

**GLENN COUNTY  
WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Glenn County Department of Agriculture  
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**AGENDA**

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, December 9, 2014  
**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.  
**PLACE:** Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District  
344 East Laurel Street  
Willows, CA 95988

**I. INTRODUCTIONS:**

**Water Advisory Committee Members:**

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| David Alves        | Central River Irrigation Districts                           |
| Vacant             | East County Reclamation and Irrigation Districts             |
| Ted Trimble        | East County Reclamation and Irrigation Districts             |
| Sandy Willard Denn | Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District                             |
| Larry Domenighini  | Glenn County Farm Bureau                                     |
| Ken Sullivan       | Orland Unit Water Users Association                          |
| Bruce Roundy       | Resource Conservation District                               |
| Mike Vereschagin   | Tehama Colusa Canal Authority Districts                      |
| Mike Alves         | Tehama Colusa Canal Authority Districts                      |
| Mark Lohse         | At-Large Private Pumpers (Agricultural/Municipal/Industrial) |
| Rob Vlach          | At-Large Private Pumpers (Agricultural/Municipal/Industrial) |
| Darin Titus        | At-Large Private Pumpers (Agricultural/Municipal/Industrial) |
| John Garner        | At-Large Private Pumpers (Agricultural/Municipal/Industrial) |

**Technical Advisory Committee Members:**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Lance Boyd        | At-Large, South Area                   |
| Roy Hull          | Department of Water Resources          |
| Allan Fulton      | UC Cooperative Extension               |
| Matt Gomes        | Glenn County Planning and Public Works |
| Kevin Backus      | Glenn County Environmental Health      |
| Ben Pennock       | At-Large, Central Area                 |
| Jim Donnelly      | Glenn County Department of Agriculture |
| Anjanette Shadley | At-Large, East Area                    |
| John Brooks       | At-Large, North Area                   |
| Leigh McDaniel    | Board of Supervisors (ex-officio)      |

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- A. Consider approval of the Minutes from the joint WAC/TAC meeting of October 23, 2014.
- B. Consider approval of the Minutes from the meeting of June 10, 2014.

### **III. AGENDA ITEMS:**

#### **A. Public Comment:**

Any person wanting to address the Water Advisory Committee on any item NOT ON TODAY'S AGENDA may do so at this time. The Water Advisory Committee will not be making decisions or determinations on items brought up during Public Comment.

#### **B. Discussion and/or Action Items:**

1. Update on member vacancies
2. Reports
  - a) TAC
    - i. Discussion/Possible action on BMO revision updates-present potential Basin Management Areas
  - b) Education/Outreach Committee
  - c) Legislation Committee
    - i. Presentation on Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
3. Other Topics of Interest

#### **C. Communications:**

#### **D. Member Reports:**

At this time WAC members are encouraged to discuss upcoming or ongoing activities that may be of interest to the committee.

### **IV. NEXT MEETINGS:**

The next WAC meeting will be tentatively scheduled at this meeting.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2014 at 1:30 pm at 720 North Colusa Street, Willows, California, 95988.

Any documents related to agenda items that are made available to the Water Advisory Committee before the meeting shall be available for review during regular business hours at 720 North Colusa Street, Willows, California, 95988.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance or accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact Lisa Hunter at the Glenn County Department of Agriculture at 530-934-6501. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Glenn County Water Advisory Committee to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.101-35.164 ADA Title II.)

## **Memo**

**To:** WAC/TAC members  
**From:** Larry Domenighini, WAC chairman  
**Date:** December 2, 2014  
**Re:** December 9, 2014 WAC meeting

The next WAC meeting will focus on three main topics:

### **BMO revisions**

The TAC has been continuing its work on BMO revisions and will provide a presentation on their recommendation for new BMO area boundaries that are more in line with observed Glenn County hydrology and DWR Bulletin 118 basin boundaries. The TAC will be looking for WAC comments and/or approval regarding the new BMO boundaries before moving on to revisions of stage alert definitions and actions, monitoring wells, and stage alerts levels. This BMO revision process is driven by three factors which are:

1. Ordinance 1237, section 20.03.110, Review of Technical Data, subsection B *“During the non-irrigation season, the TAC meetings will focus on review of BMO compliance for the previous irrigation season and development of new BMO criteria for the following year.”*
2. The “Report on Groundwater Level Declines in Western Glenn County” (Adhoc report) and its accompanying Action List , adopted by the WAC and BOS in May 2014, lists among other BMO revisions the following direction regarding BMO revision:

*“It is the recommendation of this committee that the WAC direct the TAC to review the current BMOs and update if necessary. It will be important for these levels to accurately represent the wells and conditions in the area to best manage the groundwater.”*

And also:

*“Should the BMOs be based on the current political boundaries or is it time to manage the groundwater more cooperatively with neighboring entities and “blur” the BMO lines to better reflect the conditions of the aquifer in that region?”*

3. At the May 6, 2014 WAC meeting the TAC was given the following direction from the WAC: *“It was determined that a county-wide review and/or revision utilizing cumulative frequency curves should be considered, with the TAC working on the specifics of the revisions using the ad hoc committee action list as a guide. The TAC will*

*provide periodic updates prior to presenting their final suggestions to the WAC, which would subsequently make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, with a goal to be completed by the end of 2014.”*

For more information concerning the current BMO revision process refer to the Adhoc report and Action List accompanying this memo.

