



Corning Sub-basin GSA Committee Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2022 | 9:30 am
Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Pump Station
7854 County Rd 203, Orland, CA 95963
Public participation was also offered via teleconference

1. Call to Order

John Amaro called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

2. Roll Call

	Party Representative	Member Agency
X	Tom Arnold	County of Glenn
X	Grant Carmon	County of Glenn
X	John Amaro	Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District
X	Pete Knight	Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District
	Julia Violich	Monroeville Water District
	Seth Fiack	Monroeville Water District

Lisa Hunter conducted roll call as noted above.

3. Meeting Minutes

a. *Approval of April 13, 2022 meeting minutes

- No corrections or comments were made on the draft minutes.

On a motion by Mr. Arnold, seconded by Mr. Knight, the meeting minutes of April 13, 2022 were unanimously approved as presented.

4. Period of Public Comment

- Matthew Sturdivant introduced himself as a consultant with LSCE and was listening in on behalf of Eddy Teasdale.

5. Staff Reports

- Ms. Hunter shared the Airborne Electromagnetic Survey (AEM) that Department of Water Resources (DWR) is conducting statewide is expected to be in this area from approximately April 26 through May 23. More information can be found

online at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Data-and-Tools/AEM>

Mr. Knight asked how accurate the information is; whereby Ms. Hunter explained the general method and the need for known data (detailed well log data) to correlate with AEM data. Pat Vellines, DWR, shared there will be a public meeting relating to this topic, but the date has not yet been set. Ritta Martin asked if the area to the west of Black Butte Lake would be covered under this survey. Ms. Hunter encouraged her to review the DWR website which will show the flight lines after the survey is conducted. Ben King stated the Groundwater Resources Association (GRA) will be holding a webinar on this topic. Ms. Hunter also noted that portions of the Colusa and Corning Subbasins were included in the Butte County pilot study about three years ago and that information is also available.

- Ms. Hunter reviewed the status of the Proposition 1 grant the associated agreement with Montgomery & Associates (M&A). She noted the second amendment for the grant had been approved which extended the administrative task through June 30, 2022. The M&A contract has expired and there is no longer consultant support.
- Ms. Hunter reported the future Sustainable Groundwater Management Grants are expected to open a Round 2 solicitation in September 2022 with agreements being executed in July or August of 2023.

6. Presentation: Land IQ

- Joel Kimmelshue, Land IQ, gave a presentation that provided an overview of Land IQ, its history, and applications of the work product. He reviewed examples of monthly field by field evapotranspiration, precipitation, and land use data that has been used for SGMA compliance. He also showed examples of how this tool can be used in the urban setting and cropping trends.
- Del Reimers asked if soil type is accounted for; whereby Mr. Kimmelshue answered that information is available.
- Pete Knight asked for clarification on applied versus consumed water. Mr. Kimmelshue responded the demand is the demand; however, an individual can pump less, for instance, applying deficit irrigation during certain periods. Individual economics then considers the degree that action impacts the crop and to what degree versus water savings.
- Ian Turnbull asked about the error associated with the data and how GSAs that are billing based on this data are dealing with variability. Mr. Kimmelshue responded the accuracy is estimated at +/- 5-7% based on measurements in field.

