

CGA/GGA Joint Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2019 | 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Sites Project Authority Office, 122 Old Highway 99 West, Maxwell, CA 95955

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:10 a.m.

In Attendance:

Committee Members: Mark Lohse, Emil Cavagnolo, Oscar Serrano, Bill Vanderwaal, Zac Dickens, David Kehn, Thad Bettner, Jim Wallace, Brandon Davison

Others in Attendance: Lisa Hunter (GGA Staff), Mary Fahey (CGA Staff), Sharla Stockton (Glenn County), George Pendell, Alfred Sellers, Jr. (CGA), Christie Scofield, Lester Messina, Lisa Porta, Tommy Ostrowski, Stephen Marsh, Brett Matzke, Kelsey McNeill, Kurtis Klein, John Smith, Vern Vierra

2. * Approval of Minutes from the April 12, 2019 meeting

Mr. Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2019 meeting. Mr. Dickens seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Period of Public Comment

Mr. Matzke from Cortina Rancheria commented that when recent basin boundary modifications were completed by the Department of Water Resources, additional Rancheria lands were brought into the Colusa Subbasin. He stated that he was not happy about this as he has been working to get the Rancheria lands removed from the basin.

Mr. Klein, a landowner in the hills west of Arbuckle, provided a handout with photos of the 80-acre parcel of land where he lives. He presented his idea of a fair solution to the CGA's Proposition 218 fee assessment that was passed at a public hearing on June 5th. Mr. Klein stated that the fee is unfair for residents with property in the western hills as it places a monetary burden on families that have no way to profit off of their acreage. Mr. Klein stated that three things were established at the CGA's June 5 public hearing:

1. The CGA Board has authority on groundwater and could make changes to billing structures
2. The purpose of the Groundwater Authority is to protect landowners from State intervention
3. City Residents' financial responsibility will be added to their water bills because it will be such a small fee that it would not be worth assessing each small parcel in the city boundaries.

Mr. Klein said that a very simple solution would be to exclude the hill people from the assessment; however, his proposal is that these landowners be treated like any other family/homeowner that is just using household water, and that the hill people should be billed like any other residential homeowner. The CGA could allow property owners to file for an exemption. Requirements to qualify for the exemption would be that properties be non-irrigated and unable to be used for profit.

4. Staff Updates

a. Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model and Water Budget for the Colusa Subbasin

Ms. Fahey reported that both the CGA and GGA Boards had accepted the Joint TAC recommendation to utilize the C2VSimFG model for the Colusa Subbasin GSP. The TAC had also recommended that if C2VSimFG did not become available in the near future, that the consultants should move forward utilizing the 2018 version of C2VSim. Ms. Fahey reported that the updated version of the C2VSimFG model was released in late May and the consultants are now able to move forward. Ms. Hunter said that the Consultants are working on gathering local data to compare with the model to decide where revisions and modifications might need to take place.

Mr. Bettner asked if there was an updated schedule on the Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM)/Water Budget work. Ms. Fahey said that she and Ms. Hunter spoke with Mr. Clark at Davids Engineering the day before and he said that they are about one month behind the original schedule due to the delays in the C2VSimFG release.

It was decided to request an updated schedule from Mr. Clark.

b. Technical Support Services - Monitoring Well Installation

Ms. Fahey described a brief background on the Technical Support Services (TSS) to install a new groundwater level monitoring well in the Arbuckle area. She reported that drilling is scheduled to start on July 8. Construction should take approximately 2 months.

A question was asked why an existing well was not utilized rather than drilling a new well. Dedicated monitoring wells provide multiple benefits including filling data gaps, no direct pumping pressure, multiple completions, continuous data, and known construction.

Mr. Wallace asked about the cost of the well installation. Ms. Fahey said it is approximately \$320,000. DWR contracts directly with the driller, so there is no paperwork that goes through her office, and there are no matching funds required. The CGA will pay for the well drilling permit which is approximately \$350.

Ms. Fahey also mentioned that the TSS program is ongoing and Ms. Hunter added that there may be other opportunities to utilize this program to fill other data gaps. It was also clarified the data collected from the well will be public data.

Mr. Davison, DWR, said that the Arbuckle well is the first TSS well installation in the State. Other opportunities available now are downhole video to clarify well construction and data logger installations in existing wells.