**Outreach Subcommittee Report:**

The Outreach subcommittee will report on its current outreach program. A basic outline of the proposed outreach program is:

- Three meetings in February 2015, one each in Willows, Orland, and Ord Bend. Each meeting will start at 6pm.
- Three topics will be covered: “Glenn County Hydrology” by Allan Fulton, “WAC Overview Activities” by Larry Domenighini, and “What the New State Groundwater Legislation Means for Glenn County”, speaker not yet identified. Each presentation will run 15-20 minutes with time for questions and answers.
- Current planning includes a moderator (not yet chosen) for the evening and possibly a panel format including the presenters and two or three other individuals involved in water activities that would assist in addressing audience questions.

The Glenn County Rangeland Association has asked Lisa to give a presentation on groundwater issues at a future meeting of theirs. The format of that presentation remains to be determined.

**Legislative Subcommittee Report:**

The Legislative subcommittee will give a presentation explaining the new Groundwater legislation enacted by the State in September. The presentation is still undergoing editing but copies of it will be available at the meeting.

# Glenn County Water Advisory Committee-Ad hoc Committee Report on Groundwater Level Declines in Western Glenn County

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**"It is the desire of the people of Glenn County that sufficient and affordable water of good quality be available on a sustainable basis to meet the needs of agricultural, industrial, recreational, environmental, residential and municipal users within the county, both now and in the future."—Goal of the Glenn County Water Advisory Committee**

The ad hoc committee was formed at the July 8, 2013 Water Advisory Committee (WAC)/Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) joint meeting. The committee met July 18, 2013, November 7, 2013, January 10, 2014, February 27, 2014, and April 17, 2014. The purpose of this committee is to:

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

It is the intention that the committee will develop an "Action List" to present to the Water Advisory Committee. The committee's expectation is to develop potential solutions, actions, and additional ideas to investigate that will help maintain a reliable water source for the people in Glenn County (County).

The committee has discussed many topics that have been broken down into eight general categories in relation to the groundwater levels in western Glenn County. The general topics are as follows:

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

Recommendations and work completed by the committee under these general topics are discussed below.

## **Modeling and Water Budget**

Use of groundwater and surface water modeling is suggested for Glenn County. It would also be reasonable to include Tehama and/or Colusa Counties if funding is available due to the similarities in hydrology and location. An end result of the modeling effort would be a county-wide water budget.

It is this committee's opinion that surface and groundwater modeling that is coupled with other types of field monitoring is one element of a cost-effective approach to managing water supplies in Glenn County. It is the recommendation of this committee that the WAC and TAC seek funding for this item. While funding is being sought, the committees should research and investigate the types of models available, the extent of field calibration that has already been completed, and the appropriateness of their application to Glenn County and the surrounding northern Sacramento Valley area. A summary report should be encouraged. In addition, the committees must determine the criteria to be used and what questions the model should seek to answer (e.g. best places for recharge, water flow, sustainability at current use). The ultimate goal of modeling would be to establish a water budget in Glenn County in order to make more informed management decisions based upon good science. This should be considered a foundational item.

## **Cost Study Analysis**

A cost study analysis to determine the cost of groundwater use versus the cost of surface water use would help understand incentives and constraints to improving coordinated use of surface and groundwater resources. This would entail total costs of groundwater use including fixed capital costs and variable operating costs. Capital costs would include the cost of drilling, well construction, well development, power transmission costs, and costs for the pumping plant. Variable operating costs would include energy costs giving consideration to Time of Use (TOU) rates for electric motors and alternative fuels for engines, maintenance, and filtration. In a similar way, total costs of surface water will be evaluated to include operation, maintenance, wheeling charges, and water charges. Additional costs of filtration and treatment so water is of suitable quality for use in drip and microsprinkler irrigation will be included.

It is the recommendation of this committee to further improve the concept of this study and develop a plan to implement the study. Funding options should also be evaluated. Statewide specialists from University of California should be engaged in the development and execution of this study with Allan Fulton, TAC representative for the UC Cooperative Extension, being the lead for the TAC. The cost study would be designed upfront with direction from the TAC so that it would produce a cost range recognizing that each area would be different based on a variety of inputs such as groundwater levels, desired pumping capacity, well and pumping plant design, etc. A preliminary estimate of groundwater costs is \$60-120 per acre-foot which would be confirmed and further refined from this study.

Previous cost studies should also be researched in conjunction with this project such as the study used for the cost analysis presented in the Department of Water Resources, California Water Plan.

## Recharge Activities

The committee recommends continued investigation of potential recharge activities including in-lieu recharge, active recharge, and detention basins. It is this committee's opinion that active or in-lieu recharge with surface water is a critical piece of stabilizing groundwater levels and improving the overall water supply reliability in the area of concern. If successful, it could lessen the need for some of the measures described in the "County Governance Options".

