

**MID-KINGS RIVER GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2023**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Steven P. Dias; Barry McCutcheon, Chair; Dianne Sharp

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Michael Murray, Vice-Chair

OTHERS PRESENT: Dennis Mills, GM and Board Secretary
Ray Carlson, Legal Counsel (phone)
Karl teVelde
Mark Kairis, Hanford Council
Jay Weiner (phone)
David Stanfield (phone)
Geoff VandenHuevel, Milk Producers Council (phone)
Lita Spencer, Westchester Group (phone)
Sebastian Silveira (phone)

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 THE REGULAR NOVEMBER 8, 2022 MEETING

Manager Mills relayed that he was still working on the November 8, 2022 meeting minutes. For that reason, the consideration of the November 8, 2022 meeting minutes was deferred.

COMMUNICATIONS

All covered in other agenda items.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Flood Conditions

Manager Mills reported that the Kings River was currently running roughly 10,000 cfs at Piedra, and that inflow to Pine Flat Dam (PF) was roughly 4,000 cfs. Storage was 685 TAF in PF, decreasing 10 TAF per day. Current flows along the river were 8,000 cfs at RB Peoples, 7,500 cfs at RB Lemoore, 1,900 cfs in South Fork, 4,580 cfs at RB Crescent. Manager Mills reported on a few flooding issues in the area:

A) Flooding upstream of Peoples Weir, Riverland, Golf Course, etc.

- B) Significant sand movement in channel, and sand bars appearing near diversion.
- C) Minor flooding on the north end of Apex, in Old River channel/slough. Not as bad as 2017 yet.
- D) Deck is off Dutch John Weir and it is completely under water. Still somewhat accessible. Rip rap stockpiled on both sides of weir.
- E) Significant debris problem at Last Chance and Lemoore Weirs. Long-reach excavator being used every three days. Last Chance potentially leasing a long-reach for a month.
- F) Golf Course concerned about likely flooding and asking for material to build up a partial levee.
- G) Flood fields near Everett and 18th Ave, just upstream of Clark's Fork on North side.
- H) KRCD on 24 hour levee patrol.
- I) Crescent Bypass siphons in use

Manager Mills reported that the Kaweah River was releasing roughly 5,500 cfs at Terminus, with an inflow of roughly 2,000 cfs. Storage was 99 TAF at Terminus, and it was decreasing roughly 6.5 TAF per day. Also there was roughly 3,000 cfs flowing through Cross Creek/Lakeside and roughly 900 cfs in Highline Bypass. Manager Mills reported on a few flooding issues in the area:

A) North of Grangeville

- Tony deGroot was/is significantly flooded, along with some others like Roger Dutra.
- A group of landowners got Doug Verboon involved, but then cut the floodwaters into the Lakeland/Highline to relieve flooding on their property.
- Sounds like Boswell observed what they did by helicopter. CID tried to address the situation, but were told they couldn't plug the channel (Flood Order 1). County also cut Grangeville Blvd at the landowners request (Flood Order 1).
- This lead to roughly 600-800 cfs in the Highline moving down into CID basins NE of Corcoran.
- Eventually Boswell negotiated a cut from Highline back into Cross Creek south of Hwy 198 across Jack deJong's property.

B) North of Hwy 198

- Gauging station upstream of Hwy 198 was measuring 2,200 cfs.
- Highline bypass measured at 900 cfs, but 100 cfs being delivered south of "plug" to white area growers.
- Might have also been 50 cfs moving overland and making it through a culvert under Hwy 198, so total would be around 3,150 cfs through the area. Flows have dropped somewhat, but are still pretty similar.

C) Along Cross Creek

- Low areas along Cross Creek are flooding, some places that were planted to trees.
- Several wash-ins along the alignment. KDWCD has been helping with those, but is now saying they've run out of funding.

D) Houston Ave Bridge

- Bridge seems to be bowing in the middle. Assumption is there is an erosion issue with the center support. Bridge has been barricaded (hard close) for a while.
- Recently, the County constructed a kind of safety bypass channel, to hopefully help if the bridge collapsed and mostly blocked the Creek flow. This was done this week by cutting Houston Ave east of the bridge.

Tulare Lake GSP Inadequate Determination

Manager Mills reported on the following related to the recent Tulare Lake GSP Inadequate Determination.