5. Colusa Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Request For Proposals (RFP)

a. Staff update on GGA and CGA Board Actions regarding the RFP process

Ms. Fahey explained that both the CGA and GGA Boards gave the Joint TAC the authority for the following:

- Finalize and release the RFP for GSP development in the Colusa Subbasin
- Facilitate the process to review the proposals and, if needed, interview applicants
- Bring a recommendation for consultant selection to the Boards.

b. * Review and Discuss Draft Request for Proposals, and possible action to authorize designated Staff to release the RFP with any suggested edits

Ms. Hunter had developed a draft RFP for development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Colusa Subbasin that was included in the agenda packet. Discussion was held regarding the draft RFP.

Mr. Bettner said he would like to include information in the RFP related to different funding mechanism options for the GSAs, such as well head fees, pumping charges, etc. He would like to know if the potential proposers have experience in this area. Mr. Bettner also asked to include information about groundwater use allocations. Ms. Hunter asked if those were tasks that he wanted, or just experience. Mr. Bettner replied, experience and potentially a task. He explained that at this point the GSAs don't know what type of funding they are going to need, or if any groundwater allocations will need to be put in place. Should these issues come up, he would like to have a consultant on board that can address these topics.

Mr. Kehn asked if a consultant should be expected to help or to develop applications for grants and TSS applications. Ms. Fahey said that it would be important for consultants to provide technical help for grant applications. It was decided to include general language in the RFP about technical assistance on grant applications.

Mr. Vanderwaal asked what information we will be providing to proposers about work that is currently being done on the HCM and Water Budget. He expressed the need to provide an even playing field for all potential proposers. The current HCM/Water Budget work plan and schedule should be included in the RFP. Mr. Vanderwaal said that from a consultant's point of view, they will need to know the work that Davids Engineering is completing so they don't duplicate these efforts in their proposal. It will affect the schedule that they develop.

Mr. Wallace said we don't have a work product, but we do have the proposal from Davids Engineering. We can put this in as an appendix. Ms. Hunter suggested that we provide the Scope of work and schedule.

Regarding Section 8, criteria and weight, Mr. Vanderwaal suggested changing the weight of some of the criteria. Upon further discussion, it was decided to change the criteria and weight in the following ways:

- Remove the "Completeness" category and make this a "go, no-go" criteria (incomplete proposals will not be considered).
- Combine Experience/References and Capabilities - 35%
- Work Plan - 25%
- Cost - 15%
- Schedule - 25%

Mr. Davison, suggested under item 8 that we add knowledge of State and Federal funding opportunities. Mr. Wallace said that we should also integrate in this section the comments from Mr. Bettner regarding agency funding options, and groundwater use allocation.

Mr. Vanderwaal also requested that proposals use at minimum, 11 or 12 point font.

Mr. Dickens suggested including the GSA's timelines/deadlines for when we need the GSP completed so we can meet the final deadlines.

Ms. Hunter directed the TAC members through the following items:
Contract. It was determined to have the proposers supply their standard contracts, rather than developing a new draft contract.

Task 3 – Regarding the level of detail needed for tasks, Mr. Vanderwaal said the general scope looks good as-is. Ms. Hunter asked if there was any additional detail that should be added, other than what has already been discussed, and there was none suggested.

Task 3.2 – Integrated Hydrologic Modeling (IHM). Davids Engineering is contracted to get this task to a certain point, but not to run specific scenarios that may be needed. Discussion was held and it was decided to utilize the second paragraph, but remove the first sentence and add “Coordinate with team at Davids Engineering to run specific model scenarios.”

Other determinations:

Add in text about the Water Budget/HCM that is being completed and also add that the IHM is also being prepared, although may not be complete.

The TAC agreed to have Ms. Hunter and Ms. Fahey decide who will be the point of contact.

The group agreed to requesting six hard copies. Most members agreed they can utilize digital copies. Mr. Bettner requested a bookmarked PDF file.

Regarding breaking out the proposal costs per GSA, the TAC agreed to leave this out.

Regarding timeline, the TAC decided that we should give the consultants a month to put a proposal together. Final consultant selection will take place at the September meeting of the CGA and the September or October meeting of the GGA.

Mr. Bettner asked to be sure there was a statement that the GSAs have the right to refuse any proposal.

Mr. Vanderwaal made a motion to release the RFP with the suggested changes. Mr. Wallace seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion: Colusa Subbasin Western Boundary

Ms. Hunter introduced this topic and clarified that this committee is the Technical Committee and that fee discussions would not be part of this item, as those are policy discussions to be held at the Board level. Ms. Hunter asked Ms. Stockton to describe maps that were developed to support today’s discussion. Ms. Stockton described the geology of the basin that is illustrated on the maps, including the west side of the basin. Mr. Davison said that the basin boundary was defined based on the geology.

