were to be applied outside the CMA. It was generally agreed that no increase in pumping should be allowed to happen anywhere that is already out of balance in the basin, and that further investigation was needed to develop a more nuanced policy.

#13b Update on Adaptive Management Analysis

The GSA will request a well survey of all wells in the basin, including small, domestic, and de minimis wells, that will identify landowner information, well location and construction information. This information was not available when the Sustainability Criteria (SCs) were first determined and it is now being compiled to help consider whether lowering the Minimum Thresholds (MTs) could still be protective of those beneficial users. Of the SAC members who live in the valley it was passionately expressed that only reducing the overdraft would be protective of these users, simply changing the SC and lowering the MTs would protect nothing. Steady groundwater elevation declines have been the

predictable trend for the last 5 decades. Robbie Jaffe said she was “absolutely outraged” that the only viable consideration of the Adaptive Management team is to move the goal posts for Minimum Thresholds. Jaffe said “Are we managing for Sustainability or are we managing for Depletion?”

A deep analysis into historical weather patterns by Woodard and Curran concluded there was an ‘inconclusive correlation of groundwater level recovery in the Central region during a wetter period’. We learned that even under more favorable precipitation we would likely still be exceeding our MTs and experiencing overdraft in the Main basin and Northwest, when the Ventucopa area could expect to show some recovery. Every farmer in the room (valley) knew this already. Somehow this data will help in the context of the glidepath modeling analysis to be presented in November. The question of recharge was raised as to whether any measurable recharge is happening to the older, deeper aquifer that greens the farms of the CMA?

#13c Report on Variance Request for the Central Management Area Allocations

This item illustrated the need to manage the allocations of groundwater, not by APN but by the well that is extracting the water, in connection with all the acres it is irrigating. The ‘farm unit’ must identify the landowner with all of their APN’s, and the wells that service it, whether inside or outside the CMA.

The fast timeline of the Variance Request process has raised concerns, especially for Requests that were returned undelivered. It was felt that some time extensions may be warranted for some late responses.

#13e Update on Implementation of Grant-Funded Projects

Committee Member Joe Haslett encouraged the idea of the River Channel Survey and asked why not survey the whole Cuyama River channel, not just four miles of it? A quality LIDAR and photographic survey by a drone could be one of the best Investments in basin understanding for identifying anything from recharge potentials to riparian habitat. More pump testing to determine if the Russell Fault is a barrier to flow should be prioritized.

13i. Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Model Update

It was requested that the data from the piezometers and the pump tests would be included in the Model Update. And it was anticipated that the Model would be updated to include the information about the Farm Unit with their production wells so that the model does not have to assume that the applied water just comes right up from under the field being irrigated.

13h. Update on Quarterly Groundwater Conditions Report for July 2022

Saving the worst news for last, this Quarterly Groundwater Report shows that 3 new wells have dropped below their Measurable Objective, and four more wells have dropped below their Minimum Thresholds. That is now 52% out of compliance, if you discount the three wells that have had no data collection since the GSP was adopted. The trigger for Undesirable Results is expected in less than 8 months. No Management Action is being proposed by the GSA other than changing the Sustainability Criteria metrics.

*Respectfully Submitted, Brenton Kelly
SAC Chairperson*

Reporte del Comité Consultivo

Permanente Fecha de junta: 1 de septiembre, 2022

Sometido a la Junta de CBGSA el 7 de Septiembre, 2022

Autor: Brenton Kelly, Presidente del SAC

El Comité Consultivo Permanente se reunió en el centro de recreación de Cuyama Valley en un formato híbrido, con seis de los siete miembros de nuestro comité presentes en persona.

