

**MID-KINGS RIVER GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2019**

Chair McCutcheon called the special meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Art Brieno; Steven P. Dias, Barry McCutcheon, Chair;
Michael Murray, Vice-Chair

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Dennis Mills, GM and Board Secretary Bill Tos
Ray Carlson, Legal Counsel Gene Kilgore, CID
Geoff Vanden Heuvel Julianne Phillips, Kings County
Rebecca Quist, KRCD Bill Giacomazzi
Jim Maciel, Armona CSD Michael LaSalle

ESTABLISH QUORUM

It was determined that a quorum was present at the meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 12, 2019 MEETING

Chair McCutcheon asked if there was a motion regarding the minutes circulated in this month's Board packets. Director Dias made a motion to approve the March 12, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Murray seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the meeting minutes of March 12, 2019. The vote for all of the Directors was as follows:

AYES: Steven P. Dias, Barry McCutcheon, Michael Murray

NOES: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Art Brieno

COMMUNICATIONS

At this point Director Brieno joined the meeting.

Manager Mills reported that he had received email communications from DWR regarding resources to consider when complying with SGMA. He had also received an email about a study by Stanford University's Water in the West effort regarding water quality requirements under

SGMA. He also reported that he had attended a recent South Fork Kings GSA Board meeting where Supervisor Joe Neves (who is also a GSA Board member) expressed that he was against having flow meters on groundwater wells in their area. It was also expressed at this same meeting that the South Fork King GSA wouldn't have sufficient funding to pursue any projects in the first five year of the GSP implementation period, and would instead focus on data collection.

GSP DEVELOPMENT

Water Supply Update

Manager Mills reported on the wetter than normal conditions as well as the efforts of Kings CWD to maximize delivery of floodwaters in the Apex Ranch Groundwater Bank, the Old River Channel and other District basins. He reported that the current DWR Bulletin 120 for the Kings River was 155% of April through July runoff, equaling roughly 1.9 million acre-feet. Lastly, he reported that local water runs are planned to begin around the beginning of May and last through August.

GSP Development & Budget Update

Manager Mills reported that MKR GSA accounts have roughly \$267,000 in funds related to GSP Development. Outside of these funds, the MKR GSA is also holding roughly \$44,400 in funds from the JPA partners for GSA administration. The current MKR GSA account balance was \$312,051.34.

As the first quarter of 2019 has been completed, Wood (the Tulare Lake subbasin's GSP development consultant) has begun to develop the most recent reimbursement request. The latest budget update is that roughly 70% of the total grant budget has been spent (\$1,045,303 of \$1,500,000). The largest costs have been associated with the groundwater model development and the Basin Setting chapter development. Wood has made Manager Mills aware that they are concerned about the budget and see a potential for overruns in the range of \$250,000. Given Wood's current spend rate, they will exceed their grant funded budget around the beginning of September. Current "seed funding" contributions have totaled \$500,000, so this could mean that half of the "seed funding" wouldn't be returned to the GSAs. Manager Mills committed to keep the MKR GSA Board aware of this issue in the coming months.

Discussion of Schedule and Outreach through 2019

Manager Mills reported that on the status of several GSP chapters and explained their current review schedule. He then reported on the current plan to hold a public hearing on the Tulare Lake GSP the first week in December at the Kings County government complex. Associated with this public hearing a notice would be published 90 days prior as per DWR regulation and other legal requirements. The plan is for the public hearing on the draft GSP in December to not be a GSA Board meeting, but to have a Board member present to hear firsthand the tone of the comments. After the public hearing, GSA staff along with the GSP consultant will summarize the comments submitted in writing and given orally. These will be available to the GSA Boards at their December Board meetings. During December, Wood will be

developing recommended responses to comments. The recommended responses and any GSP document modifications will be available for consideration at the January GSA Board meetings, where the GSA Boards will be asked to adopt the GSP and authorize staff to submit it to DWR. DWR has recently communicated that their GSP submittal process will be on-line. However, Manager Mills' recommendation has been to submit on-line as well as by hard copy at the local Fresno Office. This should be done just in case there are issues with the on-line system.

DWR will also require an annual report from the Subbasin in April 2020. The current thought is that this report will bring the Data Management System (DMS) information included in the GSP current through the end of Water Year 2019. However DWR is being asked questions about what else might need to be included. Tulare Lake subbasin representatives have discussed a potential contract amendment with the Wood consultant team to take on this effort, and will have the scope for the effort formalized by September in order to complete the deliverable on time.

