

# GLENN COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Glenn County Department of Agriculture  
720 North Colusa St., P.O. Box 351, Willows, CA 95988  
Phone: (530) 934-6501 Fax: (530) 934-6503

E-mail: [wateradv@countyofglenn.net](mailto:wateradv@countyofglenn.net) Web Page: [www.glenncountywater.org](http://www.glenncountywater.org)

## MINUTES

Meeting Date: December 10, 2013

Time: 1:30 pm

Place: Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District  
344 East Laurel Street  
Willows, CA 95988

### Water Advisory Committee Members Present:

Larry Domenighini	Glenn County Farm Bureau
Ted Trimble	Western Canal Water District
Mike Alves	TC Canal Authority Districts
Mark Lohse	At-Large Private Pumper
Bruce Roundy	Resource Conservation District

### Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Leigh McDaniel	Glenn Co. Board of Supervisors
Lance Boyd	South Area
Roy Hull	Department of Water Resources
Anjanette Shadley-Martin	East Area
Jim Donnelly	Glenn County Ag Commissioner

### Water Advisory Committee Members Absent:

David Alves	Central River Irrigation Districts
Sandy Willard-Denn	GCID
Ken Sullivan	Orland Unit Water Users Assoc.
Mike Vereschagin	TC Canal Authority Districts
Darin Titus	At-Large Private Pumper
John Garner	At-Large Private Pumper

### Others in Attendance:

John D. Brooks	
Lisa Hunter	Glenn Co. Ag Dept.
Brian Taylor	Glenn Co. Ag Dept.
Eric Miller	MPM Engineering
John Garner (for David Alves)	PCG Irrigation District

- I. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Those in attendance introduced themselves.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Draft minutes from the previous meetings on July 8th and June 11th were not available. The approval of the minutes was postponed until the following meeting.
- III. **AGENDA ITEMS:**
  - A. **Public Comment:** None.
  - B. **Discussion & Action Items:**
    1. **TAC Report**

A summary of the TAC meeting held on August 6th was given; the meeting included presentations on water quality data from the summer and the GCID transfer program which included data collected regarding the abnormal groundwater level complaints in the area.

**2. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

There were insufficient committee members present for a quorum. Elections will be held at the next WAC meeting.

**3. Update on Member Vacancies**

The two current vacancies on the WAC consist of an at-large position and a member of the East County Reclamation and Irrigation Districts, and a TAC position for a member of Planning and Public Works.

**4. Update on 2013 Groundwater Substitution Transfers**

The transfers have been completed and there have been no new complaints. The final reports will be ready in the spring. It was also mentioned that there will probably be a great need for water transfer programs and potential following this year considering the dry weather conditions.

**5. Fall Groundwater Measurements**

Roy Hull, DWR, provided a report on both spring 2013 and fall 2013 groundwater measurements. The report was prefaced by a discussion of the variables which may potentially influence the consistency and accuracy of the measurements, such as locality and timing of the measurements. The report emphasized that despite the small upward trend in water levels observed on an annual basis in some areas, there is a general decline observable in the long-term data across the majority of the region, particularly in the Northwestern portion of Glenn County. Change maps were also handed out.

**6. Reports**

a) Board of Supervisors report – a summary of the report given to the Board of Supervisors in August was included as an attachment to the agenda. Topics included in the report were:

- Completion of the Glenn County Groundwater Reliability and Recharge Pilot Project Grant
- Spring groundwater measurements
- Summer water quality measurements
- Abnormal groundwater level reports
- Ad Hoc Committee activities
- WAC/TAC vacancies
- Upcoming WAC activities

b) Western Glenn County ad hoc committee report – a summary of the committee’s activities over the past four months (some of which were also referenced in the previous agenda item) was also included as an attachment to the agenda. Topics included:

- Potential for modeling studies including scope and funding
- Surface and groundwater cost study analysis
- Discussion points concerning policy from the July WAC meeting
- Options for county government involvement
- Surface water areas of need and detention basins/recharge possibilities
- Bureau of Reclamation involvement
- Well mapping in the “problem area”

**C. Communications:** Attached to the agenda packet.

**D. Member Reports:**

Mr. Domenighini briefly discussed his attendance at the joint Butte County and Aquallinace Groundwater meeting. Ms. Hunter mentioned that the BDCP had been released and comments are due in April. Also, a DWR Sacramento River Regional Forum meeting will be held in Redding on 12/11/13.

IV. NEXT MEETINGS: The next WAC meeting was tentatively scheduled for January or February. There was no date set for the next TAC meeting.

# Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management – A Summary



# The Basin

- 800 square miles
- Approx. 30 million acre-feet
- 40% of agriculture in the region and thousands of residents entirely dependent on basin groundwater

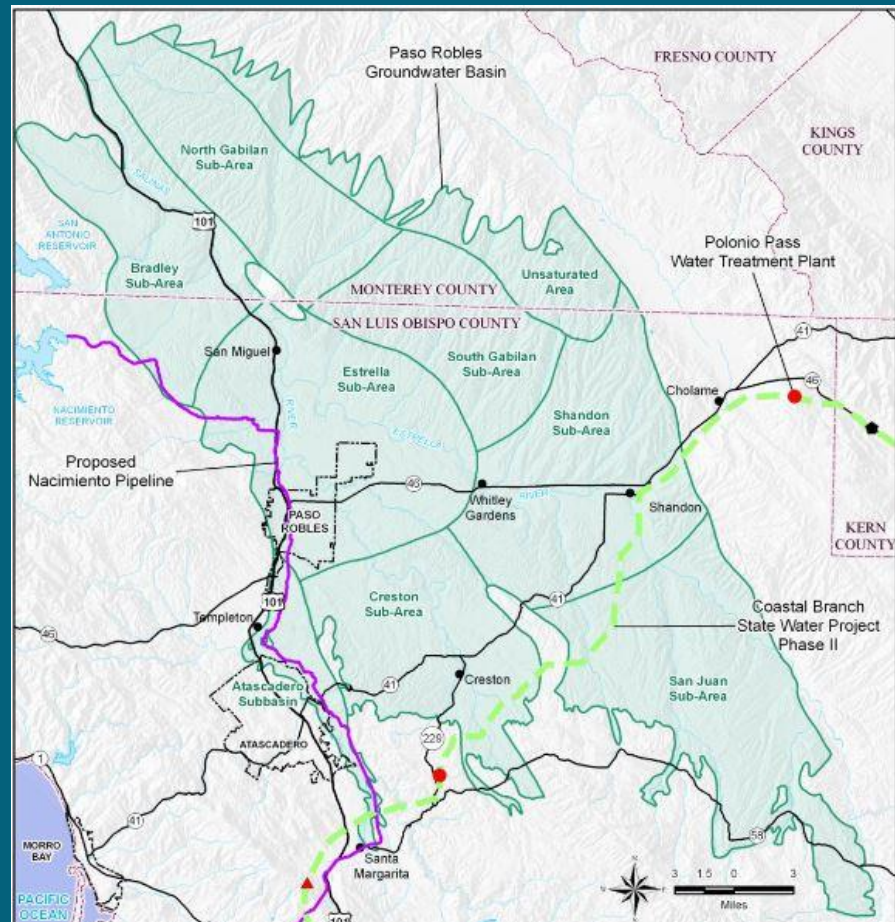
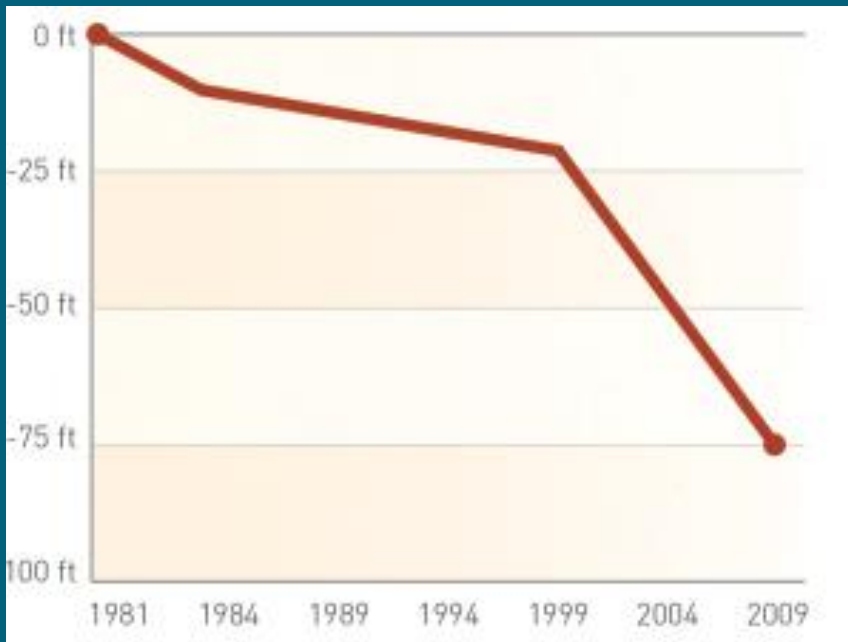