- Mr. Turnbull asked for clarification on the land use error. Mr. Kimmelshue stated the error is tied to crop type. Rice is over 99% correct and almonds are 98.8% accurate. Fallow versus first year tree crops are less accurate and ground-truthing helps to increase the accuracy with that. Mr. Turnbull provided an example of a GSA that is using a charging structure based on well inventory rather than irrigating/not irrigating. Mr. Kimmelshue noted GSAs can use remote sensing ET data or meter on a well to determine water use and the pros and cons must be weighed to choose the right tool for the GSA. Discussion ensued.
- Ms. Hunter asked if GSAs have used this method for billing based on ET in areas with mixed groundwater/surface water use and how that could be reconciled. Mr. Kimmelshue replied Land IQ cannot tell the water source. On the ground stations have rain gauges, so precipitation can be measured and reconciled with the ET values.
- Del Reimers asked if the Land IQ data knows where all the irrigated acres are. Mr. Kimmelshue stated then land use is mapped out with 97.6% accuracy and the Land IQ data goes back to 2014. Mr. Reimers asked about the cost the data; whereby, Mr. Kimmelshue said they charge by the acre for ET work and depending on complexity, it could range from about \$0.65- \$2.00 per acre.
- Mr. Turnbull asked how quickly a change in crop type is detected. Mr. Kimmelshue responded the detection is correlated to size of project. Small areas can be assessed in about a month. Some data is seasonal and would also need to be accounted for.
- Mr. Carmon asked about a cost estimate for irrigated versus non-irrigated lands. Mr. Kimmelshue stated that type of project would be on a time and materials basis.
- Mr. Reimers asked if the DWR data is public; whereby Mr. Kimmelshue answered that it is and offered free of charge to the public. He further noted that some areas need the information faster or need additional information, and therefore, pay to have the work done independent of the DWR dataset. Peak date tracking can also provide useful information. Discussion ensued on timing and applications of the data.
- Ben King suggested this work be done at the IRWM level and noted this could be a good way to distinguish between rangeland and irrigated acreage and may be a more economical effort than metering. Mr. Kimmelshue suggested speaking with other GSAs that have similar situation as far as land use.
- The committee thanked Mr. Kimmelshue for presenting.

7. Discussion on Legal Counsel to represent the CSGSA as needed

- Ms. Hunter summarized the committee began discussing this topic in March. It was reported in April that Glenn County, County Counsel suggested the CSGSA seek the services of an experienced water attorney and the committee requested Ms. Hunter reach out to Valerie Kincaid of Paris Kincaid Wasiewski, LLP to determine if the firm would be interested in serving as counsel to the CSGSA. Ms. Kincaid responded affirmatively. Staff requested direction from the committee.
- Holly Dawley asked if the CSGSA has a procurement policy. Members shared respective relevant policy information. A simple on-call services agreement was discussed.
- Mr. Knight asked if there is anything coming that needs immediate attention. Ms. Hunter replied the upcoming funding and budget discussions would likely need counsel advice and also any potential agreements among the members.
- Mr. King stated he is opposed to hiring a water attorney for day-to-day business and county counsel could be used for Brown Act compliance. A specialized attorney could be useful for targeted advice like fee studies.
- Ms. Dawley suggested getting a list of qualifications from Ms. Kincaid and bring that to the next meeting. Having someone on-call does not preclude the committee from adding others for specific purposes. Discussion ensued. Mr. Carmon suggested reaching out to Michael Colantuono relating to the fee discussions.
- Governance and fees currently imposed in the region were summarized and discussed.
- Staff was directed to request a draft contract and list of qualifications from Ms. Kincaid and to reach out to Mr. Colantuono. This topic will come to the next meeting as a possible action item.

8. Corning Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan

- a. Discussion on Corning Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan implementation and next steps
 - Ms. Hunter stated the links to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and Annual Reports are located in the meeting packet and comments received on the GSP are included in the meeting packet.
 - Ms. Hunter indicated the total cost of the Annual Report beyond what the grant covered is approximately \$12,000; however, not all the invoices are in yet.

- Mr. King asked how the cost of the Corning Annual Report compared to the Colusa Subbasin Annual Report; whereby Ms. Hunter indicated the costs were comparable.

9. Corning Subbasin Advisory Board Report

- Mr. Amaro stated there was robust discussion on the Annual Report presentation at the April 6, 2022 CSAB meeting, which was covered in the report at the April 13 CSGSA meeting.
- Ms. Hunter announced the next CSAB meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2022.

10. Discussion on Executive Order N-7-22

- *Approve Well Permit Acknowledgement Form and authorize staff to finalize process with the Glenn County Environmental Health Department
- Mr. Amaro introduced the item and referenced the materials included in the meeting packet.
 - Ms. Hunter summarized the background materials and discussion from the April 13, 2022 CSGSA meeting and noted that several GSAs in the region are using a very similar Well Permit Acknowledgement Form.
 - Mr. Carmon stated that because replacement ag wells are being allowed under the current well permit moratorium, it is important to have the Acknowledgement Form in place to comply with the Executive Order. Mr. Amaro agreed.
 - Mr. King asked a question relating to replacement well depth. Mr. Carmon responded that per the moratorium the replacement of a failed ag well is allowed to go deeper than the original, but no bigger in diameter than the original well. Mr. King relayed concerns about water quality at depth and suggested well depths be recorded; whereby Mr. Carmon noted well depth is recorded on the logs.