Mr. Vanderwaal asked if we could redefine the western basin boundary in five years when there is another Basin Boundary Modification (BBM) opportunity. Mr. Davison said yes, either a jurisdictional or scientific adjustment can be requested. He said that perhaps new data that the GSAs are collecting through the HCM could help justify a scientific adjustment.

Ms. Fahey commented that it will likely be difficult to get a jurisdictional modification approved on the west side. Mr. Vanderwaal said that he asked this question to make it clear that the GSA cannot arbitrarily change basin boundaries. Ms. Fahey said that during the 2018 BBM process, she looked into a jurisdictional modification to remove the Cortina Rancheria from the Colusa Subbasin and was told by DWR that it would have to be a scientific modification and she did not have the data at that time to support it.

Mr. Klein asked why there wasn't a more practical solution to this. He stated that there is no water where his land is. If there was, there would be farms there. They are at high elevations, 600-700 feet elevations. His concern is that the costs will continue to go up. Mr. Smith, another landowner on the west side, said he has a 600' deep well with a 3/4 HP pump and he can only pump a couple of gallons of water per hour out of his well.

Mr. Bettner suggested that the County could re-zone these parcels. It could be designated as hill country, non-farmable, and prohibited from being farmed.

Mr. Cavagnolo suggested that these landowners are being affected by landowners in the basin pumping. They are receiving the benefits of SGMA compliance through this fee. Mr. Klein said he doesn't want to get out of it, but that he wants to be treated like every other homeowner that uses a home's worth of water.

Mr. Wallace asked if the current fee is the problem, or the prospect of the fee increasing. Mr. Klein said he is concerned about increasing fees. Mr. Wallace said for the next five years, that cannot happen. Mr. Klein said he is not concerned about these five years, the fee has already been passed. The concern is future higher fees.

Ms. Fahey said that over the next five years the GSP will be completed. The GSAs will have the data and knowledge that we don't have now. This issue is on both boards' radars. As the GSAs are developing the Plan and defining management areas, they will gain the knowledge to be able to make these decisions.

Mr. Klein said that he doesn't want someone that doesn't know the area making these decisions.

Ms. Fahey stressed that landowners need to be involved in the Plan development process. The Boards have to take public input into consideration. The local knowledge is very important.

Mr. Cavagnolo also expressed that stakeholders need to stay involved in the process.

Mr. Matzke stated that he applied for boundary modifications, and supplied the scientific information to DWR. The Cortina Rancheria lands do not affect the Tuscan formation at all. He noticed recently that the western boundary of the Colusa Subbasin was moved to take in more of the Rancheria's land than it did previously. He wants to be sure that it is stated that the Cortina Rancheria is a federally recognized Tribe and not subject to SGMA. When we are working on the RFPs and the Plan, everyone needs to realize that the Cortina Rancheria is exempt and not involved in this process.

Mr. Marsh, a landowner in the basin and on the west side, talked about geology and described it as a smoke screen. The geologic mapping is describing soil not water. Landowners cannot farm in the hills on the westside. If exemptions could be put in place, that would be a fair solution.

Ms. Hunter stated that this has been a good conversation, but the fee discussion is more Board/policy related. This body is a Technical committee and can gather technical data to support some of the ideas discussed today.

Mr. Wallace said that he doesn't have a problem helping the hill people with the fee situation, but he feels it's a mistake for them to be excluded. They need the protection. However, he would be willing to work with them, but he would expect some sort of an easement that if GSAs accommodate them, they don't come back in the future asking for something different if things change, such as they determine they can get water to grow vines or trees. 30 years ago, the hills west of Williams were used for raising sheep. If they had taken some sort of easement or agreement at that time, they would not be able to grow trees on that land today.

Mr. Davison said that he is working with both GSAs and they are trying to find a solution. He and his colleagues at DWR are currently working on a well query in the area which will help provide some scientific data. He has communicated this information to his senior staff and Statewide. DWR knows that this is an issue in this basin.

Ms. Hunter mentioned that there will be future discussions on this topic and we will be working to refine existing data.

7. Member Reports and Comments

None

8. Next Meeting: To be determined

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:15 a.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ms. Hunter and Ms. Fahey will work with Mr. Clark at Davids Engineering on an updated schedule for completion of the HCM and Water Budget project.
- Ms. Hunter and Ms. Fahey will determine the Point of Contact for the RFP.
- Ms. Hunter will make the edits to the RFP and Ms. Hunter and Ms. Fahey will finalize the RFP for release.
- Ms. Hunter and Ms. Fahey will determine the timeline for the RFP process.