Image source: <http://prwaterbasin.wordpress.com>

# The Problem

## Cumulative Change in Groundwater Level



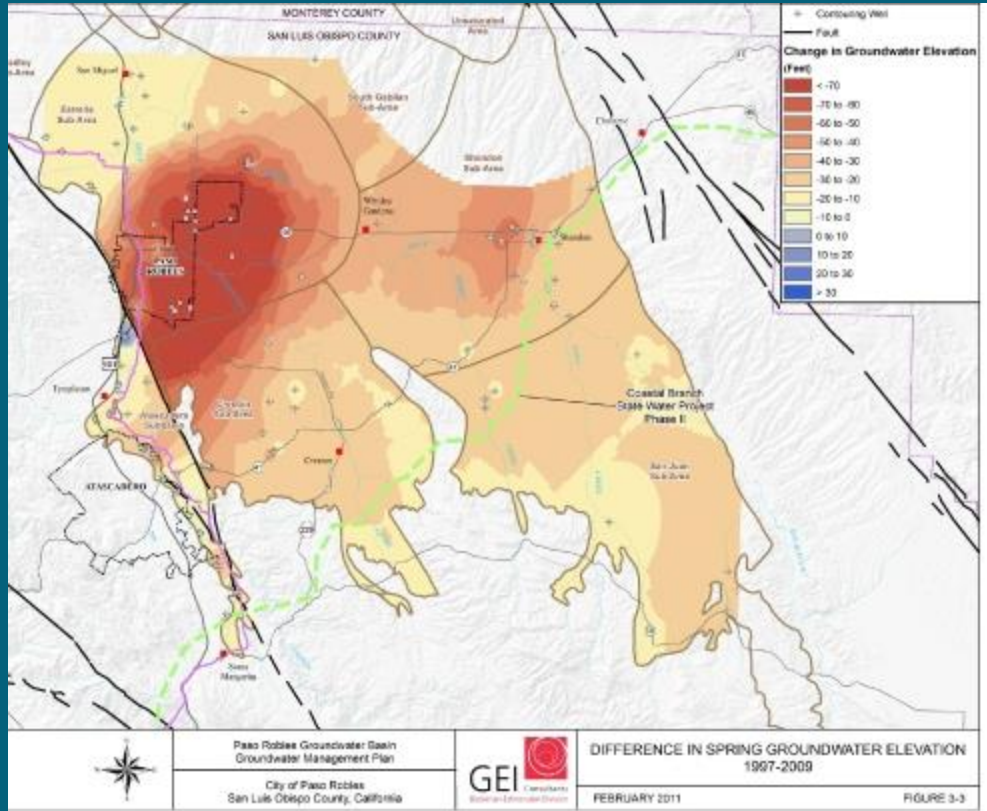
- Increased agricultural use and population levels have increased demand for water
- Basin is approaching its “safe yield” – more out than in
- Groundwater levels are declining significantly, with increasing numbers of dry wells

Source: Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management Plan, Estrella Area Composite Well Hydrograph



