

GLENN COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Glenn County Department of Agriculture
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MINUTES

Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2015

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	Private Pumper
Bruce Roundy	Resource Conservation District
Ken Sullivan	Orland Water Users Association
David Alves	Central River Irrigation Districts
Terry Bressler	East County Rec & Irr Districts
Rob Vlach	Private Pumper
John Garner	Private Pumper

Water Advisory Committee Members Absent:

Darin Titus	Private Pumper
Mike Vereschagin	TC Canal Authority Districts
Sandy Willard-Denn	GCID

Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Roy Hull	DWR
Ben Pennock	Central Area
Matt Gomes	Glenn County PPWA
Jim Donnelly	Glenn Co. Ag Dept.
John Brooks	North Area

Others in Attendance:

Lisa Hunter	Glenn Co. Ag Dept.
Brian Taylor	Glenn Co. Ag Dept.
Erin Smith	DWR
Jeff Sutton	TC Area
Hank Wallace	Self
Carol Perkins	Butte Environmental Council
Lester Messina	CGSP
Mary Fahey	Colusa County
George Pendell	
Will Martin	Capay Farms
Zac Dickens	GCID
Geoff Fulks	Cal Water
Barbara Hennigan	BSBAGU

- I. INTRODUCTIONS: Those in attendance introduced themselves.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Draft minutes from the previous meeting on December 9, 2014 were unanimously approved as submitted.
- III. AGENDA ITEMS:
 - A. **Public Comment**: None.

B. Discussion & Action Items:

1. Update on member vacancies

Mr. Terry Bressler was welcomed to the Water Advisory Committee as the newly appointed representative of the East County Reclamation and Irrigation Districts.

2. Reports

a) TAC update: The Technical Advisory Committee last met December 15, 2014, to review the responsibilities of the committee as detailed in the county ordinance, receive an update on fall groundwater levels from Roy Hull (DWR), and to continue to discuss revisions to the current Basin Management Objectives. Discussion included a review of how the initial BMO levels came to be established. Next steps include incorporating updated cumulative frequency charts, potential redefinition of stage alert levels, and protocol in response to stage alert levels. An Ad Hoc Committee has been formed to expedite the revision process, and is expected to bring suggestions forward at the next meeting. Possible changes to abnormal groundwater level reporting and responses to these reports will also be proposed. TAC members will bring ideas for report revisions to the next meeting.

b) Education / Outreach Committee update: Mr. Domenighini reviewed the press release included in the agenda packet concerning the planned outreach meetings. The first will be Thursday February 19th at Willows City Hall, the 2nd will be Feb. 26th at the Orland Fairgrounds and the last meeting will be March 5th at the Ord Bend Community Hall. The meetings will be held from approximately 6:30 to 8:00 and will address the county's hydrology, summarize WAC activities and provide information concerning the recent groundwater legislation. To raise awareness of the meetings, meeting announcements were sent to approximately 1,000 pesticide permit holders within the county, announcements will be placed in the upcoming newsletter by the Glenn County Farm Bureau, an announcement was in the UC Cooperative Extension newsletter, a notice was placed on the WAC website, and a copy of the press release was sent to the local newspapers. Glenn County Farm Bureau and the UC Cooperative Extension are co-sponsoring the meetings.

c) Legislation Committee update: On January 20th, Mr. Domenighini and Ms. Hunter, in conjunction with Thad Bettner from GCID, presented a summary of the recent groundwater legislation to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Domenighini also referenced a memo to WAC members that is included in the agenda packet asking for their input on next steps for the legislation committee. One step could be to have meetings with districts/agencies to begin coordinating the establishment of local GSAs. Jeff Sutton from the TCCA asked whether there was still an opportunity to participate in this committee. He also recommended that local agencies be prepared to participate in the legislative process to help shape forthcoming regulations. Mr. Domenighini encouraged local agencies to contact himself or Ms. Hunter with their input regarding the next steps for the committee.

3. DWR Update

Erin Smith from the Department of Water Resources presented an update on county and regional groundwater levels. She began with a water year index from 1971 through 2014, showing several recent dry/critical years, and the Northern Sierra Precipitation 8-station index, which showed the daily precipitation for the current year is approaching average levels. Next, she discussed the updated fall groundwater change elevation maps. From 2004-2014 for wells of intermediate depth (100-450 feet) and deeper wells (600+ feet) across the valley as a whole and for Glenn County alone, the changes in elevation were generally downward, being more pronounced in the deeper wells. Approximately 155 wells are measured in Glenn County. In closing, Ms. Smith promoted the DWR's Groundwater Information Center as an additional resource for local agencies and the general public.

Mr. Hull then transitioned into a presentation on the results of a GPS ground surface elevation study. A GPS survey grid was established for Glenn County in 2004, and expanded to include the rest of the valley in 2008 when the second set of measurements were collected within the county. An analysis of the results was conducted in 2015 (for Glenn County only as the rest of the valley was lacking a second data set). Accounting for the margin of error inherent to the survey (± 2 -4 cm, or .75-1.5 inches, approximately), there were two areas of interest within the county. To the southwest of Orland there was an elevation change which was at the upper limit of the margin of error (approximately 1.5 inches) but may be considered significant because it is substantially larger than the negligible values observed in the rest of the county. An even more significant change was detected to the southeast of Hamilton City, where the ground surface elevation showed a change of 4-5 inches, a change Mr. Hull defined as “significant enough to warrant [an] investigation.” At present, there is insufficient data to attribute the change to a particular cause.

Data collected from an extensometer located off of Highway 32 between Orland and Hamilton City between 2005-2015 showed periodic variations in ground surface elevation of .15-.05 inches but no cumulative long-term changes. Mr. Hull explained that this is indicative of a certain level of elasticity within the soil composition of the county. However, the presence of clay layers (which become compressed when dehydrated and do not re-expand) at shallow depths in certain areas may make them susceptible to permanent subsidence in the event of prolonged drainage. Follow-up surveys incorporating additional data points (including ones in adjacent counties) may be necessary to determine what effects, if any, have resulted from the recent drought conditions.

4. Groundwater quality assessment report

Lester Messina of the Glenn-Colusa Subwatershed presented a summary of the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition’s groundwater quality assessment report. The report addressed the vulnerability of the region in terms of its susceptibility to increased nitrate concentrations and included results of recent nitrate sampling in Glenn, Colusa, Shasta, Butte, Yuba, and Sutter counties. Overall, the Nitrogen Hazard Index for Glenn and surrounding counties is low compared to more problematic areas of the state but there are isolated regions of high vulnerability.

5. Other topics of interest: None

C. Communications: None.

D. Member Reports: Larry Domenighini commented on the projected inflow to Shasta.

IV. NEXT MEETINGS:

The next WAC meeting will be scheduled for April, May, or June 2015. Informational memos may be sent in lieu of meetings depending on topics to be covered. The Legislative ad hoc committee will schedule meetings with the districts and other agencies/cities regarding GSA establishment. Date and time to be determined. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.