1. March 2, 2023 letter from Paul Gosselin @ DWR to Amer Hussain (Point Of Contact) for TLS of Inadequate Determination.
2. March 28, 2023 letter from Natalie Stork to Paul Gosselin for TLS Inadequate Determination.
3. Deficiency #1 re: chronic lowering of GW levels - "The GSP did not establish sustainable management criteria based on a commensurate level of understanding of the basin setting and the interests of beneficial uses and users have not been considered. The GSP has not explained at what level impacts would be considered significant and unreasonable, nor does it appear that those impacts were accounted for in the development of site-specific measurable objectives and minimum thresholds."
4. Deficiency #2 re: subsidence - "The GSP did not establish subsidence sustainable management criteria based on a commensurate level of understanding of the basin setting and the interests of land surface beneficial uses and users have not been considered. The GSP has not explained at what level impacts would be considered significant and unreasonable, nor does it appear that potential impacts were accounted for in the development of site-specific minimum thresholds. The GSP did not provide measurable objectives."
5. Deficiency #3 re: groundwater quality - "The revised GSP has not established sustainable management criteria and a monitoring network for managing degradation of water quality in a manner consistent with the GSP Regulations and SGMA. Staff Report indicates that the Agencies did not take sufficient actions to correct this deficiency, which materially affects the ability of the Agencies to achieve sustainability and the ability of the Department to evaluate the likelihood of the Plan to achieve sustainability."

DWR & State Board Meetings

Manager Mills reported on the following related to a DWR – State Board – Tulare Lake Subbasin meeting on 03/29/23.

- DWR doesn't want to meet to discuss the evaluation. Made it sound like their role was over.
- State Board doesn't have a defined process for how to proceed, and would be speaking to the Board members about Hearings/Schedule/Priorities/etc.
- There was some discussion of GSP issues with Inadequacy and also 2025 GSP Updates. It was suggested these be folded into the same broader effort, but that was not received well.
- I relayed that there was a disaster in our area and that we needed time to focus on the flood. That did not seem to matter to them.

Manager Mills reported on the following related to a State Board meeting on 04/04/23.

- Discussed how to move forward with six subbasins that are found inadequate. Reviewed general "issues" of the areas. Seemed that the Tulare Lake, Kaweah and Tule were likely to be first group dealt with. Some discussion of using the WY 2022 annual report as a basis for evaluating what areas should proceed first.
- Generally, some members acknowledged that they didn't have unlimited resources for the effort and needed to wait until the coming budget got clearer. Also, that they needed to better understand things in these areas.
- Generally, other members wanted to ensure that quick progress to address deficiencies was made. The phrase, "it was not a pencil down time" was used several times.
- There was discussion about ET monitoring versus flow meter monitoring. State Board staff seemed somewhat skeptical of ET estimates. Seemed to support the concept of groundwater pumping charges.
- Significant discussion from Laurel Firestone on what the GSAs are monitoring and making that information publicly available.
- Received comment from a series of NGOs, but only one GSA.

Possible Next Steps

Manager Mills reported on the following:

1. Communication with the State Board

- State Board members seems to allow anyone to speak with them, and also seem to have little understanding of the TLS area. It appears reasonable to begin communicating more directly with the State Board on important matters in the area.

2. GSP Revisions

- Evaluate the Kings and Westside Subbasins to compare on how they addressed deficiencies.
- Try to engage with DWR to meet on ideas to address deficiencies and gain clarification on their assessment.
- Potentially retain a new consultant on GSP revisions who has been successful in another subbasin.

3. GSA Implementation

- Review and discuss DWR's recent guidance on domestic wells.
- Continue implementing well registration and flow meter policies.
- Develop initial groundwater pumping allocation policy.
- Develop initial on-farm recharge policy.
- Develop initial well mitigation plan or framework.

Mitigation Plan Element Discussion

Manager Mills reported on the following:

- No update on Spring Groundwater levels yet.
- Not many GSP Verifications are coming in.

On-Going Efforts

Manager Mills reported on the following:

- Annual Report Submitted
- Grants

DIRECTOR REPORTS

None

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

The regular May Board of Directors meeting was tentatively set for May 9, 2023 at 1 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Mills
MKR MIN 230411