



# Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

---

**Monday, January 22, 2024**

**3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**Woodland Fire Station #3**

**1550 Springlake Court, Woodland, CA 95695**

**(and via Zoom)**

---

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:**

Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Lee Smith, Vice Chair.

Executive Officer Sicke conducted a roll call and determined a quorum was present.

The following Board members and (alternates) were in attendance:

City of Davis: Babu Vaitla

City of West Sacramento: Verna Sulpizio Hull (*Item 4 – end*)

City of Winters: Carol Scianna

City of Woodland: Mayra Vega

Dunnigan Water District: David Schaad, (Bill Vanderwaal\*)

Esparto CSD: (Alex Lepley)

Reclamation District (RD) 108: Roger Cornwell (*Item 4 – end*), (Bill Vanderwaal\*)

RD 307: James Johas

RD 537: Tom Ramos

RD 765: David Dickson, Jr.

RD 787: Dominic Bruno

RD 999: Tom Slater

RD 1600: Michele Clark

RD 2035: Kyriakos Tsakopoulos

Rumsey Water Users Association: (Mica Bennett)

Yolo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (YCFC&WCD): Tom

Barth (*Item 4 – end*), (Kristin Sicke)

UC Davis – Andrew Fulks

Cal Am Water – Dunnigan: Evan Jacobs

Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company: Lynnel Pollock

Yolo County Farm Bureau: Lee Smith

Environmental Representative: Ann Brice\*

*Absent:* Madison CSD, RD 150, RD 730, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, Yolo County

\*remote attendance, member was non-voting

\*\*remote attendance, member provided just cause pursuant to AB 2449

2. **ADDING ITEMS TO THE POSTED AGENDA:** Nothing to report.
3. **PUBLIC FORUM:** Ben King reported on his findings regarding mercury, TDS, and chloride pollution sources in the Cache Creek and Colusa Basin watersheds. He believes the recently released 303(d) list report contains omissions about natural salt springs as a source of these pollutants. He provided written comments and sources to Kristin, which were distributed to the Board via email. Ricardo Amon's written comment was read out by Kristin. Ricardo commented regarding issues of excessive groundwater pumping in areas of special concern and recommended limiting pumping rates and establishing groundwater pricing policies. He referenced a petition at the following link: [https://open.substack.com/pub/ricardoamon/p/please-halt-well-permits-in-historic?r=q3ow1&utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=web](https://open.substack.com/pub/ricardoamon/p/please-halt-well-permits-in-historic?r=q3ow1&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web) Ricardo's full public comment is attached at the end of the minutes.
4. **CONSIDERATION: CONSENT ITEMS**
  - a. Approve November 20 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
  - b. Receive Fiscal Year 23/24 Financial Statements: 11/18/23-1/16/24
  - c. Receive minutes of Executive Committee: 11/14/23
  - d. Approve payment of bills

Action: Approve items 4a and 4d as presented.

Motion: RD 108 (Cornwell)

Second: City of Winters (Scianna)

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: Approved (roll call attached)

5. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Kristin Sicke, Executive Officer, provided an overview of her report included in the agenda packet. Groundwater levels are much higher today than last year at this time. Data from the newly constructed multi-completion wells is now available on [sgma.yologroundwater.org](http://sgma.yologroundwater.org).

6. **PRESENTATION: GROUNDWATER ACCOUNTING PLATFORM**

Mike Myatt, EDF, and John Burns, ESA, provided an informational presentation of the Groundwater Accounting Platform's purpose and capabilities.

Board discussion

Pollock: Is the field-level data accessible to the public? Burns: The platform requires sign-in and fields are only accessible to the owner and authorized personnel.

Jacobs: Accuracy of different data sources? Burns: Data sources are generally reporting 10-15% accuracy.

Vaitla: Does this tool have potential use in the well permitting process? Sicke: Yes, it could be used in the future, but further development is needed.

Sulpizio Hull: Who would be providing ongoing technical support to the growers? Burns: Depends on the GSA; he envisions an option for GSA staff support and ESA support.

Sicke: What is the funding model after the grant period? Burns: They will implement a subscription model for platform access.

Vaitla: What are the adoption rates across the state? Burns: The platform is still in pilot phase, but some pilot partners are beginning rollout.

Ben King commented on the importance of considering water quality when using the bank account analogy.

Pollock: Is this tool intended for a water district, or for the GSA? Sicke: She envisions that it can be useful for both.