A summary report of previous local studies should be developed. This report would include studies by the Colusa Basin Drainage District, the WAC's Stony Creek Pulse Flow study, the Stony Creek Fan Project Recharge study that was done by GCID, OAWD, AND OUWUA, and others. Areas summarized would include Wilson Creek, Walker Creek, gravel pits, ponding areas, and Stony Creek. Funding opportunities for project implementation would be researched.

New potential studies and sites should also be evaluated and funding researched. This would also include incorporating the possible reoperation of the T-C project to potentially make more water available for recharge. This would require coordination with water districts and water users in the areas being researched. In addition, naturally occurring groundwater recharge areas in the County should be identified and steps taken to protect them from future threats.

## Surface Water Use

A fundamental objective is to use all available surface water supplies for beneficial uses within our area. By doing this, there is potential to lessen demand on groundwater during wet and normal hydrologic years and reserve groundwater for when surface water is critically short in supply. Although this may have a higher up-front cost to the water users, it will help ensure long-term sustainability of the groundwater supplies. The committee recommends continuing to investigate the ways in which all the available supplies can be utilized in an efficient manner. This includes a vast amount of outreach and coordination with both districts and landowners, which is also included in the outreach section.

Many of these tasks include coordination and cooperation with other agencies, water districts, and water managers. This could include inter-district transfers locally within the basin, potential transfer from a district to local groundwater-dependent landowners outside of the district, possible expansion of a current water district, or formation of a new district.

A list of possible water sources should be developed. It could include Orland-Unit Water Users, Orland-Artois Water District, Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District, regional or out-of-area suppliers, and others. Types of water must also be considered such as Central Valley Project contract water, base supplies, winter water, etc. Obstacles should be researched and noted as well. This could include water availability, infrastructure capacity, legal and political hurdles including state-wide actions, environmental interests, cost, district policies, timing, as well as others. A list of water uses (irrigation, domestic, recharge, etc.) should accompany these items as well. A report detailing these items is recommended.

One example of these types of surface water use and recharge activities was the Glenn County Groundwater Reliability and Recharge Pilot Project. Developed as a response to public concern, the County applied for and obtained a grant to investigate the opportunity for in-lieu recharge in the groundwater dependent area in the Capay region in North-eastern Glenn County. This study investigated the potential to purchase surface water to irrigate the area's crops leaving the groundwater available for years in which the surface water was not available. This would create a more reliable water system that could use both surface water and groundwater as needed. The end result indicated that it is not currently feasible to move forward with the project due to cost, but now there is a plan that can be built upon in the future if some hurdles are minimized or removed to bring the cost down. It also provided an excellent opportunity for outreach in that area.

## **Coordination, Outreach, and Education**

It is essential for water management throughout the County to include a robust coordination, outreach, and education program. Partnerships need to be developed and maintained for the ultimate good of the citizens in this County. These partnerships should be considered a long-term investment in the resources as the partnerships created should be maintained indefinitely. It is recommended that a coordination, outreach, and education program be formulated and implemented.

A list of potential partners should be developed including state agencies, local agencies, regional partners, and potentially other counties with similar resources and challenges. Examples are the Glenn County Farm Bureau, the Cities of Willows and Orland, local and regional water districts, managers, and users, the general public, the Glenn County Resource Conservation District, neighboring counties, the University of California and other academia, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service, and others. This could provide for increased coordination in a multi-faceted approach to locally managing our precious water resources. The knowledge base and understanding between the groups would grow and also provide an increased level of outreach.

In addition to creating a list of partners, it should be considered fundamental to provide more information and ask for increased participation from our partners. This would also include more informational reports given by the WAC to groups such as the Glenn County Board of Supervisors, local City Councils, Farm Bureau, and other interested groups. It would also include creating more outreach materials in the form of articles in existing newsletters, such as Farm Bureau newsletters, and local newspapers. Additionally, the WAC website should also be updated on a regular basis. Examples of some topics could include efficiency versus conservation, encouraging surface water use to the extent possible in order to reserve groundwater use in areas with surface water availability for times in which surface water is not available, and the WAC and its role and the public's ability to participate.

Some additional areas of coordination include working with the University of California to develop potential studies that would benefit the management of water resources in the County. An example of a potential study is discussed previously under the Cost Study Analysis section.



Outreach to the groundwater-dependent, private pumper areas should include information regarding protection of the groundwater, coordination throughout the area and the County, potential district formation or other formal organization, the idea of a water users' cooperative in which there could be a voluntary cooperative pumping schedule to minimize the interference from one well to another, and other ideas as they become relevant.

It may become necessary to coordinate with California's Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regarding "time of use" incentives and the unintended consequences it has on other natural resources. Due to people generally being conscious of spending, they tend to pump their water when the rates are less expensive. Because everyone tends to pump at the same time, it seems to create a regional cone of depression causing some wells to operate inefficiently or cause them to dewater for a period of time. It also increases pumping costs since the water table is lowered at those times. Perhaps coordinating with the CPUC would lessen the impacts of the "time of use" issues.

## Mapping

This section will address the importance of creating resource mapping. It is essential to have the ability to manage the County, area by area, depending on the particular needs of that area recognizing that each is unique. One task the committee completed was a draft map of the County indicating areas that have reached historic lows in groundwater levels. It is the recommendation of this committee that mapping of wells and associated data continue and expand. The following will summarize the efforts that have taken place so far.