Personal de la GSA incluyendo Taylor Blakeslee, Joshua Montoya y Alex Domínguez estaban en la sala acompañados por Jim Beck y Brian Van Lienden en la llamada, y unos miembros del público en la sala como en la teleconferencia. Una serie compleja de discusiones tomó lugar cuando el Comité compartió con el personal nuestras perspectivas locales y ofrecimos comentarios constructivos y reflexivos sobre las 120 páginas de material para nuestra agenda. Con un promedio de ½ minuto por página, la reunión del SAC concluyó en menos de cinco horas. Este Comité espera que la GSA y el personal de la GSA puedan beneficiarse de los comentarios reflexivos y constructivos de estos usuarios beneficiosos de las aguas subterráneas en nuestra cuenca. Sin embargo, el SAC sigue careciendo de la perspectiva de la comunidad latina para quien reservamos dos puestos en nuestro Comité y continuamos dando la bienvenida a aplicantes.

Esta reunión se dedicó a varias cuestiones de política sustanciales relacionadas con la gestión de las reducciones de bombeo en el GSP para lograr la sostenibilidad. Este Comité se siente alentado por el hecho de que estos detalles de política difíciles finalmente están saliendo a la luz. Estas discusiones deben suceder para las decisiones que se deben tomar. Y por muchas razones, debemos continuar tomando estas decisiones con información que es menos que perfecta. Un acuerdo entre los participantes del SAC fue que los hechos, las tablas y los gráficos presentados en este paquete representan claramente una cuenca en rápido agotamiento de las aguas subterráneas con remedios disponibles limitados en el corto plazo. Por medio del SAC, presentó este reporte con la esperanza de que la Junta de CBGSA considere seriamente nuestros comentarios, inquietudes y recomendaciones.

#9 Dirección sobre la política de permisos de pozos de la GSA

La SAC se preocupó en varios de los detalles de esta política. Se enfatizó los requisitos específicos para el desmantelamiento seguro de pozos abandonados. Se sugirió la consideración de disposiciones para degradar un pozo viejo a de minimis, uso doméstico o monitoreo. El SAC preguntó qué criterios específicos se requerían para el reporte hidrológico de cualquier solicitante de un pozo nuevo. Varios miembros del Comité pidieron que la GSA definiera los criterios en lugar de esperar que cada solicitante revisará todo el GSP. Varios miembros del Comité y participantes públicos respaldaron un enfoque de superposición de áreas zonificadas que podría reconocer los diversos grados de impacto frente a los beneficios que tienen esta y otras políticas dentro de cada Región Umbral. Además, se recomendó que la política identifique claramente el proceso, incluida la revisión por parte de consultores hidrológicos de la GSA. Este asunto es visto

como la primera política disponible para controlar de inmediato el desarrollo de operaciones de extracción de agua subterránea nuevas o adicionales en nuestra críticamente sobreexplotada cuenca. Esta es una autoridad que tiene esta GSA y debe continuar desarrollando los detalles del procedimiento completamente.

En general, se acordó la Opción 2, que la Junta de GSA debe aprobar o rechazar todas las solicitudes de pozos nuevos después de ser revisadas por el personal y un comité de la GSA.

#10 Dirección de Administración de Reducciones de Bombeo en el Área de Gestión Central

El miembro del comité, Haslett, continuó alentando un enfoque "por niveles" para la metodología de administración de las reducciones de bombeo. Noto que algunas operaciones desperdician más agua en exceso de rociado diariamente que la que la mayoría de los pequeños agricultores del valle usan en una temporada. Las prácticas de bajo uso de agua deben ser reconocidas y fomentadas mientras que el desperdicio debe ser desalentado o penalizado. Brad Debranch señaló que la GSA aún no sabe quiénes son los bombeadores grandes o pequeños, porque no tenemos la información completa de la "Unidad agrícola" con todos sus APN vinculados a los pozos de producción y su infraestructura de transporte. Se reconoció la necesidad de comprender dónde se bombea el agua hacia adentro y hacia afuera del Área de Manejo Central (CMA). La GSA ahora solicita la información que podría llenar este vacío de datos, ya que cada propietario debe enumerar las APN a las que sirven sus pozos y cuántos acre-feet de agua se usaron en cada APN al informar su uso mensual de agua subterránea para cada pozo. En el comentario público, Casey Walsh expresó la necesidad de un inventario de las tuberías de transporte a través de APN, y Lynn Carlisle señaló las necesidades de QA/QC para alguna verificación puntual de los datos autoinformados. La SAC reconoce tanto los desafíos como el valor de contar con un presupuesto de contabilidad del agua a escala de "Unidad agrícola" como el que se propone para este próximo año.