On a motion by Mr. Carmon, seconded by Mr. Knight, it was unanimously approved to send the proposed draft to the County and receive their input.

11. Corning Sub-basin GSA 2022/2023 Budget

- Discuss Short Term Funding Strategy
 - Provide direction on a proposed agreement among member agencies to fund specific tasks or explore other potential options to meet short term funding needs
- Ms. Hunter stated the funding item has been discussed at the last few CSGSA meetings and the committee requested that some additional information and figures be brought back for consideration. Ms. Hunter reviewed the draft budget provided in the GSP. If immediate term items are prioritized, the budget would be

\$197,000 for fiscal year 2022/2023. If split evenly, each member's share would be \$65,667.

- Mr. Amaro noted that although Glenn County has provided administrative services, GCID does not have a large footprint in the basin and perhaps another allocation method could be used. Mr. Knight asked if reimbursement at a later date would be possible.
- Mr. King asked if the GCID deep wells are located in the subbasin and noted that even if their footprint is small, they may still pump groundwater.
- Mr. Amaro suggested this be brought to the member boards for discussion. Mr. Carmon suggested moving forward with an immediate interim funding mechanism to help with these initial costs. Discussion ensued on initial budget figures, considerations, and processes including local examples.
- Mr. Carmon suggested to request each member provide a contribution of \$40,000. Members agreed to take the request to their respective member agency.
- Mr. Reimers shared concerns about equitable distribution of charges, particularly related to the rangeland areas. Pete Knight exited the meeting at approximately 11:25 a.m. Discussion ensued and there was general agreement in structuring a fee that accounts for different land uses.

12. Discussion on Funding Mechanisms for GSP Implementation

- a. *Appoint an ad hoc committee to develop and release a Request for Proposals to solicit a consultant to develop and implement one or more funding mechanisms for Corning Subbasin GSP implementation
- The CSGSA was not in favor of creating an ad hoc committee. Ms. Hunter stated the reason for the proposed ad hoc committee would be to serve as a working group to prepare a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) and bring to the next board meeting in a final draft form.
 - At the committee's discretion, John Amaro and Grant Carmon were appointed to serve on an ad hoc committee to bring a draft RFP to the CSGSA for consideration.
 - Mr. Reimers asked for clarification on the \$0.29 charge in Tehama County and how much of that funding will support the Corning Subbasin. Discussion ensued on the GSAs' responsibility to fund GSA administration and GSP implementation for their portion of the subbasin through their own funding mechanism (GSA specific). There will also be shared costs and the GSAs will need to decide how to split those costs. It is expected shared costs will be a future CSAB meeting topic.
 - Mr. Turnbull commented that early in the SGMA process, a proposal was made to split the Corning Subbasin at the County line, and there was little support for that

proposal, which ultimately did not pass and the subbasin basin remained a single subbasin.

- Ms. Martin asked if a representative from the non-irrigated lands areas could be added to the ad hoc committee. There was some discussion on the amount on non-irrigated acreage within the CSGSA. Ms. Lely reiterated Ms. Martin's request. Ms. Hunter clarified the ad hoc committee would only be developing the RFP and bringing it back to a future meeting, not managing the RFP or the funding mechanism process, and that adding members is at the CSGSA's discretion. Mr. King suggested public participation at the ad hoc committee be allowed. The committee was left as is, but there was a commitment to bring more detailed funding mechanism discussions to board meetings during the process.

13. Corning Sub-basin GSA Committee Member Reports and Comments

- Mr. Carmon announced the County's Drought Task Force meeting is scheduled for May 12 at 3:00 p.m. DWR and GCID will each provide a report as well as an update from DWR and the City of Orland on the City's project.

14. Next Meeting

The next CSGSA is scheduled for June 8, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:48 a.m.