Data in reference to groundwater levels has been collected from both private and dedicated monitoring wells located within Glenn County, in some cases dating as far back as the 1920's. The lowest levels in these wells were most frequently associated with measurements from the 1976-77 monitoring period, which coincided with one of the more severe droughts in California's history. In the years following the 76-77 drought, groundwater levels often approached these historic lows but rarely fell below them. However, recent (2012-13) data indicate levels in many wells have declined below those historic thresholds and are now at the lowest levels observed since monitoring began. It is important to note that the period of record for each well is different and not all wells include the previous drought years. Some of the newer monitoring wells may have less than ten years of data.

Although these declining water levels have been observed to some extent throughout the county, the effect seems to be somewhat regionalized, with the highest density of low-level wells concentrated in the Orland and Artois areas. This clustering of low-level wells has led to the region being recognized as an "area of concern" that will be of particular interest for monitoring, and potential efficiency and management strategies. To more fully assess the extent and severity of the issue, a preliminary review of available data concerning the area was conducted.

The area, as defined for the preliminary review, contains most of the area south of Orland and west of Road M, extending as far west as Road B, as far north as Wyo Road, and as far south as Road 48, with its southeastern portion between Roads 27 and 45 extending as far east as Road T (a map is included in the

attachments). These borders are not presented as conclusive, but are intended to encompass most of the affected area based on the initial review of the available well data. The County's well database is a combined effort of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) well completion reports and County well drilling permit information. The database shows over 1000 total wells in the area, mostly domestic or irrigation wells, and the most common depth being 100-200 feet.

Readily available monitoring data obtained through DWR's California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) is available for 100 wells, and of those 100, 21 still show their lowest levels as occurring in 1977, while 21 had an all-time low water surface elevation level in 2013, and an additional 15 wells reached their lowest point in 2009-2012. Therefore, one out of every five monitored wells in the area was at its lowest-ever recorded level in 2013, and one out of every three wells monitored in the area was at its lowest-ever recorded level between 2009 and 2013. Decade-by-decade comparisons using this data are problematic due to inconsistencies in monitoring records, depth, well design and timing. The data suggests that the area identified is suffering from a regional depression in groundwater levels.

This scenario is not unexpected given the information provided by large-scale groundwater monitoring programs already underway within the state. Given the increased demand in the area, a general decline in groundwater levels in the absence of precipitation has been anticipated. However, area-specific information detailing the effects of the current water shortage on a regional or even individual level will identify the areas of greatest concern, and will be useful in developing and promoting local management strategies. It is the recommendation of this committee to produce a more thorough summary of available data and incorporate that information into a comprehensive and ongoing discussion of water resources in the county.

## **Basin Management Objectives**

This section discusses the Basin Management Objectives (BMOs) set forth in Glenn County Ordinance 1237 adopted in 2012, which replaces Ordinance 1115 adopted in 2000. This ordinance is the Glenn County Groundwater Management Plan and stands as the backbone to managing our groundwater. It is essential to continually review and update the plan as new information becomes available and new or unusual situations arise.

It is the recommendation of this committee that the WAC direct the TAC to review the current BMOs and update if necessary. It will be important for these levels to accurately represent the wells and conditions in the area to best manage the groundwater.

New ways to view water management may become necessary to keep the aquifers of Glenn County healthy and sustainable. Some ideas to further investigate while reviewing the BMOs could be:

- a. Are the current BMO groundwater levels set at the appropriate levels?
- b. How do we distinguish different aquifer zones (shallow, intermediate, deep)?
- c. Do we need BMO zones?

- d. Should the BMOs be based on the current political boundaries or is it time to manage the groundwater more cooperatively with neighboring entities and “blur” the BMO lines to better reflect the conditions of the aquifer in that region?
- e. Are the wells selected for BMOs representative of the area? Do they provide useful data?
- f. Should only dedicated monitoring wells be used rather than including irrigation and domestic wells?
- g. Consider using the cumulative frequency curve and well data to analyze the level of risk associated with BMO levels.

## County Governance Options

The County has many potential opportunities to help ensure long-term sustainability of groundwater, the encouragement of using groundwater and surface water most efficiently, and has the ability to reach out broadly to the public and other entities. This committee chose to look at many potential government actions that can be taken if it becomes necessary. It is the committee’s desire that these ideas be thoroughly vetted at the WAC and the Board of Supervisors as well as through outreach to others while being more thoroughly developed.

### *County Efforts in Other Regions*

San Luis Obispo County is currently dealing with severely declining groundwater levels in the Paso Robles Groundwater basin. A summary of the challenges and the actions occurring in that county were presented to the committee. It is this committee’s recommendation that the actions occurring in other counties be considered and evaluated informally while evaluating Glenn County’s position on groundwater management.

San Luis Obispo’s management strategy for the Paso Robles groundwater basin presents an interesting case study for other primarily agricultural counties contemplating emergency water conservation measures. The basin is an 800 square mile area in San Luis Obispo County, which provides the sole source of water for a significant portion of the county’s residents and an estimated 40% of its agricultural production. Monitoring data, modeling studies, and numerous reports of dry wells in the area all indicate that the basin is being drawn down beyond its ability to recharge. Faced with the prospect of a continually diminishing groundwater supply and no other major water source, the county was compelled to initiate a number of aggressive conservation and management strategies.

