

MEETING SUMMARY | April 21, 2016

Private Pumper Advisory Committee (PPAC) Inaugural Meeting

MEETING RECAP

- Sacramento State University Center for Collaborative Policy (Center) Facilitator Dave Ceppos welcomed participants, reviewed today's agenda.
- Meeting attendees received a presentation from Grant Davids of Davids Engineering Inc., on water supply and groundwater conditions in the different areas of the County.
- PPAC Members were given an opportunity to share their concerns and experiences.
- The group discussed outreach responsibilities and opportunities for the PPAC including drafting a letter to all Private Pumpers in Colusa County (County).
- The PPAC agreed to meet every other month.
- The PPAC requested to develop a social media presence.

For more local information please visit the [Colusa County Water Resources Webpage](#).

MEETING SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The meeting began with all attendees reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Dave Ceppos welcomed introductions by all attendees. He introduced his colleague, Tania Carlone. Mr. Ceppos gave a broad overview of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) as it relates to County responsibilities. He lauded Colusa County for forming the PPAC as a vehicle for Private Pumpers to have a voice in SGMA planning. Most other areas of the State do not have such a vehicle. He mentioned that the current role of the PPAC is advisory to the County. This may evolve over time as SGMA governance is developed.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSIONS

a. Welcome PPAC Members

Mr. Ceppos turned the floor over to Supervisor Denise Carter for introductory comments. Ms. Carter mentioned that she and Supervisor Vann have been designated by the Board of Supervisors to work on groundwater-related activities in the County. She thanked the members of the PPAC for their involvement and willingness to serve. Supervisor Carter expressed she feels strongly that the Private Pumper voice in SGMA planning and implementation is critical.

Mr. Ceppos then made time for Supervisor Kim Vann's comments. Supervisor Vann also thanked the members of the PPAC for their dedication, and made note that Colusa County is ahead of the game in SGMA planning and we are on a great path.

b. Management Area Boundaries

Mr. Ceppos introduced Grant Davids from Davids Engineering, Inc. Mr. Davids referred to a map that he produced: *Colusa County Water Supply Source Classifications*, which depicts the various water supply sources in the different areas of the County (Surface, Mixed and Groundwater-only), as well as

contours showing groundwater level changes from Spring 2008-Spring 2015. Mr. Davids discussed net recharge in the surface water supply areas being positive .8 acre feet per acre, and the groundwater-only areas being negative 1.5, with the mixed use areas being in between. He also mentioned that despite cropping differences, net recharge remains about the same. So why are we seeing such dramatic differences in groundwater conditions across the county, especially the severe drops in the Area of Interest (AOI) in the southern part of the county? Mr. Davids described the three things that happen when groundwater is pumped: 1) groundwater storage decreases; 2) Induced Recharge (groundwater is pulled from other areas to fill in the gap; 3) Induced Discharge (groundwater moves away towards the area of pumping).

Mr. Davids then handed out a second contour map showing groundwater movement. He described that generally county groundwater flows west to east which is why we are not seeing large changes near the river. The Arbuckle area does not induce recharge like the area by the river.

Question: With levels as they are now, do you see groundwater moving from the river to the “hole” in the AOI? **Answer:** No, Mr. Davids indicated that he is not seeing that but needs to look into it more.

Mr. Ceppos mentioned that the Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) regulations allow locals to acknowledge the different conditions in basins by breaking them up into Management Areas. However, under the draft regulations, Management Areas are still part of the larger subbasin, so you can't say, “I'm next to the river, I'm good.” The sustainability of the entire subbasin is required under SGMA.

Mr. Davids expressed that there is a great need to get surface water to the AOI. Private Pumpers could work with Colusa County Water District to get surface water to the area, for instance. Otherwise, we will be talking about shutting off pumps. The key questions are: How much is it going to cost? And who is going to pay?

Supervisor Vann brought up Sites Reservoir. She commented that she had looked into getting private pumpers affiliated with the Colusa County Water District, but there are laws that do not allow this. She is working on it. She also mentioned that Colusa County Water District is committed to 30,000 acre feet per year from Sites that would increase supply in that area.

Question: In the past, there was no surface water in the AOI. In drought, groundwater levels were drawn down and they recovered. In SGMA's eyes, are we considered sustainable? **Answer:** Sustainability is looked at over time, and wet and dry cycles are taken into consideration as well as six undesirable results including: depletion of supply, reduction of groundwater storage, seawater intrusion, degraded water quality, land subsidence, and adverse impacts on beneficial uses of the surface water. The question becomes whether these undesirable results are considered significant and unreasonable. SGMA does not define what significant and unreasonable means.

PPAC Comment: In the Private Pumper areas along the river, many folks are pumping water out of the river, so this could be considered mixed supply. Discussion ensued regarding groundwater surface water interaction, pumping river water, groundwater flow to and from the river depending on

precipitation and river levels. The Sacramento River will definitely be looked at through this SGMA implementation process.