#11 Dirección sobre políticas de gestión del agua en toda la cuenca

El SAC no ha recibido evidencia de un mayor uso de agua fuera del Área de Manejo Central. Mientras que Joe Haslett promovió el uso de las 6 regiones de umbral originales para un análisis más detallado y coherente con el GSP, Brad Debranch enfatizó que hasta que se demuestre lo contrario, la cuenca de Cuyama debe considerarse como una sola cuenca interconectada. Jean Gaillard señaló que las restricciones de bombeo en la CMA por sí solas no serían suficientes para alcanzar la sostenibilidad. Robbie Jaffe observó que todo el desequilibrio de bombeo al oeste de la falla Russell se debe a una operación agrícola irrigada, el resto es en su mayoría pastizales sin irrigación. Del comentario público, Ann Myhre señaló que la mayor parte del valle es terreno abierto que solo usa 1 pulgada de agua por acre para el ganado y, por lo tanto, no es parte del problema del sobregiro. El presidente del comité, Kelly, recomendó que se agreguen datos sobre la utilización de la tierra a la tabla. ¿Qué % de estas tres regiones no son regadas? ¿Cuánta o qué poca área de la cuenca está usando demasiada agua? Esto condujo a la discusión en curso de un enfoque "por niveles". Si el modelo de la cuenca se puede utilizar para generar un contorno de reducción previsto con fines de gestión, entonces la diana de los contornos de reducción podrían usarse para indicar dónde el gradiente de sobregiro podría informar el gradiente escalonado de las reducciones de

bombeo. Cada propietario sería tratado igual al grado de reducción en su área. Todos los miembros del Comité, excepto uno, estuvieron de acuerdo con la necesidad de un enfoque más matizado y específico para implementar restricciones de bombeo si se aplicaran fuera de la CMA. En general, se acordó que no se debe permitir que ocurra un aumento en el bombeo en ningún lugar que ya esté desequilibrado en la cuenca, y que se necesita más investigación para desarrollar una política más matizada.

#13b Actualización sobre análisis de gestión adaptativa

La GSA solicitará un estudio de pozos de todos los pozos en la cuenca, incluidos los pozos pequeños, domésticos y de minimis, que identificará la información del propietario, la localización e información de construcción del pozo. Esta información no estaba disponible cuando se determinaron por primera vez los Criterios de Sostenibilidad (SC) y ahora se está compilando para ayudar a considerar si la reducción de los Umbrales Mínimos (MT) todavía podría proteger a esos usuarios beneficiosos. De los miembros del SAC que viven en el valle se expresó con pasión que solo reducir el sobregiro protegería a estos usuarios, simplemente cambiar el SC y bajar los MT no protegería nada. Las disminuciones constantes de la elevación del agua subterránea han sido la tendencia predecible durante las últimas 5 décadas. Robbie Jaffe dijo que estaba "absolutamente indignada" de que la única consideración viable del equipo de Gestión Adaptativa es cambiar los postes de la meta para los Umbrales Mínimos.

Jaffe dijo: "¿Estamos gestionando para la sostenibilidad o estamos gestionando para el agotamiento?"

Un análisis profundo de los patrones climáticos históricos realizado por Woodard y Curran concluyó que había una "correlación no concluyente de la recuperación del nivel del agua subterránea en la región central durante un período más lluvioso". Aprendimos que, incluso con precipitaciones más favorables, probablemente aún estaríamos excediendo nuestros MTs y experimentando un sobregiro en la cuenca principal y el noroeste, cuando el área de Ventucopa podría esperar mostrar cierta recuperación. Todos los granjeros en la habitación (y el valle) ya sabían esto. De alguna manera, estos datos ayudarán en el contexto del análisis del modelo de trayectoria de planeo que se presentará en noviembre. Se planteó la pregunta si que si esta recarga está produciendo alguna recarga medible en el acuífero más viejo y más profundo que reverdece las granjas de la CMA.