A Blue Ribbon Steering Committee, consisting of municipal water companies and governmental agencies along with several public organizations and landowner groups, was formed in 2011 to develop and implement the county’s basin management plan. As part of the development process, the committee collected and reviewed a number of proposed solutions, ranging from immediate emergency measures to long-term solutions, determining the best submissions by means of a weighted point system. The committee released a list of its top ranked solutions in August 2013 (see attachment).

The county also adopted an urgency ordinance in August 2013. The ordinance is intended to minimize additional water use from the basin by prohibiting new or expanded crop production or the conversion of dry farmland into irrigated crop production, requiring all new wells to be metered, and requiring new development to be water neutral (via offset clearances issued by the department of planning). This ordinance provides for the immediate implementation of some of the adopted solutions, while others (such as the creation of a water district) are being phased in incrementally, with a large emphasis on education, outreach, and involvement of all affected parties.

While the effectiveness of these management efforts will not be apparent for some time, the process itself may be informative for other counties anticipating similar water issues. In the absence of existing emergency measures, outreach efforts and organizational structures, counties may find themselves inadequately prepared for severe water shortages. But pre-emptive discussion of such strategies, referencing the ones established in other areas but modified to reflect local needs, may minimize the damages if such shortages were to occur locally, and allow water use apportionment to occur cooperatively through defined parameters rather than through litigation.

### *Glenn County Options*

While considering actions being taken in other regions, it is imperative that Glenn County actively engage in managing the resources that exist within our County. This is a cooperative effort between other water managers, such as water districts and municipalities, as well as private well owners. It is important that all involved are aware of the value of our resources and do what we can to protect them. While some of these ideas will not be popular and will be controversial, to benefit the citizens of this County, an open discussion should ensue. The ideas presented in this section must be further developed and vetted through the WAC, the Glenn County Board of Supervisors, and the public.

It is the intent of this committee to present a wide variety of potential ideas and solutions to the issues of declining groundwater levels. Not all may be feasible in the short-term, but should be considered to more fully discuss the options. Generally these options include changes to the County Ordinance governing water management, changes in well permitting, updating the water element in the Glenn County's General Plan, and addition of fees for management, coordination, and programs, or programs that could potentially be implemented. In reality, it should be a combination of the above listed factors to most effectively manage the resource.

The current County ordinance or a separate ordinance could be developed to include additional management strategies and clarify and update the adaptive management procedures. The updated ordinance could also include "emergency measures" similar to those used in San Luis Obispo County. It may become essential to stop using additional groundwater resources until some potential solutions can be implemented. This could potentially include a moratorium on new wells drilled with specific exemptions.

In conjunction with potential ordinance actions, well drilling permits issued by the Glenn County Environmental Health Department should be updated to include more information and potentially more requirements. Additional information or requirements that should be collected through permitting

could include pumping test data, water quality testing, including testing for saline water intrusion, whether the well is a replacement well or new, and potential additional requirements if drilling is occurring in an area of concern or a BMO area that is in a Stage Alert status. The permits should also include an updated mapping interface which builds upon the current mapping that the County has already developed. This would provide for more easily collected and accurate data.

Additional possible revisions in an updated well drilling permit in areas of concern could include such things as requiring meters on new wells, with data being submitted to the County, higher fees for monitoring, studying, and oversight of areas with groundwater decline and sustainability of water throughout the County, restrictions on well locations (well spacing), requiring mitigation plans, and/or additional monitoring requirements. It is also suggested to consider types of use such as domestic wells versus production wells when determining potential requirements for each.

In addition to the updated ordinance and well permitting requirements, it would be beneficial to update the water element in Glenn County's General Plan. This would allow for greater coordination between land use decisions and water resource decisions, which is essential to Glenn County's economy. A stronger water element coupled with the additional changes mentioned would allow for a more robust analysis of water resources and developing responsibly while protecting the current users of groundwater.

Generating local revenues to support local water resource management is a concern. Financial resources are necessary to support real-time monitoring and reporting of water resource conditions. Currently, Glenn County is under-funded to support the level of water resource management that is in the interest of the county as a whole. Potential fees for water management should be considered. It is crucial to the well-being of this County to provide funding to support the management of water county-wide. Fees could potentially include a county-wide water assessment for Water Protection per parcel, fees based on public benefit in areas of concern, revisit the water transfer fees in the Export Water Transfer Guidelines, in addition to well drilling permit fees. These ideas would need to be vetted more fully to determine the potential for these or other fee types to be implemented.

Monies collected through these venues should be used to fund a water coordinating department whose responsibilities would include data collection and management, implementation of the Groundwater Management Plan, and coordination of water programs. Some of these programs are state mandated, while others may be voluntary.