Question: Regarding the mapping and the recharge calculations, was recharge from the 2047 canal considered? **Answer:** Mr. Davids did consider the 2047, and utilized best available information on seepage rates from the ephemeral streams and the drain.

Mr. Ceppos next opened the floor to PPAC comments, experiences and concerns:

Mr. Strain: would like to know where wells are located in the county so we can visualize areas where there's a lot of pumping pressure. Ms. Fahey mentioned that the Colusa County Water Resources Department is working on mapping all wells in the county and she will be working on this with Grant Davids on the Prop 1 grant funded project as well as with a summer intern this year.

Mr. Peterson: Agreed that we need to know where the wells are in the county. He expressed concern about well information being public – folks will see where the good supplies are and start punching wells. He mentioned water transfers and that there are two sides to the story there. He proposed looking at things differently – what about setting up a water district whose sole purpose is for groundwater recharge. He believes that supply should come from environmental water because it benefits the environment. He asked if a layer could be added to Davids' map with water district boundaries and their base allocations. Mr. Davids said that is possible.

Mr. Ceppos encouraged everyone to check out DWR's Water Management Planning Tool online.

Ms. Gallagher: Interested in knowing who along the river uses mixed supplies in the Private Pumper areas. She is also very interested in the development of local governance.

Mr. McGeoghan: Mentioned that there are no transfers south this year due to pumping restrictions in the Delta and limited capacity to move water. He expressed concern over layers of bureaucracy. He also wondered how successfully we can regulate ourselves, but truly hopes we will be very successful.

Mr. Williams: He shared some of his personal experiences over the past two and a half years. He has had to repair two ag wells at great expense, some damage caused by subsidence. Domestic well went out twice. His biggest concern is with SGMA and that private pumpers are left out of the governance equation, yet they are the most affected. He envisions the two biggest water agencies being GSAs and that he will be at their mercy with no voice, and does not like that idea. He is thankful to the County for the PPAC but would like for the private pumpers to be able to sit at the table.

Mr. Davids mentioned that it was planned today to look at dividing the Private Pumper areas up based on groundwater conditions, but maybe there is a greater strength in numbers.

Mr. Ceppos brought up the Common Principles idea. He described that a solid set of Common Principles provides an important reference and reminder of the group's rules of engagement or the

truths that the group holds to be evident. These principles can help to pull the governance group back on track.

Mr. Moresco: The area where he farms is near the river and is in good shape. He has concerns about over-arching county-wide or basin-wide pumping restrictions. He is also concerned about the cost and resources necessary for developing a GSP and implementing SGMA. Who will pay for all of this? Just the groundwater pumpers or everyone?

c. Outreach Letter to Colusa County Private Pumpers

Ms. Fahey described an outreach letter that Supervisor Carter had requested. This letter is to go out to all Private Pumpers in the county to inform them about SGMA, let them know how they can get involved, and where they can get information and meeting notifications. Ms. Fahey felt that this would be a good task for the PPAC as part of their outreach efforts. Supervisors Vann and Carter agreed that it would be good for this letter to come from the PPAC rather than the County. Mr. Davids suggested CC'ing the water agencies when the letter is completed so they can distribute it to their landowners. As an action item, Ms. Fahey will work with CCP to draft a letter for the PPAC members to review and to provide comment over email.

CONCLUSION

a. PPAC Member Comments and Updates

Ms. Fahey briefly mentioned that she had been working with Roy Hull at DWR to get a subsidence resurvey done in Colusa County. The county received approval last week for a resurvey in the AOI. Colusa County Public Works staff will do the survey work and DWR will provide staff time, equipment and data processing.

Mr. Williams suggested we utilize social media for outreach. After everyone got over the shock of a farmer asking for a social media page, it was decided that Ms. Fahey would set up a Facebook page for the PPAC and other SGMA-related activities.

b. Set Meeting Schedule/Next Meeting Date

The PPAC decided to set meetings every other month. 10:00 is an agreeable time.

c. Items for Next Agenda

Next Steps / Action Items

- Draft letter to Private Pumpers and utilize email for PPAC member comments and edits (CCP and Fahey)
- Produce a map, utilizing Grant Davids' map, with an overlay of water district boundaries and a listing of each districts' base allocations. (Grant Davids)
- Start a Facebook page for outreach on SGMA and groundwater-related activities (Fahey)
- Set-up PPAC meeting schedule (Fahey)

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

PPAC Members

Kim Gallagher
Darrin Williams
Jeff Moresco
Derick Strain
Jim Peterson
Doug McGeoghan
Lorraine Marsh (on the phone)

Public

Mary Randall, Department of Water Resources
Mike Mitchell, City of Williams
Theresa Bright, Jeffrey's Ranch
Colleen Cecil, Butte County Farm Bureau
Craig Bradford, Mayflower Farms
Jim Wallace, Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company
Grant Davids, Davids Engineering, Inc.
Walt Seaver, Colusa Indian Community

Staff

Mary Fahey, Colusa County Water Resources
Dave Ceppos, Center for Collaborative Policy
Tania Carlone, Center for Collaborative Policy