#13c Reporte sobre solicitud de variación para las asignaciones del área de administración central

Este ítem ilustró la necesidad de administrar las asignaciones de aguas subterráneas, no por la APN sino por el pozo que está extrayendo el agua, en relación con todas las acres que está regando. La 'Unidad agrícola' debe identificar al propietario con todos sus APN y los pozos que le dan servicio, ya sea dentro o fuera de la CMA. El rápido cronograma del proceso de solicitud de variación ha generado inquietudes, especialmente para las solicitudes que se devolvieron sin entregar. Se consideró que algunas extensiones de tiempo pueden estar justificadas para algunas respuestas tardes.

#13e Actualización sobre la implementación de proyectos financiados por subvenciones

El miembro del comité Joe Haslett alentó la idea del estudio del canal del río y preguntó por qué no estudiar todo el canal del río Cuyama, no solo cuatro millas. Un estudio fotográfico y LIDAR de calidad realizado por un dron podría ser una de las mejores inversiones en la comprensión de cuencas para identificar cualquier cosa, desde potenciales de recarga hasta hábitats ribereños. Se debe priorizar más pruebas de bombas para determinar si la falla Russell es una barrera para el flujo de agua subterránea.

#13i. Calendario para la actualización del modelo del año fiscal 2023-2024

Se solicitó que los datos de los piezómetros y las pruebas de bombeo se incluyeran en la Actualización del Modelo. Y se anticipó que el Modelo se actualizará para incluir la información sobre la Unidad agrícola con sus pozos de producción para que el modelo no tenga que asumir que el agua aplicada simplemente sale de debajo del campo que se riega.

#13h. Actualización del informe trimestral de las condiciones de las aguas subterráneas de julio de 2022

Dejando las peores noticias para el final, este Reporte Trimestral de Aguas Subterráneas muestra que 3 más pozos han caído por debajo de su objetivo medible y cuatro pozos más han caído por debajo de sus umbrales mínimos. Eso ahora es 52% fuera de cumplimiento, si se descuentan los tres pozos que no han tenido recopilación de datos desde que se adoptó el GSP. El desencadenante de resultados no deseados se espera en menos de 8 meses. La GSA no propone ninguna acción de gestión aparte de cambiar las métricas de los criterios de sostenibilidad.

*Respetuosamente sometido, Brenton Kelly
Presidente del SAC*

Traducido al español por spencerbh@basinlogix.com

CONSENT AGENDA

5-8. Consent Agenda

Chair Yurosek asked if any Directors wanted to move any of the consent items out to discuss in more detail. No request was made and Chair Yurosek asked if there was a motion for consent agenda item nos. 5-8.

MOTION

Vice Chair Chounet made a motion to approve the consent agenda item nos. 5-8. The motion was seconded by Director Bantilan, a roll call vote was made and passed with 88%.

AYES: Yurosek, Chounet, Albano, Bantilan, Elliot, Klinchuch, Scrivner, Vickery, Wooster
NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Compton, Anselm

ACTION ITEMS

9. Direction on GSA Well Permit Policy

Executive Director Jim Beck provided background on the GSA Well Permit Policy and the direction provided by the ad hoc. Mr. Beck explained the ad hoc's recommendation for a well permit policy for a modification/replacement of an existing well and the policy for the construction of a new well.

Chair Yurosek commented that having a Standing Committee to review well permit applications would be helpful to improve the efficiency of Board meetings.

Director Arne Anselm joined the meeting at 2:13 p.m.

Vice Chair Chounet asked staff if they could provide a definitive answer if the GSP will achieve the GSA's sustainability goal. Mr. Beck replied the GSP is evolutionary, and that question is difficult to answer. Mr. Beck explained this policy is being developed because the Governor's Executive Order (EO) N-7-22 requires GSA determination and there is a balance of trying to get a policy to help us achieve sustainability and comply with the EO.

Director Albano commented the language is confusing and absolute and for modification/replacement of an existing well there should be a change with requiring the same capacity. Director Albano commented he does not agree with appointing a Standing Committee to approve new well permits.

Director Bantilan commented he is in favor of option one.

