

Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES
Monday, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020, 3:15 p.m.
Meeting held via Teleconference
34274 State Highway 16, Woodland, CA 95695

- 1. CALL TO ORDER and DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:** Meeting called to order at 3:15 p.m. by Roger Cornwell, Chair.
Donna Gentile conducted a roll call and determined a quorum was present.

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

California American Water, Dunnigan: Evan Jacobs
Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company: Lynnel Pollock
City of West Sacramento: Martha Guerrero, (William Roberts)
City of Winters: Jesse Loren, Vice-Chair, (Kurt Balasek)
Dunnigan Water District: (Bill Vanderwaal)
Environmental Representative: Ann Brice
Esparto Community Service District (CSD): Charles Schaupp
Reclamation District (RD)108: Hilary Reinhard
RD 537: Tom Ramos
RD 765: David Dickson
RD 787: Roger Cornwell, Board Chair
RD 999: Tom Slater
RD 1600: Michele Clark
RD 2035: (Mike Hall)
University of California Davis (UCD): Camille Kirk
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation: Emily Drewek
Yolo County: Gary Sandy
Yolo County Farm Bureau (YCFB): (Denise Sagara)
Yolo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (YCFC&WCD): Tom Barth,
(Tim O'Halloran)

Absent: City of Davis, City of Woodland, Madison CSD, RD 150, RD 307, RD 730

- 2. APPROVE AGENDA:** The Board approved the September 21, 2020 agenda as posted.
Motioned by City of Winters to approve the agenda, seconded by Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company and unanimously approved.

Absent: City of Davis, City of Woodland, Madison CSD, RD 150, RD 307, RD 730

- 3. PUBLIC FORUM:** Ben King commented during the Water Resources Association of Yolo County's meeting today. His comments were more appropriate for the YSGA Board. Following are his comments as a matter of record to be included as part of the YSGA's public forum. *Ben King is a landowner whose family has been farming near Arbuckle since the 1860's. He has been an active participant in the Colusa Groundwater Authority. He wanted to raise the inter-relationship between*

Northern Yolo County and Southern Colusa County subbasin regarding the issue of subsidence. He expressed his concerns about the depletion of domestic wells and increasing erosion in recent years. He hopes that the Yolo County Board (referring to the YSGA) will look at the inter-relationship of the subbasins and the operations of the Tehama Colusa Canal during years of lower precipitation due to climate change. He also mentioned the issue of increased flooding from seasonal river runoff through the Dunnigan foothills and southern Colusa County. He would like to see additional monitoring wells in the northern portion of the Yolo Subbasin, such as existing wells #21 and #18. As you know, the issue of subsidence in the long-term sustainability of both the Yolo and Colusa subbasins are related by groundwater recharge. Whatever we can do to mitigate the flooding we've experienced and the determination of native pollinator habitat is important. Ben has also been actively working with UC Davis to increase native pollinator habitat.

- 4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR and EXECUTIVE OFFICER:** Chair Cornwell did not have anything to report. Kristin Sicke reviewed the information provided in the written Executive Officer's report with the September agenda. She gave a current water conditions report, including updated YCFC&WCD's groundwater well monitoring levels compared to historical levels as illustrated in the graphs included with the agenda. Once the YCFCWCD's irrigation season has ended in October they will be collecting fall groundwater level measurements. She reminded the Board that as of July 2020 the YSGA now has 25 member agencies with the consolidation of Reclamation Districts 785 and 827 into Reclamation District 537. The dues income in the budget was amended at the June 2020 Board meeting to accommodate this change. She highlighted other items from her written report.

5. CONSIDERATION: CONSENT ITEMS

- a. Approved June 15, 2020 Board of Directors meeting minutes
- b. Received Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Financial Statements: July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020
- c. Received Audited Financial Statements as of June 30, 2020
- d. Received Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Financial Statements: July – August 2020
- e. Approve recommended amendment to Conflict of Interest Code and Submission to Fair Political Practices Commission
- f. Adopted recommended Board Policies as presented with the agenda
- g. Adopted 2021 Board meeting dates: 1/11, 3/15, 6/21, 9/20, and 11/15/21
- h. Received minutes of Executive Committee: 5/18, 7/8, and 8/10/20
- i. Received minutes of Working Group: 5/6/20

Motioned by the Dunnigan Water District to approve all consent items, seconded by YCFC&WCD and unanimously approved.