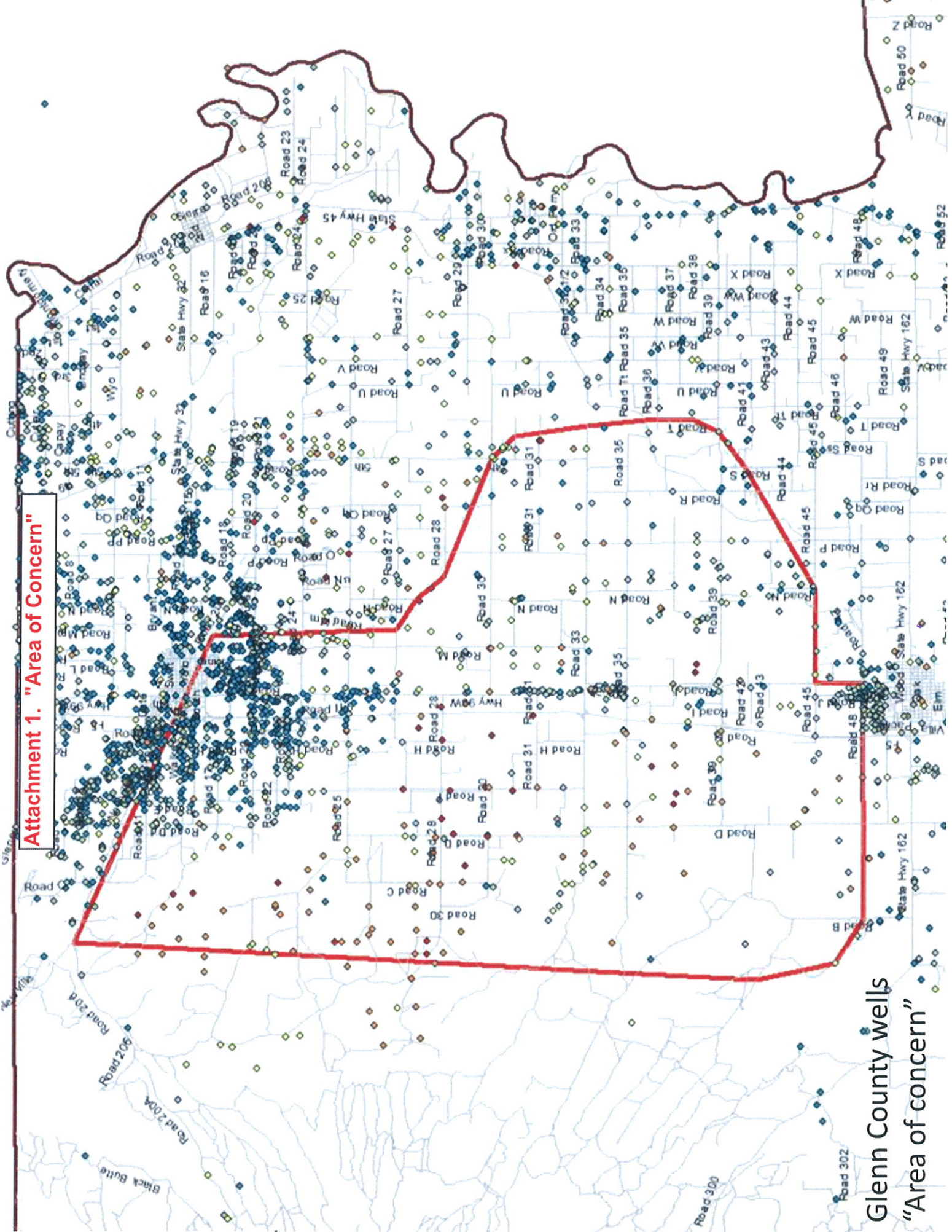
One potential program that could be implemented include the development of a mapping based Local Groundwater Users Program (Cooperative) for pumpers to voluntarily coordinate their pumping with others in the area. Another might be to create a program to help water users control and coordinate their costs (energy costs) associated with water use, for both surface water and groundwater. This could include projects to help fund alternative energy such as solar projects, or surface water filtration projects for micro and drip irrigation. Another potential program could be outreach and organizational efforts in groundwater dependent areas. This could initiate either informal or formal organization, such

as a district, by the group. This would give groundwater users a collective voice for their region allowing for more local control.

## **Summary**

It is the hope of this committee that the ideas discussed in this report be a beginning point for an open discussion and potential updating of the management of water within Glenn County, especially in the western area exhibiting signs of groundwater decline. This report summarized several general categories and will be used to create an “Action List” through the listed recommendations. Many of the ideas must be further developed and will need to be prioritized. Most have restrictions on implementation due to funding constraints. The committee introduced the draft report to the Water Advisory Committee on February 11, 2014, and the Technical Advisory Committee on April 23, 2014. It is the intent of this committee to present a final draft of this report to the Water Advisory Committee at the May 6, 2014 special meeting for additional discussion and potential approval.