Director Vickery asked how long we expect the EO to be in place and if this will occur every year. Mr. Beck replied that the emergency proclamation due to the drought is likely to remain in place for some time.

Director Vickery asked if the well capacity is determined when the well was first installed or for a specified time period. Mr. Beck replied the ad hoc did not make a determination on what time period the GSA would require for the well capacity.

Director Vickery commented the GSA needs to streamline the process and is comfortable with having a Standing Committee.

Director Wooster agreed with having a Standing Committee, but once the committee approves the well permit it is absolute, however, if it is denied then the landowner has the opportunity to appeal the decision to the Board.

Alternate Elliot commented she and Director Williams is in favor of option one.

Chair Yurosek commented he is comfortable with a standing committee, as long as there is an appeal process, however for the construction of a replacement well the approval should be absolute.

Mr. Beck explained the goal is to get direction for a policy to prepare and present to the Board at the November 2, 2022, meeting.

Director Wooster made a motion to adopt the policy presented with the exceptions that staff provide direction to define capacity and once the well permit is approved no one can appeal the approval to the GSA, but the motion was not seconded.

MOTION

Director Albano made a motion to adopt policy for modification/replacement of existing wells where a well must not exceed the maximum historic capacity, a well must be within a half mile of existing well, existing well must be properly abandoned following county procedures, and if staff determination is that a well is a replacement well it is not appealable to the Board but if it is determined not to be a replacement well, then that decision is appealable to the Board. The motion was seconded by Director Vickery, a roll call vote was made and passed with 88%.

AYES: Yurosek, Chounet, Bantilan, Vickery, Albano, Scrivner, Anselm, Elliot, Klinchuch, Wooster
 NOES: None
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT: Compton

MOTION

Director Albano made a motion to adopt policy for construction of new wells where a well applicant to hire hydrogeologist firm to ensure "(i) the proposed well would not be inconsistent with the GSA's GSP; and (ii) the proposed well would not decrease the likelihood of achieving a sustainability goal included in that GSA's GSP." The motion was seconded by Director Bantilan, a roll call vote was made and passed with 88%.

AYES: Yurosek, Chounet, Bantilan, Vickery, Albano, Scrivner, Anselm, Elliot, Klinchuch, Wooster
 NOES: None
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT: Compton

Director Wooster commented the SAC wanted more specific language because it will be extremely difficult for anyone to get approved.

Director Albano replied this is a requirement of the EO, so we are unable to change this language. Director Albano commented he is strongly against having a Standing Committee.

MOTION

Director Albano made a motion new well applications to be reviewed by staff and put on a consent agenda for approval by the board. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Chounet, a roll call vote was made and passed with 75.56%.

AYES: Yurosek, Chounet, Bantilan, Albano, Scrivner, Anselm, Elliot, Klinchuch
 NOES: Vickery, Wooster
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT: Compton

10. Direction on Administration of Pumping Reductions in the Central Management Area

Mr. Blakslee reported that the Board provided direction to bring the draft Central Management Area (CMA) policy that was presented at the July 6, 2022 Board meeting back for review at the September 7, 2022, Board meeting. Mr. Blakslee reviewed the draft CMA administration of pumping reduction policy.

Director Wooster asked for an explanation of the policy point “Each parcel carries an allocation, but water extractions are reported at the wellhead” and how this would apply when there are some parcels within the CMA. Mr. Beck explained the parcels inside the CMA would receive a reduction based on the methodology agreed upon in the last Board meeting, however the parcels outside the CMA would not.

Director Vickery asked if staff has considered the scenario where a wellhead is inside the CMA and serves parcels both inside and outside the CMA. Mr. Beck replied staff has identified this issue and it will be addressed later during the presentation.

Mr. Beck explained the Board has the authority to develop management actions to address a well inside the CMA pumping outside the CMA if it impacts the measurable objectives and minimum thresholds.

Chair Yurosek replied that is something that needs to be addressed and eventually this will be applied to the entire basin. Chair Yurosek commented his reluctance to vote on this item due to there being multiple unknown variables.