**7. CONSIDERATION: APPROVE ENTERING INTO CONTRACTS FUNDED BY SGMA IMPLEMENTATION GRANT**

- a. Authorize Entering into Contracts with Stockholm Environment Institute and Leafbird Consulting
- b. Authorize Entering into Contract with Websoft Developers, Inc. for Database Upgrade Project
- c. Authorize Entering into Contract with Water and Land Solutions for the Yolo-Zamora (China Slough) Groundwater Recharge Pilot Project

Action: Approve items 7a through 7c as presented.

Motion: RD 108 (Cornwell)

Second: YCFC&WCD (Barth)

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: Approved (roll call attached)

**8. CONSIDERATION: 2-TIER WELL PERMIT REVIEW PROCEDURES**

- a. Update on Draft 2-Tier Well Permit Review Process

Erik Cadaret, West Yost, provided an update on the revised well permit process.

Board discussion

Tsakopoulos: What is an example of high versus a low impact well? Cadaret: This would vary based on the site conditions, but an example would be a 100 gallons per minute (gpm) pumping capacity versus 2,000+ gpm.

Balasek: Does this approach consider where the water will be applied; i.e. previously unirrigated land?

Cadaret: Yes – this info would be considered during Tier 1.

Barth: The well design might not be known until a borehole is drilled – should a test hole be drilled between Tier 1 and Tier 2? Kristin provided clarification on test hole vs ag well permitting process, and expressed concerns about timing if test holes were required. Barth suggested that test holes not be required but could be a helpful option for the applicant to provide additional information.

Vaitla: If data is inadequate to evaluate the well, the permit should go directly to Tier 2 – avoid conflating no data with no issue. Does the lack of PG/PHG certification in Tier 1 pose a legal issue?

Sicke: Since the tool will be developed by a PHG, it should provide legal protection. Vaitla: There is an option for a waiver written up in draft procedures – what are the restrictions on that process? Sicke:

This concept was written up before the new approach – the procedures will be amended. Vaitla: What is the status of the permits in the queue? Sicke: They are on hold pending these updated procedures.

Pollock: How is this process influenced by the Board of Supervisors? Sicke: She will be providing an update on February 13 to the Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors continue to advocate for a more immediate process.

Jacobs: Can the County grant some indemnity to the YSGA? Cadaret: Some counties have taken this approach. Kristin will confer with Cadaret about the other examples, and explore whether this is possible with Yolo County.

Public comment

Grant Davids confirmed that this 2-tier process is only within the delineated Focus Areas, and stressed the importance of providing clear criteria separating Tier 1 and Tier 2.

Ben King questioned the viability of the model in the Dunnigan Hills.

Sicke agreed that the criteria needs to be clear to the public about how a well application will move from a Tier 1 analysis to a Tier 2 Hydrogeology Report in the Focus Areas. Sicke suggested that West Yost and the YSGA Team continue to revise the *Technical Memorandum* so that it is a comprehensive update and description of the 2-tier process prior to the Technical Memorandum and Focus Areas Map being released for a public comment process.

b. Approve Amendment of Professional Services Agreement with West Yost

Action: Approve item 8b as presented.

Motion: Dunnigan Water District (Schaad)

Second: RD 108 (Cornwell)

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: Approved unanimously (roll call attached)

c. Approve Draft 2-Tier Well Permit Review Process, Approve Public Comment Period for Draft Technical Memorandum and Focus Areas Map, and Authorize Drought Committee to Finalize Well Permit Review Procedures

Action: Approve item 4c as presented.

Motion: Colusa Drain MWC (Pollock)

Second: City of West Sacramento (Sulpizio Hull)

Discussion:

Director Schaad asked when the public review period would be? Would it need to be delayed to provide sufficient detail as requested by Mr. Davids? Sicke: Ideally, the public comment would end before March 18 to allow the Board to approve the final procedures at the next meeting. West Yost: To allow for sufficient detail, the timeline would likely need to be pushed a couple weeks.

Smith: Would the *Drought Contingency Planning Committee* be authorized to finalize these procedures?

General consensus was reached that the *Drought Contingency Planning Committee* could make decisions from here on out, with updates provided to the full Board.

Motion tabled.

Action: Approve the draft 2-Tier Well Permit Review Process; Authorize a public comment period for Focus Areas map and draft Technical Memorandum that includes definitions between Tier 1 and Tier 2; and Authorize the *Drought Contingency Planning Committee* to finalize the well permit review procedures.

Motion: Colusa Drain MWC (Pollock)

Second: City of Winters (Scianna)

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: Approved (roll call attached)

8. **MEMBERS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** Andrew Fulks provided an update on the Arboretum Waterway Flood Protection and Habitat Enhancement Project. The project will enhance wetland habitat in the arboretum and improve water quality; the project has successfully gone out to bid.
9. **NEXT MEETING:** March 18, 2024
10. **ADJOURNMENT:** Vice Chair Lee adjourned the meeting at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kristin Sicke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kristin" and last name "Sicke" clearly distinguishable.