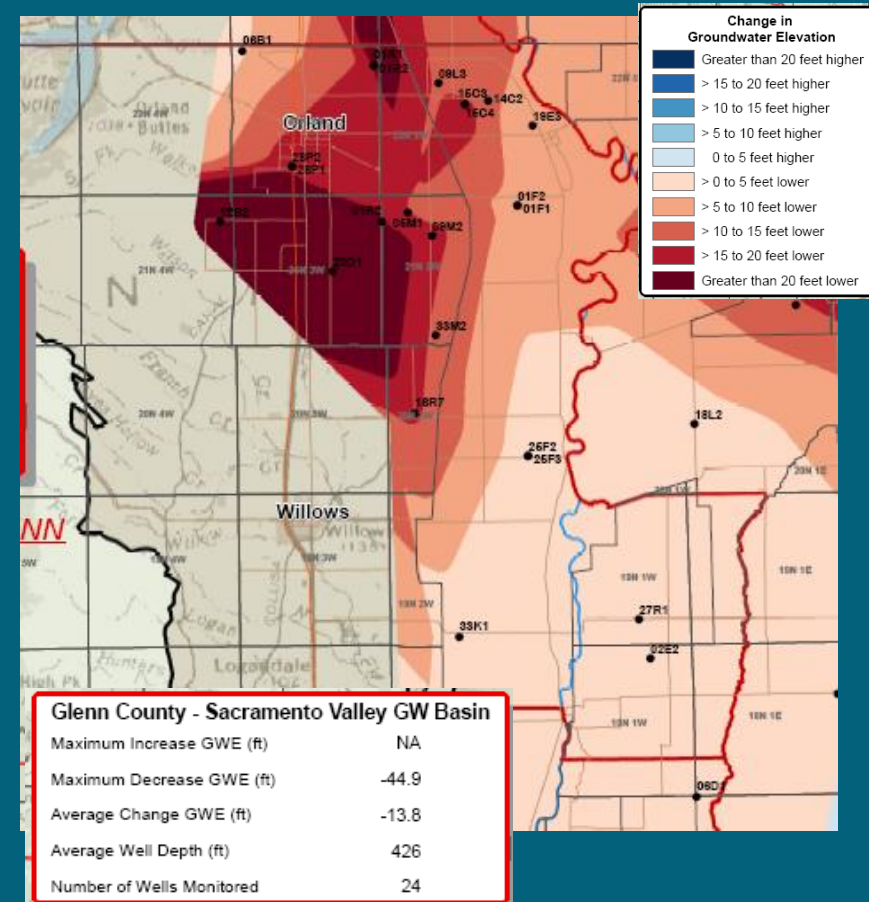
# Similarities to local issues

SLO County, 1997-2008



Source: <http://prwaterbasin.wordpress.com>

Glenn County, 2004-2013



# Management Strategy

- Blue Ribbon Committee (formerly steering committee)  
Formed 2011 – outreach, education, increased monitoring
- Members include the City of Atascadero and Paso Robles, Atascadero Mutual Water Company, the Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Atascadero Mutual Water Company and various community service districts and public organizations
- Responsible for implementing the Groundwater Basin Management Plan

# Groundwater Basin Management Plan

- Numerous Reports/Studies in the early 2000s
- Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management Plan (PRGBMP) adopted March 12, 2012.
- Funded (partially) by Local Groundwater Assistance Grant Program (AB303)
- City of Paso Robles is lead agency, and contractor with California Department of Water Resources
- San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District co-lead agencies in conjunction with Dir. Of Public Works
- Intended “to establish a regional approach to groundwater management in the Paso Robles Basin” (WRAC, 2011)



# Groundwater Basin Management Plan

## Results of BMO Workshops – Groundwater Level BMO by Subarea

Subarea/Subbasin	Basin Management Objective (BMO)
Atascadero	Stabilize groundwater levels at 2009 levels
Bradley	Maintain groundwater levels
Creston	Stop decline and stabilize levels at 2009 levels
Estrella	Stabilize groundwater levels
North Gabilan	Maintain high groundwater levels
San Juan	Maintain groundwater levels
Shandon	Stabilize groundwater levels
South Gabilan	Maintain groundwater levels

Source: SLO water resources advisory committee 6/11

- Basin management objectives determined on a regional level based on monitoring data
- Goals are flexible, can be adjusted to reflect new data
- Increased monitoring efforts and revised basin models
- Conservation efforts mostly voluntary – coordination and outreach, including the Blue Ribbon Committee website: <http://prwaterbasin.wordpress.com>

# Urgency Ordinance

- Began as a 45-day ordinance, extended to a two-year ordinance established August 27, 2013, prohibits:
  - New or Expanded Irrigated Crop Production
  - Conversion of Dry Farm or Grazing Land to New Irrigated Crop Production
  - New development dependent upon a well in the Basin
- For new orchards/vineyards: new water demand must be offset at a ratio of at least 1:1 - requires offset clearance by the Department of Planning and Building
- Any new well must be metered, with data collected and maintained by the property owner

# Urgency Ordinance - exemptions

- All existing irrigated crops and construction/land use based on permits issued prior to August 27, 2013 *not* subject to ordinance
- Ponds, reservoirs, replacement of existing structures (including old wells) and some remodeling projects also allowed
- Works in varying states of progress need to demonstrate “vested rights” to be exempt – subject to review on a case-by-case basis

# Recent developments

- Two lawsuits challenging the ordinance filed in SLO Superior Court in November—perhaps the beginning of adjudication?
- Formation of a comprehensive water district seen as an alternative to adjudication
- December/January: Proposal to establish a water district: joint effort by Board of Supervisors , Planning Dept., PRO Water Equity (residents) & Paso Robles Agricultural Alliance for Groundwater Solutions (vineyard owners)
- Proposed district would have a nine-member BOD, three elected by residents, six landowners (two each of small, medium and large parcel holders)

Glenn County Water Advisory  
Committee-Ad hoc Committee

**Report on Groundwater  
Level Declines in  
Western Glenn County**

## *Ad hoc* : “concerned with a particular end or purpose”

.The purpose of this committee is to:

- Research the declining groundwater levels observed on the west side of Glenn County.
- Develop potential solutions including stabilizing and/or reversing the downward groundwater level trend in that area.
- Develop a list of projects.
- Determine potential funding opportunities.
- Develop additional ideas to investigate.
- Make recommendations to the WAC.