Director Albano suggested giving landowners the option in the variance process to bring lands inside the CMA.

Mr. Beck reminded the Board staff is trying to maintain the timeline of December 1, 2022, for distributing final allocations as previously presented to the Board.

Director Vickery asked if this would require a rerun of the entire model. Woodard and Curran Project Manager Brian Van Lienden replied staff would not need to rerun the model, but the calculations would need to be redone.

Director Wooster expressed concern for not having accurate data of well locations. Mr. Blakslee clarified the map that was presented at the July 6, 2022, Board meeting had only county reported wells, and inadvertently did not include the user reported data that staff does have.

Director Bantilan suggested all wells inside the CMA should have reduced pumping of five percent regardless of the well pumping to parcels inside or outside the CMA.

Director Vickery agreed with Director Bantilan and added that the boundary should be redrawn to include those lands outside the CMA. Director Albano disagreed with needing to change the CMA boundary, instead landowners should be given the option to include those APN's that are outside the boundary to be inside the CMA.

Mr. Beck summarized the board discussion of instructing staff to develop a policy with the ability to recognize farming units to account for properties where water is pumped within the CMA to serve lands outside the CMA.

Chair Yurosek instructed staff to notice landowners in the CMA regarding the potential delay of final CMA allocations.

Director Vickery commented that the GSA should not track water use per parcel since a landowner can use the entire allocation on one parcel or another.

11. Direction on Basin-Wide Water Management Policies

Mr. Beck discussed with the Board if there should be a concern with increased water use outside the CMA. Mr. Beck clarified that while there are currently no reductions of pumping outside the CMA, the GSP executive summary indicates there may be a reduction in basin-wide pumping in order to achieve sustainability.

Director Albano asked if there is a difference in estimated water use and modeled pumping. Mr. Beck replied the estimated water use is reported from landowners using crop factors based on ET values and the modeled pumping is based on ET values and DWR's 2018 land use dataset.

Director Wooster commented that the GSA needs to manage the entire basin and not just the CMA. Chair Yurosek agreed that the GSA needs to manage the entire basin and develop a policy to address this.

Mr. Beck informed the Board staff needs direction on whether to address this issue now or include it in the 2025 GSP update.

Director Vickery commented it is important to not wait to address this issue. Director Wooster said the GSA should concentrate on those who irrigate and are causing most of the overdraft. Director Bantilan agreed with Director Vickery that the GSA should not wait until the next update to address this issue. Chair Yurosek, Director Albano, and Vice Chair Chounet all agreed to address this issue now.

Director Bantilan asked what the timeline was to develop this policy. Mr. Beck replied it depends on if the Board wants there to be technical information it will take more time, however if it is solely the development of a policy without using modeling information this could be done more quickly.

Director Vickery suggested staff investigate ways that won't restrict additional pumping beyond what's historically pumped in the basin. Mr. Beck replied this might require an amendment to the GSP.

Director Wooster commented if the Board divided the basin into six pieces that would benefit digesting the information.

Chair Yurosek commented the number one goal for this basin is to have a sustainable yield for the entire basin and the GSA needs to start looking at the entire area. Chair Yurosek continued to explain this should not require an amendment to the GSP, but if it does then that is what needs to be done.

Mr. Beck replied staff will develop strategy options to address increase water use outside the CMA to be reviewed at the November 2, 2022 Board meeting.

REPORT ITEMS

12. Administrative Updates

a. Report of the Executive Director

Mr. Blakslee provided an update on Hallmark Group progress and next steps and an overview of the GSA's expenses and actuals-to-budget.

b. Report of the General Counsel

Nothing to report.

c. Update on Public Workshop

Mr. Blakslee provided an update on the number of attendees at the August 25, 2022, public workshop and the topics that were discussed which are summarized in the Board packet.

