

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Standing Advisory Committee Meeting

May 1, 2025

Meetings Minutes

PRESENT:

Kelly, Brenton – Chair
Haslett, Joe – Vice Chair
Caufield, John
DeBranch, Brad
Gaillard, Jean
Jaffe, Roberta
Lewis, Dave

Bianchi, Grace – Project Coordinator
Blakslee, Taylor – Assistant Executive Director
Dominguez, Alex – Legal Counsel
Van Lienden, Brian – Woodard & Curran

1. Call to Order

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (CBGSA) Standing Advisory Committee (SAC)
Chair Kelly called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Bianchi called roll of the Committee (shown above).

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Kelly led the pledge of allegiance.

4. Meeting Protocol

Project Coordinator Grace Bianchi provided an overview of the meeting protocols in facilitating a hybrid meeting.

5. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Committee Member Jaffe expressed frustration over the lack of response to their letter regarding adjudication, which was sent on March 3rd. She emphasized the importance of the topic and the need for regular updates during SAC meetings.

Legal Counsel Alex Dominguez confirmed that the correspondence was included in the board packet in March and stated that the board does not necessarily respond to every piece of correspondence it receives.

6. Approval of February 27, 2025, Minutes

Committee Chair Kelly opened the floor for comments on the February 27, 2025, CBGSA SAC meeting minutes.

There were no comments on this item.

MOTION

Committee Member Jaffe made a motion to approve February 27, 2025, CBGSA SAC meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Caufield. A roll call vote was made, and the motion passed.

AYES: Caufield, DeBranch, Gaillard, Haslett, Jaffe, Kelly, Lewis
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

7. Discuss and Appropriate Action on Potential Nonreporting Pumping

Mr. Blakslee provided an overview of the potential nonreporting pumping analysis, the methodology, and past work done on the analysis.

Ms. Bianchi provided an overview of the methodology, which included data from Land IQ and landowner reported use information. She reported that 20 parcels were identified in the initial analysis, representing about 900 acres.

Mr. Blakslee clarified that the fields have only been identified as irrigated, and does not have any information on how much water was used for irrigation.

Committee Member Caufield raised questions about the accuracy of the Land IQ data and the need for ground truthing in the west side of the basin.

Mr. Van Lienden explained that Land IQ's ground truthing was limited to public roadways and areas where they had permission from landowners.

Staff agreed to look into the data further.

The committee generally agreed to move forward with staff's recommendation for most of the irrigated fields.

Committee Member Dave Lewis asked how these nonreported parcels will impact the parcels and asked for the acreage of reported parcels.

The committee generally agreed to move forward with staff's recommendation for most of the irrigated fields and provided comments on the following parcels:

- Committee Member Robbie Jaffe commented that APN 147-050-038 is dry farmed and report each year.
- Committee Member Caufield commented that APN 149-090-053 is irrigated with surface water. He suggested coming up with questions for landowners.
- SAC generally agreed to follow the staff recommendation to remove APN 147-030-061 from potential nonreporting pumpers list.
- Stakeholder Jim Menzies (APN 151-060-002 and 001-015-018) expressed frustration over being listed as nonreporting. He noted that they previously reported and that the land was irrigated up until 2021.
 - o Staff agreed to verify the data and correct any errors.
- SAC members noted that APN 002-008-025 is dry-farmed and should be removed from the list.
- 002-008-006
 - o Dry-farmed and should be removed from list

Committee Member Caufield noted that the parcels identified as irrigated was previously ground-truthed.

- 002-014-002 / 002-014-006 / 002-014-017
 - o Stakeholder Jason Higbee from Kern Ridge commented that they have been farming on these parcels and APNs should've been reported by Kern Ridge.
 - o Staff agreed to follow up with kern ridge to confirm APNs
- A committee member noted they have contact info for APN 002-014-018 and SAC recommended staff follow up with landowners.
- SAC recommended that staff follow up with landowners of APN 002-014-012
- SAC confirmed that APNs 002-021-006 / 002-015-016 was spring fed and can be removed from potential nonreporting list.
- SAC recommended staff reach out to landowners at APN 001-022-005

8. Report on Basin-Wide Pumping

Ms. Bianchi provided a brief overview of basin-wide pumping which was previously requested by the board. The report included reported pumping from 2019 through 2024.

Committee Member Lewis asked about the model recalibration process.

Mr. Van Lienden described adjustments to ET rates and land use assumptions in the model.

Stakeholder Jane Wooster suggested renaming the spreadsheet column from landowner to reporting entity.

9. Report on 2024 Central management Area Allocations

Ms. Bianchi provided an update on the 2024 Central management Area (CMA) allocation report, including the addition of Duncan Farms. The report summarized the water allocations and usage for various landowners in the CMA.

The committee discussed the significance of the data, noting that only 57% of the 2024 allocations were used. They raised questions about the reasons for the low pumping from some users and the impact of weather conditions on water use. It was suggested to Rename landowner column.

Committee Member Debranch commented allocation impacts are tied to historical use and cropping decisions.

Committee Member Jaffe asked about the significance of 57% of allocations were used in 2024.

Staff noted that the 2024 allocations reflect the old model and updated model will be reflected in 2025 allocations.

Committee Member Haslett commented that the 57% of allocations used support the need for equitable allocations.

Committee Member Gaillard commented on farming variability due to rainfall and crop cycles.

Committee Member DeBranch commented that the model uses historic water use and for allocations that are not use. Reported use changes significantly each year.

Committee Member Lewis responded that smaller farmers have permanent crops, making it difficult to rotate crops.

10. Report on Historic Modeled Pumping for all Parcels in the Basin

Mr. Blakslee provided background on the inclusion of historic modeled pumping data for all parcels in the basin, as requested by the board.

The committee discussed the methodology and potential issues with the data, emphasizing the need for quality assurance and control.

Committee Member Jaffe asked how historic pumping is estimated.

Mr. Van Lienden responded that the model uses Land IQ land use datasets and soil characteristics.

Chair Kelly requested the spreadsheet of historic pumping.

Committee Member Lewis commented that the historic pumping is used for the model and highlights inequities in the basin.

The SAC emphasized the need for quality assurance and control to ensure the accuracy of the modeled data. They discussed the importance of verifying the data with landowners and other sources.

11. Technical Updates**a. Update on Groundwater Sustainability Plan Activities**

Mr. Van Lienden noted that the update on GSP activities is provided in the SAC packet.

b. Update on Grant-Funded Projects

Mr. Van Lienden provided a brief update on the grant-funded projects, which is provided in the SAC packet. He reported staff is working with DWR to develop a grant amendment for the extension of funds for the CIMIS stations. He noted that transducers had been procured and would be installed in the coming weeks

12. Administrative Updates**a. Report of the Executive Director**

Nothing to report.

b. Report of the General Counsel

Nothing to report.

c. Board of Directors Agenda Review

Mr. Blakslee briefly noted that May 7, 2025, CBGSA Board Meeting agenda is provided in the SAC packet.

13. Items for Upcoming Sessions

Nothing to report.

14. Committee Forum

Nothing to report.

15. Correspondence

Nothing to report.

16. Adjourn

Chair Kelly adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE
CUYAMA BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Chair Kelly: *Brenton Kelly*
Brenton Kelly (Jun 29, 2025 11:03 PDT)

ATTEST:
Vice Chair Haslett: *Matt*
Matt Haslett (Jun 26, 2025 18:47 PDT)