

## MEETING SUMMARY | June 22, 2016

### Private Pumper Advisory Committee (PPAC) Meeting #2

#### MEETING RECAP

- PPAC Members suggested further outreach to all well owners in the county to notify them that important governance decisions related to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) are being made, and that there will be costs involved in SGMA implementation.
- PPAC members shared their concerns and experiences.
- PPAC members were encouraged to determine what it is they want to advocate for before the next Governance Workgroup meeting.

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

#### MEETING SUMMARY

##### INTRODUCTION

Sacramento State University Center for Collaborative Policy (Center) Dave Ceppos, the facilitator, welcomed attendees to introduce themselves. Of special note, new Colusa County Agricultural Commissioner, Greg Hinton was in attendance. Mr. Ceppos reviewed the agenda and asked if PPAC members had any suggested changes to the agenda. There were no changes, but PPAC member Marsh mentioned that she wanted to have a discussion regarding the PPAC outreach letter that went out after the last meeting (this item was discussed during the PPAC action items progress report).

##### SGMA IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES

###### a. General SGMA/GSP regulations update

Mr. Ceppos gave a brief recap of SGMA and the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) regulations. He reminded the group that only local agencies with land use and/or water management and/or water supply authority can be a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). GSAs are responsible for implementing the GSPs. The GSP will be implemented over a 20-year period. GSAs must be formed by June 30, 2017, and GSPs must be completed by January, 2022. The GSP regulations were finalized June 1, 2016. These regulations are very important because they tell us what we need to do. The regulations contain six sustainability criteria, five of which pertain to Colusa County basins: groundwater levels, groundwater storage, water quality, subsidence, and groundwater/surface water interaction (seawater intrusion is the sixth criteria but it does not pertain to the Colusa County basins). It will be important for the PPAC and Governance Workgroup to start to focus on these five criteria as we move forward.

###### b. PPAC action items progress report

Mary Fahey reported on the status of the four action items from the last PPAC meeting:

1. Draft letter to Private Pumpers: Ms. Fahey reported that the letter was completed and mailed. It was also sent to an extensive email list, as well as to the water agencies to distribute to their landowners and to the Farm Bureau for distribution to their membership. PPAC member Marsh asked for an explanation on who the letter was mailed to because some landowners in the white areas did not receive it. Ms. Fahey explained that she used a mailing list developed by

Supervisor Vann who had utilized a GIS parcel overlay to identify parcels in the white areas. Prior to that effort, such a mailing list did not exist.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding broader distribution of the letter to all well owners in the county. Shelly Murphy, CCWD, expressed that her district has filed to be a GSA and if a letter was to go to their landowners, it should come from them. Ms. Fahey explained the extensive outreach she has done over the past year and a half through email, newsletter, website and public outreach meetings. She also reminded the group that the PPAC's role is to represent the white areas of the county, not the areas covered by other GSA-eligible agencies. Mr. Ceppos suggested that perhaps a new letter to all landowners could be developed. Ms. Fahey expressed concern over budget. *Action Item: Consideration of further outreach to landowners and well owners throughout the county.*

2. Grant Davids to produce a map with an overlay of water district boundaries and their base allocations: Ms. Fahey reported that this has not been completed and that the Governance Workgroup will need to determine a funding mechanism before this item can be initiated. PPAC member Strain suggested including such a map in the proposed letter to landowners to clarify where their parcels lie.
3. Start a Facebook page for outreach: Ms. Fahey developed a "Colusa County Groundwater" Facebook page.
4. Set up PPAC meeting schedule: Ms. Fahey presented a proposed schedule. The next proposed meeting date of August 24 conflicts with an annual Rice Growers meeting. *Action Item: Ms. Fahey will work with the group over email or Doodle poll to schedule future meetings.*

#### **c. Adjacent basins and county activities**

Mr. Ceppos described the activities in Yolo County. They have applied for a Basin Boundary Modification to the county boundary, with the exception of the small area that encompasses Colusa County Water District's service area boundaries. He described Yolo County's proposed governance structure that includes Management Areas. Mr. Ceppos discussed the process in Glenn County. CCP is utilizing the work done in Colusa County to help move Glenn County forward at a faster pace in order to align the two counties' governance formation processes. This will assist Colusa and Glenn Counties to coordinate efforts in shared subbasins. Ms. Fahey mentioned some of the activity taking place in Butte County and reminded the group that Colusa County and Butte County (and Glenn County) share the West Butte Subbasin.

#### **d. Grant Davids anticipated technical consulting services**

Ms. Fahey explained that Grant Davids will present information at the next Governance Workgroup meeting. He will provide an overview of groundwater conditions in the County. He will also discuss how the conditions relate to the five Sustainability Criteria as well as other requirements in the GSP Regulations. Based on the information, the working group will also consider possible Management Areas. Mr. Ceppos suggested that the group read the GSP regulations, especially the Management Area language. He also reminded participants that even with Management Areas, the basins must be managed sustainably as a whole.

Ms. Fahey mentioned that she had reached out to the five agencies that have filed to be GSAs asking for help to fund Grant Davids work. To date, RD 108 and GCID have received board approval to contribute up to \$3,000 each. Shelly Murphy will address this item at CCWD's next board meeting. Ms. Fahey had not heard from Princeton/Provident or RD 1004. The County will also contribute. The total cost for Grant Davids' efforts at this meeting will be \$7,000-\$9,000. Ms. Fahey mentioned that the group is going to have to figure out a funding mechanism for future technical work.