13. Technical Updates

a. Update on Groundwater Sustainability Plan Activities

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on the accomplishments for July and August.

b. Update on Adaptive Management Analysis

Mr. Van Lienden provided an updated on the well survey, water level trends analysis, precipitation trends, groundwater production trends, and groundwater level trends which is included in the Board packet. Staff reminded the Board that the detailed modeling analysis will be presented at the November 2, 2022, Board meeting.

c. Report on Variance Requests for the Central Management Area Allocations

Mr. Blakslee reported that eight (8) variance request were received. He noted that the variance request forms will be reviewed by staff and an ad hoc for review with the SAC on October 27, 2022 and the Board on November 2, 2022. Mr. Blakslee reviewed the returned to sender mail from the CMA mailout and explained the feedback from the ad hoc was to extend the deadline for the variance request for those who did not receive the mailout.

The Board provided consensus to extend the deadline of the variance request for the returned to sender CMA notifications for the eight landowners.

d. Update on Effort to Identify Potential Non-Reporting Pumpers

Mr. Blakslee provided an update on the effort to identify potential non-reporting pumpers and informed the Board that staff is currently in the QA/QC stage. Mr. Blakslee clarified the information being compared is user-reported irrigated lands from 2021 and DWR's 2019 land use data which is why staff is performing the current QA/QC.

e. Update on Implementation of Grant-Funded Projects

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on being awarded \$7.6 million in DWR SGMA Round 1 grant funds and informed the Board the grant agreement has been signed. Mr. Van Lienden reviewed the tasks that were discussed with an ad hoc committee, which is provided in the Board packet.

f. Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Model Update

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on the schedule for the fiscal year 2023-2024 model update and reviewed the data to be included in the next model update, which is provided in the Board packet.

Director Vickery asked if there were any projects dedicated to studying the faults. Mr. Van Lienden replied there are no projects specifically dedicated to studying the faults. Director Vickery commented it is concerning there is no projects to study the faults and there should be more research about the Russell and Santa Barbra Canyon faults and how the water flows between the faults.

Chair Yurosek asked how the model can accurately represent the basin when there is no concrete data of how the water flows between the faults. Mr. Beck replied staff can put together a more detailed evaluation of what additional work can be done to identify fault definition to be presented at the next Board meeting.

Director Albano asked what the purpose is of getting more information about the water flow between the faults and what information the GSA will find. Director Vickery clarified it is important to know if the Santa Barbara Canyon and Russell faults are permeable or semi-permeable to better the data of the model.

Director Wooster suggested looking at the wells near the faults and gathering data from these wells to better understand the faults. Director Albano commented there is also a fault near Ventucopa that should be looked at.

Director Bantilan asked why the previous pump test was only done for three days. Mr. Van Lienden replied that the landowner only allowed staff to use the well for three days.

g. Update on Monitoring Network Implementation

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on the monitoring network implementation and informed the Board the next quarterly groundwater level will be taken in October 2022.

h. Update on Quarterly Groundwater Conditions Report for July 2022

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on the quarterly groundwater conditions report for July 2022.

Director Albano asked what adaptive management actions are in place to address the wells going below their minimum threshold. Mr. Beck replied staff is following the direction from the Board, which is to review those wells with an ad hoc and develop management actions as necessary.

i. Update on Annual Water Quality Report

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on the annual water quality report that was performed at 24 wells in August 2022.

Closed Session

14. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation

Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9, subdivision (d)(2)

a. Number of Potential Cases: One

No reportable action.

15. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation

Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9, subdivision (d)(4)

a. Number of Potential Cases: One

No reportable action.

Regular Session

16. Report of the Ad Hoc Committee

Nothing to report.

17. Directors' Forum

Director Vickery asked staff to agendize options to study the faults for review at the November 2, 2022, Board meeting.

18. Public comment for Items Not on the Agenda

No comments.

19. Correspondence

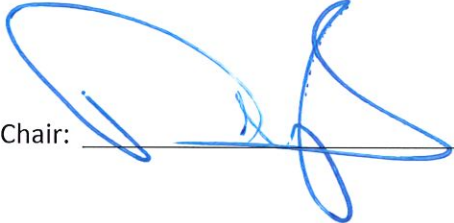
No comments.

20. Adjourn


Chair Yurosek adjourned the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Board of Directors of the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency the 12th day of December 2022.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
CUYAMA BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Chair:  _____

ATTEST:


Secretary: _____