# General Topics

1. Mapping
2. Surface Water Use
3. Cost Study Analysis
4. Groundwater and Surface Water Modeling
5. Recharge Activities
6. Coordination, Outreach, and Education
7. Basin Management Objectives
8. County Governance Options



## Surface Water Use

- Efficient surface water use lessens groundwater demand
- Increased short-term costs but enhanced sustainability
- A report detailing water sources/types/users for outreach and coordination efforts is recommended

## Cost Study Analysis

- Groundwater vs. surface water
- Capital costs, operating costs, fixed vs. variable
- Preliminary estimate of groundwater costs is \$60-120 per af
- Project direction by TAC, with Allan Fulton as TAC representative for the UC Cooperative Extension

# Groundwater and Surface Water Modeling

- No modeling studies currently underway: need to determine model criteria, sources of funding
- Possibility of collaboration with Tehama/Colusa Counties— issues expand beyond county borders

## Recharge Activities

- All potential recharge activities need continued evaluation: in-lieu, active, detention basins
- A number of local studies exist – a summary is recommended
- Reoperation of T-C Canal could make more water available

# Coordination, Outreach and Education

- Partnerships as long-term investments
- Collaboration with state agencies, local agencies, regional partners and other counties for effective management
- More informational reports to partners
- More public engagement through newsletters, local media, web updates

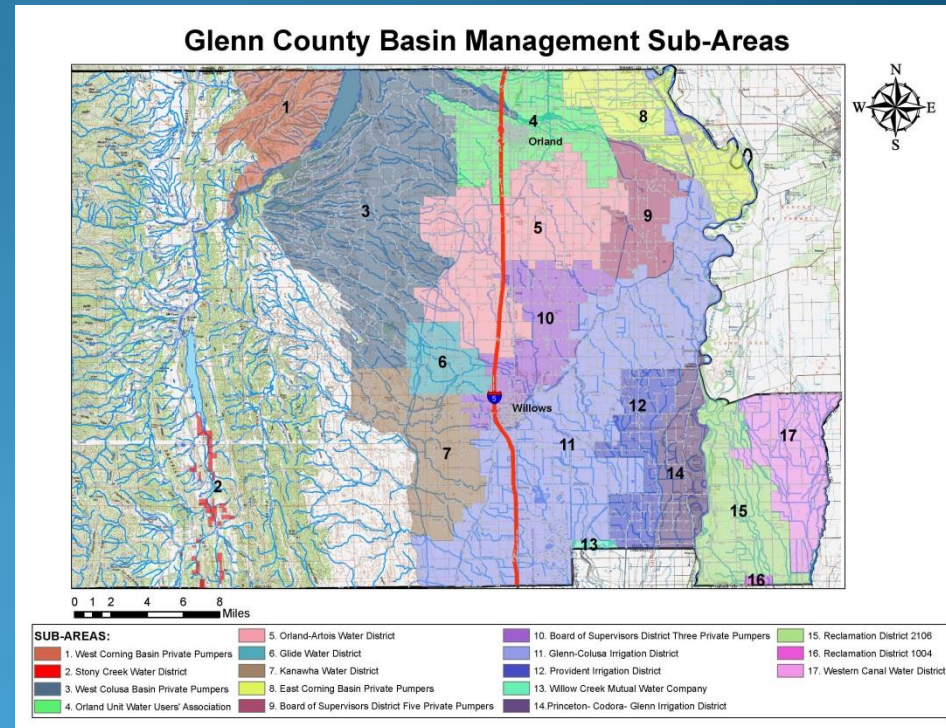


**Glenn County Resource Conservation District**



# Basin Management Objectives

- BMOs set forth in Ordinance 1237 (2012)
- TAC should review & update
- Aspects to consider:
  - appropriateness of current BMO levels
  - which wells should be used (type & location)
  - how to define different aquifer zones
  - whether to change BMO sub-area borders
  - use of cumulative frequency curve for risk analysis





# County Governance Options

- All options should be vetted through WAC, BOS
- Additional outreach to affected parties, landowners, public
- Other counties with established processes can serve as model – e.g. San Luis Obispo’s blue ribbon committee, urgency ordinance, top ranked solutions
- Local options include:
  - changes to the County Ordinance governing water management
  - changes in well permitting – more information/restrictions
  - addition of fees for management
  - local groundwater users program , voluntary pumping coordination
- A multi-faceted approach will be necessary – combined efforts and resources