Kristin Sicke, Executive Officer

Attachment: Public Comment by Ricardo Amon

Buenos Dias, my name is ricardo amon, a Yolo County resident.

For the past few years, I have documented the comments and testimonies presented by community members regarding the environmental, social, and economic impact of excessive groundwater pumping in areas of special concern.

These are a few statements that we may agree with:

1. The hydrogeological protocol developed by YSGA to assess the environmental impact of drilling new wells in the focus areas, is greatly appreciated.
2. However, it is an insufficient measure to address "significant and unreasonable depletion of supply conditions."
3. Any new well will continue to expand the conversion of historic non-irrigated lands to water intensive tree and vine plantations that require year-round groundwater supplies.
4. Their demand for groundwater will continue to harden their impact on the aquifers, as the plantations grow and mature.
5. There is an urgency to reduce groundwater extraction from depleted aquifers.
6. YSGA has documented that Hungry Hollow and Dunnigan Hills have limited groundwater recharge potential with degraded watersheds.
7. There are no water budgets available to make informed decisions about sustainable yields for the focus area aquifers.

A few recommendations:

1. Slow down existing pumping rates and avoid increasing pumping capacity with new wells in historic non-irrigated lands.
2. Existing wells in the focus areas should be required to install pumping metering systems to assess extraction rates.
3. Like what they did in Pajaro Valley, YSGA could establish equitable tier-system-groundwater pricing policies to discourage excess pumping.

Please enter into the record this Change.org petition. Gracias. Ricardo

[https://open.substack.com/pub/ricardoamon/p/please-halt-well-permits-in-historic?r=q3ow1&utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=web](https://open.substack.com/pub/ricardoamon/p/please-halt-well-permits-in-historic?r=q3ow1&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web)

	Agency	Name	Board/ Alternate	ATTENDANCE	VOTE - ITEM 4	VOTE - ITEM 7	VOTE - ITEM 8B	VOTE - ITEM 8C
1	City of Davis	Bapu Vaitla	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Stan Gryczko	Alternate					
		Richard Tsai	Alternate					
2	City of West Sacramento	Verna Sulpizio Hull	<b>Board</b>	X <i>(Item 4-end)</i>	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
3	City of Winters	Carol Scianna	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Kurt Balasek	Alternate	X				
		Wade Cowan	Alternate					
4	City of Woodland	Mayra Vega	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Vicky Fernandez	Alternate					
5	Dunnigan Water District	David Schaad	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Bill Vanderwaal	Alternate	X*				
6	Esparto CSD	Pierce Scott	<b>Board</b>					
		Alex Lepley	Alternate	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
7	Madison CSD	Leo Refsland	<b>Board</b>	X*	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
8	RD 108	Roger Cornwell	<b>Board</b>	X <i>(Item 4-end)</i>	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Bill Vanderwaal	Alternate	X*				
9	RD 150	Warren Bogle	<b>Board</b>	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
10	RD 307	James Johas	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Karen Chesnut	Alternate					
11	RD 537	Tom Ramos	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
12	RD 730	Jim Heidrick	<b>Board</b>	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
13	RD 765	David Dickson, Jr.	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Doug Dickson, Sr.	Alternate					
14	RD 787	Dominic Bruno	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
			Alternate					
15	RD 999	Tom Slater	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
16	RD 1600	Michele Clark	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Absent	Absent
17	RD 2035	Kyriakos Tsakopoulos	<b>Board</b>	X	Abstain	Abstain	Abstain	Abstain
18	Rumsey Water Users Association	Ken Muller	<b>Board</b>					
		Mica Bennet	Alternate	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
19	Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation	Marc Fawns	<b>Board</b>	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
		Jim Etters	Alternate					
20	Yolo County	Mary Vixie Sandy	<b>Board</b>	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
		Angel Barajas	Alternate					
21	YCFC&WCD	Tom Barth	<b>Board</b>	X <i>(Item 4-end)</i>	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Kristin Sicke	Alternate	X				
22	UC Davis	Andrew Fulks	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Kelli O'Day	Alternate					
23	Cal Am Water - Dunnigan	Evan Jacobs	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Audie Foster	Alternate					
24	Colusa Drain MWC	Lynnel Pollock	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Jim Wallace	Alternate					
25	Yolo County Farm Bureau	Lee Smith	<b>Board</b>	X	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
		Denise Sagara	Alternate					
26	Environmental Rep.	Ann Brice	<b>Board</b>	X*	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent

\*remote attendance, member was non-voting

\*\*remote attendance, member provided just cause pursuant to AB 2449