**Attachment 1. "Area of Concern"**



Glenn County wells  
"Area of concern"

**Attachment 2. Paso Robles Groundwater Basin--  
Blue Ribbon Steering Committee Top Ranked Solutions**

**Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management Plan  
Blue Ribbon Steering Committee  
Top Ranked Solutions  
August 21, 2013**

| Solution Number   | Solution Category | Water User   | Solution  |
|---|-------------------|--|---|
| <b>Emergency Solutions</b>  |                   |  |   |
| E-1   | Management        | Rural Residential                                      | Provide a potable water source for use in trucking water to homes for emergency purposes.   |
| E-2   | Management        | All areas  | Create a structure to achieve an equitable allocation of safe yield for all Basin water users.  |
| <b>Short Term Solutions (Implementation in 1 to 5 years)</b>  |                   |  |   |
| ST-1  | Management        | All areas  | Create a Basin-wide groundwater management structure(s). Create water districts or other management authorities to convey water to agricultural users and create small community systems for rural communities. |
| ST-2  | Conservation      | All areas  | Identify, implement, and make available appropriate Best Management Practices.  |
| ST-3  | Management        | Rural Residential, Agriculture and Rural Non-Domestic  | Encourage projects that detain or slow runoff to recharge the Basin.  |
| ST-4  | Conservation      | Rural Residential and Rural Non-Domestic               | Maximize water use efficiency as appropriate to achieve water use reduction.  |
| ST-5  | Conservation      | All areas  | Meter all new and replacement wells and measure all well outputs and report.  |
| ST-6  | Conservation      | Urban - Templeton and San Miguel                       | Participate in California Urban Water Conservation Council policies and practices as appropriate.   |
| ST-7  | Conservation      | Rural Residential, Agriculture and Rural Non-Domestic  | Conduct regular outreach activities.  |
| ST-8  | Management        | Rural Residential, Agriculture and Rural Non-Domestic  | Require new development to be water neutral.  |
| ST-9  | Management        | All areas  | Annually monitor status of Basin to determine whether solutions are effective.  |
| ST-10   | Management        | Rural Residential                                      | Require disclosure when land is sold that Basin is in decline and may not be suitable to rely on for intensive use.   |
| ST-11   | Conservation      | Urban – Paso Robles, Atascadero, Templeton, San Miguel | Reduce per capita consumption to offset growth in service area where appropriate.   |
| ST-12   | Supplemental      | All areas  | Exchange or bank Nacimiento water with Santa Margarita Lake to benefit Basin.   |
| ST-13   | Supplemental      | Paso Robles  | Structure operations to use alluvial water first, Nacimiento water second and Basin last.   |
| <b>Medium and Long Term Solutions (Implementation in 6-10 years (Medium) and greater than 10 years (Long Term))</b> |                   |  |   |
| MLT-1   | Supplemental      | All Areas  | Implement water supply options associated with State Water and the Salinas River Corridor (may include use of Nacimiento & other areas of Basin & increasing the capacity of Santa Margarita Lake).             |
| MLT-2   | Supplemental      | Monterey County  | Explore opportunities with Monterey County including Lake Nacimiento / Lake San Antonio intertie (tunnel).  |
| MLT-3   | Supplemental      | All areas  | Direct delivery of unsubscribed Nacimiento or State Water Project allocation water.   |
| MLT-4   | Management        | All areas  | Prohibit groundwater exports from the Basin.  |
| MLT-5   | Management        | All areas  | Establish mechanisms to protect recharge areas and maximize watersheds.   |
| MLT-6   | Recycling         | All areas  | Incentivize the installation of grey water reuse systems onsite.  |
| <b>Completed or Already in Progress Solutions</b>   |                   |  |   |
| C-1   | Supplemental      | Atascadero   | Utilize the full allocation (2,000 AFY) by fully utilizing the existing percolation ponds.  |
| C-2   | Conservation      | Urban – Paso Robles and Atascadero                     | Participate in California Urban Water Conservation Council policies and practices.  |
| C-3   | Conservation      | Agriculture – Irrigated Crops                          | Conduct outreach for County's groundwater level monitoring program.   |
| C-4   | Management        | Agriculture & Rural Residential                        | Implement ordinances to prohibit subdivisions of land or General Plan Amendments in the Basin.  |
| C-5   | Management        | Rural Residential                                      | Implement landscaping ordinance.  |
| C-6   | Management        | All areas  | Establish baseline conditions of Basin through updated model.   |
| C-7   | Management        | All areas  | Implement landscaping ordinance (ag processing).  |
| C-8   | Management        | Rural Residential                                      | Implement Low Impact Development standards.   |
| C-9   | Supplemental      | Templeton  | Maximize or increase the use of the full Nacimiento allocation (250 AFY).   |
| C-10  | Supplemental      | Shandon  | Connect Shandon to State Water Project and set up distribution system (100 AFY).  |



# Glenn County Water Advisory Committee-Ad hoc Committee

## Groundwater Level Declines in Western Glenn County

# Action List

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**"It is the desire of the people of Glenn County that sufficient and affordable water of good quality be available on a sustainable basis to meet the needs of agricultural, industrial, recreational, environmental, residential and municipal users within the county, both now and in the future."—Goal of the Glenn County Water Advisory Committee**

### **Modeling/Water Budget (foundational)**

- Pursue the use of groundwater and surface water modeling for Glenn County (possibly include Tehama and/or Colusa Counties).
  - Research and investigate the types of models available
  - Research the extent of field calibration that has already been completed
  - Research the appropriateness of their application to Glenn County
  - Determine the criteria to be used
  - Develop questions the model should seek to answer (e.g. best places for recharge, water flow, sustainability at current use).
- Develop county-wide water budget
- Couple modeling with other types of field monitoring
- Seek funding
- Summary report