Absent: City of Davis, City of Woodland, Madison CSD, RD 150, RD 307, RD 730

6. UPDATE ON WATER LEGISLATION, REGULATORY & DELTA ISSUES,

Adam Robin, Northern California Water Association (NCWA) Legislative Affairs Director, gave updates on the following legislative and regulatory issues related to water and groundwater.

2020 Legislative Session Summary

The Legislature wrapped up business at the end of August. The Governor has until the end of September to sign all bills pending on his desk. As so many other aspects of our lives, COVID-19 really transformed the Legislature's agenda and ability to do work this year. NCWA monitored over 3,000 measures that

were introduced by the Legislature this year and actively tracked 70 of them. Ultimately, only four bills made it to the Governor's desk that they engaged on in any capacity. That's a dramatic reduction compared most years and it reflects the fact that the Legislature was really constrained in their ability to do policy work this year. No significant legislation related to groundwater or SGMA was even seriously considered in either house.

It is important to note, however, there were significant policy and funding decisions that were made through the state's budget this year. The budget is typically adopted and signed by the Governor in July. There are just a few items there that might be of interest to this group. DWR appropriated \$9 million for additional SGMA staff. Those positions are going to be dedicated to technical assistance and GSP review. In addition to that \$9 million for SGMA, DWR was allocated \$130 million for multi-benefit flood projects. Five projects are in the North State. Three of those projects are in Yolo County: Yolo Bypass Phase One, Knights Landing Outfall Gates and State work in the Cache Creek Settling Basin.

There are a few other policy items that were advanced through the budget that he will not cover today, but as soon as the Governor takes action on all proposals currently before him, he will compile a comprehensive legislative summary document to share with Donna for distribution to the YSGA Board. In spite of the fact that the Legislature wasn't able to take action on a number of priority items, the stage is set for discussions next year.

Adam highlighted a few legislative proposals related to the authorities and responsibilities of local agencies under SGMA, specifically in basins designated as critically over-drafted. These proposals were not thoroughly discussed, but we will see more robust policy discussion around those types of issues next year. For example, bills dealing with land use effects on surface water diversion of previously irrigated crop lands to non-irrigated range lands. He is not sure whether this issue is applicable in Yolo County.

The second big item that we will be seeing next year is discussion of funding for natural resources and water priorities. This year, there were a lot of conversations about presenting general obligation bonds for voter consideration and approval. Ultimately, no water or natural resources bonds made it on the November ballot. Some of those funding priorities include issues such as wildfire and headwaters work, climate resilience proposals, SGMA implementation, and Groundwater Sustainability Plan development, and implementation. Other proposals considered by the Legislature this year included elements of water management type investments, such as improved groundwater and surface water monitoring grants available to local agencies.

Regulatory Updates

Adam felt there were others who could better characterize the State Water Board's Delta Water Quality Control Plan update process, but suffice to say that whole process is on "pause", while various legal issues are being worked out.

The YSGA Board has expressed an interest in updates to the State Water Board's maximum contaminant level (MCL) for hexavalent Chromium-6. As you'll recall, the standard previously adopted by the California Department of Public Health was validated by a superior court in 2017. The Water Board is proposing to adopt a new MCL for chromium-6, while also adopting a formal

policy for how they'll adopt all MCLs moving forward. As with so many other regulatory issues right now that item is sort of paused, as they address staffing challenges and workflow challenges associated with a fully remote work force. Therefore, there is no update on a chromium-6 MCL.

Last week, the State Water Board adopted their new water rights fee schedule for the next fiscal year. This fee schedule is noteworthy in that it includes an entirely new fee structure for the five year temporary permits for diversion to underground storage. This is a permitting framework that was developed by AB 658 approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor back in 2019. A lot of folks have evaluated that opportunity provided by the bill and declined to pursue it, due to concerns about how that five year permitting framework might work. As an example, at the hearing adopting the fee schedule, the Water Board staff indicated that they have no applications for that program at this point, but nonetheless, that fee schedule is now adopted and will be going into effect soon.

The Legislature is adjourned until after the November election. The new Legislature will begin work in earnest in January 2021.

7. CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES UPDATE, Barrett Kaasa September 2020 DWR Updates

Grants

California Grants Portal

The California State Library, in partnership with the Department of Water Resources and other state grantmaking agencies, has launched the California Grants Portal – your one destination to find all state grant and loan opportunities provided on a first-come or competitive basis. Visit grants.ca.gov to find funding opportunities.

DWR: Prop 68 Sustainable Groundwater Management Implementation Grants for Critically Overdrafted Basins

The public comment period has closed for the draft Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) for the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Grant Program. The final PSP is expected in November 2020. During the first round of funding, \$26 million will be available for critically overdrafted basins for projects that will assist with the implementation of groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs). A second round of funding will be available beginning in 2022 and will have approximately \$62 million available for projects for high- and medium-priority basins.

SGMA

DWR is developing eight Proposition 68-funded technical projects - These projects include aerial electromagnetic surveys, improving groundwater elevation and quality monitoring networks, Statewide land use data collection, improved subsidence monitoring network, installing and maintaining stream gauges, maintaining and enhancing statewide well completion reports, managing and reporting sustainable groundwater information, and enhancing and maintaining DWR's modeling tools. Fact sheets on each project can be viewed under the "Prop 68" tab here: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Data-and-Tools>.

Facilitation Support Services (FSS): Funding still available

- GSA’s developing GSPs are eligible to receive funding for identification and engagement of interested parties, meeting facilitation, interest-based negotiation/consensus building, and public outreach facilitation
- More information can be found here: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Assistance-Engagement>
- New written translation services available in 10 languages for outreach materials (5,000 word maximum).

Technical Support Services (TSS): Funding still available

- Critically overdrafted basins have priority, but this application is open to all high and medium priority basins including those with an approved alternative plan. More information and applications can be found here: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Assistance-and-Engagement>
- Funds can be used for monitoring well installation, geophysical logging, geologic logging, groundwater level monitoring training, borehole video logging, and other field activities.

Kristin Sicke informed that YCFC&WCD staff, on behalf of the YSGA, are working with DWR to potentially install a stream gauge up stream of the Capay Dam. This would be an excellent location to monitor excess stormwater diversions for groundwater recharge during the winter months. Additionally as part of our Technical Support Services agreement, up to 3 new monitoring wells have been requested in areas where data gaps have been identified.

She also appreciated Barrett’s suggestion to read comments submitted for critically overdrafted basins GSPs. During her participation in NCWA’s groundwater task force meeting last week, The Nature Conservancy shared their review of the draft GSP’s submitted by critically overdrafted basins and noted a common theme in the public comments received.

8. ESTABLISHMENT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEE FOR RECONSIDERATION OF VOTING STRUCTURE AND EXPENSE ALLOCATION

Kristin summarized the agenda report presented with today’s agenda and the need to establish an ad-hoc committee as recommended by the Executive Committee. Chair Cornwell informed that several board members have express interest in serving on this committee. The intention is to include a mix of urban and agricultural representatives on the committee. He requested that those interested in being on the committee contact Kristin Sicke.

UC Davis motioned to establish an ad-hoc committee for reconsideration of voting structure and expense allocation. The motion was seconded by Yolo County and unanimously approved.

Absent: City of Davis, City of Woodland, Madison CSD, RD 150, RD 307, RD 730

Ben King requested to comment that it is important that Yolo County doesn’t compromise on sustainability initiatives throughout the basin. He referenced the overall connection of the northern part of the Yolo Subbasin to the western part of the Sacramento Valley. (Refer to Ben’s public comment from the WRA’s Board meeting above in Item #3.)

9. UPDATE ON GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (GSP) DEVELOPMENT,

The September Board presentation can be accessed here: <https://www.yologroundwater.org/2020-09-21-board-of-directors-meeting>

- a. Water Budget
- b. Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model
- c. Stakeholder Communication and Engagement
- d. Groundwater Monitoring and Report
- e. Surface Water and Groundwater Modeling
- f. Sustainable Management Criteria

Kristin Sicke, YCFC&WCD, provided a brief explanation of the various groups that are working on development of the GSP. An illustrative flow chart will be prepared and shared with the Board in November to clarify the various groups and their role in the GSP development.