PPAC member Marsh asked what the cost will be to develop a GSP. Mr. Ceppos said he has heard between \$200,000-\$600,000. Ms. Fahey mentioned that there will be some Proposition 1 funding to help with GSP development but there is a 50% cost share. Mr. Ceppos added that there is a total of \$83 million remaining from Proposition 1 available for the hundreds of potential GSPs that will need to be completed. That is not a lot of money.

**e. Roy Hull/DWR report presented to the Groundwater Commission on June 16, 2016**

Ms. Fahey provided handouts from Mr. Hull's PowerPoint presentation to the Groundwater Commission.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS**

**a. Groundwater Conditions**

Mr. Ceppos opened the floor for PPAC members to discuss the conditions they are seeing in their areas. PPAC member Williams reported that the groundwater table did not recover over the rainy season. His wells were about 20' shy of normal in the spring. Now that the pumping season has started, his wells are looking better than they did at this time last year, likely because there is more surface water available. He thinks this is good news. PPAC member Moresco agreed that we would be worse off this year without a surface water allocation to the TCCA. Mr. Williams stated that the shallow wells have not recovered. Deeper wells are maintaining because there is not as much pumping this year. Mr. Moresco stated that in his experience, it takes about three years for the aquifers to recover after drought conditions. Mr. Williams said that the topsoil has been so dry that it didn't really moisten this year and there is not much moisture in the soil. Gil Ramos (landowner) stated that the creeks did not run this winter.

Mr. Ceppos asked if anyone is seeing effects related to groundwater/surface water interaction. Ms. Marsh stated that changes in irrigation practices from flood to drip have an effect on this and she noted a dry slough on her property that used to be wet before changing to drip irrigation.

There was some discussion about groundwater recharge projects. *Action Item: Mr. Ceppos will look into getting Daniel Mountjoy from Sustainable Conservation to give a presentation at the next PPAC meeting on the work they are doing in the San Joaquin Valley flooding orchards and vineyards for recharge.* Related to the recharge discussion, Mr. Ceppos mentioned that the Sites Reservoir project will need to be presented with an integrated, multi-benefit approach that will include utilizing the reservoir for groundwater recharge activities.

Mr. Moresco discussed conditions being better in his area this year. He has been able to use the pumps in a slough to recirculate runoff. He has not been able to use those pumps for the past two years.

## **b. PPAC Role in GSA Formation**

Mr. Ceppos began a discussion regarding the PPAC anticipated role in GSA formation. He gave an overview of how some other GSAs are forming, and specifically mentioned the Sacramento Groundwater Authority. He told the PPAC group that they need to decide what they want to advocate for. Mr. Williams expressed concern that SGMA excludes private pumpers yet it is essential that they have a seat at the table. He said that private pumpers need to feel they are part of the process. There are many pumpers that have wells within districts that are not going to be a GSA. These will fall under the County.

Ms. Marsh stated that she has issues with GCID and RD 108 having taxing authority and police powers over landowners outside of their service areas. She feels that the County is the appropriate GSA since the Board of Supervisors are elected by the people.

Mr. Ceppos mentioned that the County can't force agencies not to be GSAs. He posed the question, how do you reconcile this? Ms. Marsh said the State could come in. It would not be ideal but at least we elect the Governor and would have a say. Mr. Moresco stated that the water agencies should represent their landowners and not others.

Mr. Ceppos then distributed handouts of sample governance diagrams and described some different governance scenarios. He stated that the PPAC needs to start talking to each other and advocate for what they want. He further stated that a private entity could be part of a JPA that is the GSA, but they would not have full voting rights.

Mr. Williams described the current scenario: there are six agencies that have filed to be GSAs – five water districts and the County. Hypothetically, two of these may become their own separate GSAs and the others may form a JPA. There are several other water districts in other boxes on the governance diagrams. The water district decision-making process will be whatever benefits their district. There is no diversity of opinion. We need to find a way to incorporate other entities.

Mr. Ceppos again encouraged the PPAC members to talk to each other and decide on a cohesive message. Ms. Fahey told the group that they have support from the County. Both Supervisors Carter and Vann want the private pumpers to have representation. She suggested not only talking to each other but also to contact the Supervisors.

Mr. Williams said he does not want this to be an “us vs. them” scenario. We have to find a way to work together. Mr. Ceppos agreed. He used the term “walk a mile in their shoes” when making decisions. This needs to be a collaborative effort.

## **Next Steps / Action Items**

- The County will consider further outreach to landowners and well owners throughout the county.
- Mr. Ceppos will contact Daniel Mountjoy from Sustainable Conservation to give a presentation at the next PPAC meeting.
- Ms. Fahey will follow up with group to schedule future meetings

## **MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

### **PPAC Members**

Kim Gallagher  
Darrin Williams  
Jeff Moresco  
Derick Strain  
Jim Peterson  
Lorraine Marsh

### **Public**

Mary Randall, Department of Water Resources  
Mike Mitchell, City of Williams  
Sharon Ellis, Glenn County farmer  
Gilbert Ramos, Farmer; RCD; Farm Bureau  
Bryan Busch, RD 108  
Carli Morengo, Farm Bureau  
Greg Hinton, Colusa County Ag Commissioner  
Shelly Murphy, CCWD  
Francis Hickel, landowner  
Savannah Miller, Butte Creek Farms

### **Staff**

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