Update from recent Tulare Lake GSA Parties Meetings

Manager Mills reported that the Tulare Lake GSA parties had most recently met on March 28th and April 12th. One of the more significant recent topics was an update on modeled projections from 2017 – 2070. A modeled projection was developed to depict a future with normal hydrology and no management or project changes. This was intended to reflect conditions that might occur if current conditions continued into the future (base line). Manager Mills summarized the groundwater level declines both above and below the E-clay from the synthetic projection as well as the anticipated subsidence.

At the April 12th meeting there was additional information provided related to the impact of management strategies and projects through modeled projections. In the MKR GSA 1,500 acres of new recharge basins were modeled that reduced agricultural demand by 4,500 AF/year and increased recharge by 200,000 AF in flood years (averaging 45,000 AF/year). The plan was to develop these facilities incrementally over the 20 year implementation period. In the El Rico GSA 6,400 acres of surface water storage ponds were modeled. The ponds were farmed in off years, but developed 20,000 AF of additional surface water beginning in 2030. The yield from these facilities was not enough to offset the overdraft in the El Rico GSA area and would therefore be revised. The efforts in the South Fork Kings GSA area were somewhat complicated, but were represented by 10,000 acres of surface water storage ponds which developed 30,000 AF/year of additional surface water supply in wet years beginning in 2030. The new ponds would also develop 30,000 AF/year of reduced ag demand. These modeled projects were then used to evaluate what the potential groundwater levels might be over the projected period of 2017-2070. Manager Mills summarized the resulting groundwater level declines both above and below the E-clay from the synthetic projection as well as the anticipated subsidence.

It was learned through the April 12th discussion that the South Fork Kings GSA Board doesn't support the development of the 10,000 acre layoff basin project that was modeled. Instead they want to pursue many different strategies (dry well recharge, AMR, etc.) that will hopefully add up to the amount of overdraft identified in their area.

Manager Mills also reported that the Southwest Kings GSA recently requested that the subbasin's Interim Operating Agreement from 2017 be renegotiated and seems to relate to their area having a small overdraft compared to other areas. The current formula for cost sharing is half based on acreage and half based on an equal cost split. The Southwest Kings GSA may have issues with their supplies from the Angiola WD well field, but given the numbers we have now, they are in balance. Manager Mills' recommendation was to adjust the formula to be half on acreage (reflecting everyone's need to report) and half on overdraft in each GSA (reflecting everyone's use of groundwater). The Board generally supported that recommendation.

Discussion of Sustainable Management Criteria

Manager Mills reported on a letter that had been received from Kings CWD on their view of Sustainable Management Criteria in the area. The major topics of the letter were:

- The existence of a 3,000 foot deep fresh water aquifer with static groundwater levels at 60 – 300 feet below ground surface;
- Regional surface water reductions were the primary reason for long-term overdraft;
- Long-term groundwater level declines are significant, but not unreasonable if mitigated during implementation period;
- Subsidence will continue while we use the wells we have. Subsidence in the area is significant but not unreasonable given what would have to be done to arrest it. The City of Corcoran and the Corcoran State Prison need to be protected from potential flood risks given subsidence in that area.
- Declines in groundwater levels are not linked to changes in groundwater quality. It seems appropriate to monitor municipal sites that are already reporting to other agencies and develop new ag monitoring locations. However most of the management effort relating to groundwater quality would be to not move known contaminant plumes.

Manager Mills reported on discussions with other local partners regarding the topics in the letter, their views and the plan to discuss the matter with other remaining partners.

Discussion of Draft Monitoring Network from Consultant

Manager Mills showed a draft subbasin map from the GSP consultant that identified current and planned monitoring locations in each GSA. Manager Mills described the monitoring network as under review and also as good progress in that it was the first effort showing both the current and future systems together.

Discussion of Projects, Estimated Budget and Future GSA Funding Plan

Manager Mills discussed planned efforts to develop 1,500 acres of new groundwater recharge basins and a voluntary fallowing program as the backbone of SGMA compliance efforts for the MKR GSA. Based on many assumptions he reported the potential costs associated with the efforts and asked for guidance from the Board on whether they continued to agree with the plans. The Board generally agreed with the direction presented and asked for additional information in the future as efforts get closer to implementation.

Manager Mills also reported that he had shared the estimated development costs for the recharge basin development plan with the County of Kings so that they could make the case to the Governor's representatives that there is a significant need for GSP Implementation grant funding.

At this point Director Brieno had to leave the meeting.

UPDATE ON ONGOING EFFORTS

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

The regular May Board of Directors meeting was set for May 14, 2019 at 1 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Mills
MKR MIN 190418