- *GSP Technical Team* is comprised of YCFC&WCD staff assigned to working on YSGA activities and consultants, GEI and SEI.
- *Working Group* was established by the Board comprised of Board members and staff from each of the member entities for the overall development of the GSP.
- *Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)* is a focused subset of the Working Group. They are advising the Working Group on the technical aspects of developing the GSP.

A Communication and Engagement Plan is being drafted and will be posted to the YSGA website sometime after the six Management Area (MA) Working Sessions are scheduled. The MA Working Sessions are planned to be convened in late October and early November where there will be more focused discussions with the stakeholders about aspects of the GSP specific to their area.

The TAC has met three times since July and Satya Gala from GEI will provide an update today on discussions at these meetings and the status the Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) development. Kristin turned the presentation over to Satya. The Working Group received an update on the TACs activities last week. Satya reviewed SGMA's definition of sustainability and explained its relationship to identifying undesirable results using the six sustainability indicators. Those six sustainability indicators are: the chronic lowering of groundwater levels, production of groundwater storage, degrading of water quality, land subsidence, depletion of the interconnectors, surface water, and sea water intrusion. He reviewed the first two indicators, the chronic lowering of groundwater levels and production of groundwater storage, and how minimum thresholds and measurable objectives help to define the sustainability of the basin. The goal is to proactively manage the basin and be able to take local action to keep the basin above the minimum threshold. Satya illustrated the technical aspects of the SMC with his PowerPoint presentation (referenced above). He explained how historical groundwater data and current conditions were referenced to reflect "normal" basin operating conditions to provide parameters for minimum thresholds and measurable objectives. The minimum threshold is the level you never want to go below or exceed. The measurable objective is where you want to be operating most of the time. GEI's findings were presented to the TAC for consideration and feedback to assist in identifying the maximum possible operational flexibility. Each of the MA workshops will be presented this same information. The SMC will be refined to incorporate MA feedback and impacts on the overall basin management of groundwater conditions. SGMA requires that the groundwater monitoring network ensure adequate coverage of sustainability indicators sufficient to evaluate basin conditions and SMC specific to our area. He explained how representative

wells in Yolo’s existing monitoring network (160+ wells) provide data to evaluate current and future conditions. He explained the process to identify data gaps in the monitoring network and the process to refine the network density. Satya reviewed minimum threshold exceedances for groundwater levels and storage that would be considered an undesirable result. When a specified number of exceedance occurs that would represent a basins-wide condition of mismanagement and significant impacts to beneficial uses of groundwater resources. Satya continued discussion of many technical details in their process to determine minimum thresholds and measurable objectives and their relationship to undesirable results and the SMC.

Next Satya discussed the approach to water quality SMC and defining undesirable result for water quality. SGMA does not require improving the condition, but our management of the basin should not make conditions undesirable for groundwater uses and users in the subbasin. The interaction between water levels and water quality must be considered and/or demonstrated (a Sustainability Indicator). SGMA defines an undesirable results for water quality occurs when the minimum threshold for any water quality constituents of concern is exceeded in 25% of the monitoring wells specified for that constituent over two sampling collection periods, without implementation of a predetermined mitigation action. He reviewed the current list of constituents of concern that are being evaluating, which are salinity, nitrate (drinking water wells), boron, arsenic (drinking water and ag wells), hexavalent chromium, manganese, and selenium. Currently some of these constituents have no minimum threshold requirements.

Next the Technical Team will be working on a process for evaluating the three remaining sustainability indicators for land subsidence, surface water/groundwater interaction, and seawater intrusion. They are in the process of wrapping up the water budget summaries for historical modeling and future climate change. A list of management actions will be developed with associated projects based on input from the MA workshops and where the minimum thresholds are set.

Kristin displayed a current schedule of GSP development through August 31, 2021. As sections of the GSP are drafted they will be reviewed by the TAC and WG. When an administrative review is available, it will be posted on the website. Email notifications will be sent.

10. MEMBERS’ REPORTS and FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – Charlie Schaupp reported that beginning in January, Esparto and Caltrans will be working on Main Street in Esparto for six months. They will be putting in all new water pipes and updating all the traffic controls.

11. NEXT MEETING – Monday, November 16, 2020

12. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Cornwell adjourned the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna L. Gentile
Board Secretary & Administrative Coordinator