### **Cost Study Analysis (moderate)**

- Further improve the concept of this study
- Develop a plan to implement the study
- Evaluate funding options
- Engage statewide specialists from University of California in the development and execution of this study with Allan Fulton, TAC representative for the UC Cooperative Extension, being the lead for the TAC.
- Research previous cost studies
- Summary report

### **Recharge Activities (critical)**

- Continued investigation of potential recharge activities
  - In-lieu recharge
  - Active recharge

- Detention basins
- Develop summary report of previous local studies
- Research funding opportunities for project implementation
- Evaluate new potential studies and sites
  - Research funding
- Coordinate with water districts and water users
- Identify naturally occurring groundwater recharge areas in the County
  - Take steps to actively protect them from future threats
- Summary report

## Surface Water Use (critical)

- Continuing to investigate ways in which all available surface water supplies can be utilized in the region efficiently
  - Outreach, coordination, cooperation
  - Water districts, other agencies, water managers, landowners
    - Examples: Inter-district transfers locally within the basin, potential transfer from a district to local groundwater-dependent landowners outside of the district, possible expansion of a current water district, or formation of a new district.
- Develop a list of possible water sources
- Consider types of water such as Central Valley Project contract water, base supplies, winter water, etc.
- Research and note potential obstacles including water availability, infrastructure capacity, legal and political hurdles including state-wide actions, environmental interests, cost, district policies, timing, as well as others.
- Develop a list of water uses (irrigation, domestic, recharge, etc.)
- Summary report

## Coordination, Outreach, and Education (foundational)

- Formulate and implement a robust coordination, outreach, and education program
  - Develop a list of potential partners
  - Provide more information and ask for increased participation from our partners.
  - Provide informational reports
  - Create outreach materials
  - Update the WAC website
- Specific coordination: University of California - develop potential studies that would benefit the management of water resources in the County.
- Specific outreach: Groundwater-dependent, private pumper areas - include information regarding protection of the groundwater, coordination throughout the area and the County,

potential district formation or other formal organization, the idea of a water users' cooperative in which there could be a voluntary cooperative pumping schedule to minimize the interference from one well to another, and other ideas as they become relevant.

- Specific coordination: California's Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) - "time of use" incentives and the unintended consequences it has on other natural resources.

## Mapping (critical)

- Prepare draft map of the County indicating areas that have reached historic lows in groundwater levels. (Complete)
- Continue, expand mapping of wells and associated data
  - Location
  - Depth, screening
  - Drill date
  - Capacity
  - Construction details
- Produce summary of available well data

## Basin Management Objectives (foundational)

- Request the WAC direct the TAC to review and update the current BMOs
- Ideas to further investigate while reviewing the BMOs could be:
  - a. Are the current BMO groundwater levels set at the appropriate levels?
  - b. How do we distinguish different aquifer zones (shallow, intermediate, deep)?
  - c. Do we need BMO zones?
  - d. Should the BMOs be based on the current political boundaries or is it time to manage the groundwater more cooperatively with neighboring entities and "blur" the BMO lines to better reflect the conditions of the aquifer in that region?
  - e. Are the wells selected for BMOs representative of the area? Do they provide useful data?
  - f. Should only dedicated monitoring wells be used rather than including irrigation and domestic wells?
  - g. Consider using the cumulative frequency curve and well data to analyze the level of risk associated with BMO levels.

## County Governance Options (foundational to moderate)

### *County Efforts in Other Regions*

- Evaluate and consider actions occurring in other counties
  - San Luis Obispo County summary (Initial complete, ongoing)
    - Blue Ribbon Steering Committee

- Urgency ordinance adopted - August 2013
- Stanislaus County

### *Glenn County Options*

- Actively engage, further develop and vet through the WAC, the Glenn County Board of Supervisors, and the public.
- Develop options to consider changes to the County Ordinance governing water management
  - Current ordinance
  - New ordinance
  - emergency measures
  - moratorium on new wells
  - specific exemptions
- Develop options to consider changes in well permitting
  - update well drilling/abandonment permit form
  - additional requirements for all new well permits
  - additional requirements for wells in areas of concern
  - mapping interface
  - fee update (in areas of concern)
  - restrictions on location, size, or screening
- Develop options to consider update of water element in Glenn County General Plan
- Develop options for addition of fees for management, coordination, and programs
  - county-wide assessment for Water Protection per parcel
  - Public benefit assessment
  - Water transfer fees in Export Water Transfer Guidelines
  - Well drilling permit fees
- Develop programs that could potentially be implemented
  - Development of a mapping based Local Groundwater Users Program (Cooperative) for pumpers to voluntarily coordinate their pumping with others in the area.
  - Development of a program to help water users control and coordinate their costs (energy costs) associated with water use, for both surface water and groundwater such as projects to help fund alternative energy such as solar projects, or surface water filtration projects for micro and drip irrigation.
  - Develop outreach and organizational efforts in groundwater dependent areas. This could initiate either informal or formal organization, such as a district, by the group.