

AGENDA
Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin: Borrego Springs Subbasin
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
Advisory Committee (AC)
May 31, 2018 @ 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Location: University of California, Irvine
Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center
401 Tilting T Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004-2098

Remote Access: <https://csus.zoom.us/j/535224265> **Call-In:** (669) 900-6833 **Meeting ID:** 535 224 265

Lunch: Lunch will be provided at no charge for Advisory Committee members and \$10 for members of the public.

I. OPENING PROCEDURES [10:00 am – 11:15 am]

- A. Call to Order
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll Call of Attendees
- D. Review of Meeting Agenda
- E. Approval of March 29, 2018 AC Meeting Minutes
- F. Updates from the Core Team
 - a. \$1M Proposition 1 Funding
 - b. Water Supply and Water Quality Act of 2018 with \$35M Earmark for Borrego
 - c. Socioeconomic Efforts: Proposition 1 Grant Tasks Updates
 - d. AAWARE Meeting with Core Team members and GSP Consultant
 - e. Updated Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Schedule
 - f. Other
- G. Updates from Advisory Committee Members

II. TECHNICAL AND POLICY ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION OR INTRODUCTION [11:15 am – 2:20 pm with lunch approximately 12:00 – 12:30 pm]

- A. Baseline Pumping Allocations Update – *Core Team*
- B. Projects and Management Actions to be Considered – *Core Team*
 - a. Water Trading Program
 - b. Land Use
 - c. Long Term Water Potability Program
- C. Well Metering Plan

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS [2:20 pm – 2:40 pm]

- A. Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

IV. CLOSING PROCEDURES [2:40 pm – 3:00 pm]

- A. Correspondence
- B. General Public Comments (comments may be limited to 3 minutes)
- C. Review Action Items from Previous AC Meetings, Next AC Meeting Date(s), and Next Steps

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Committee is tentatively scheduled for **July 26, 2018** at the UCI Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center (*location is subject to change).

Please be advised that times associated with agenda are approximations only. Public comment periods will be accommodated at the end of each item listed for discussion and possible action. The duration of each comment period will be at the discretion of the meeting Facilitator. Any public record provided to the A/C less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, regarding any item on the open session portion of this agenda, is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Office of the Borrego Water District, located at 806 Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs CA 92004.

The Borrego Springs Water District complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Persons with special needs should call Geoff Poole at 760-767-5806 at least 48 hours in advance of the start of this meeting, in order to enable the District to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility. Borrego SGMA Website: <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/SGMA/borrego-valley.html>

MINUTES

**Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin: Borrego Springs Subbasin
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)**

Advisory Committee (AC)

March 29, 2018 @ 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Location: University of California, Irvine

**Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center
401 Tilting T Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004-2098**

I. OPENING PROCEDURES

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Borrego Water District (BWD) President Beth Hart.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call of Attendees

Committee members: Present: Jim Seley, Jim Wilson, Rebecca Falk, Dave Duncan,
Bill Berkley, Gina Moran, Ryan Hall, Diane Johnson

Core Team members: Beth Hart, BWD Jim Bennett, County of San Diego

Geoff Poole, BWD Lyle Brecht, BWD

Staff: Meagan Wylie, Center Wendy Quinn, Recording Secretary

for Collaborative Policy Trey Driscoll, Dudek, GSP Consultant

Julia Chase, County of SD Hugh McManus, Dudek, Consultant

Public:

Michael Sadler, *Borrego Sun* Linda Haneline

Cathy Milkey, Rams Hill Bill Haneline

Stephen Ballas Ray Shindler, Independent Ratepayers

Martha Deichler Ray Burnand

Jan Krasowski Dennis Jensen, Oasis Ranch Mgmt

Bob Krasowski Jim Engelke

D. Review of Meeting Agenda

Meagan Wylie reviewed the meeting ground rules, Agenda and Brown Act provisions.

E. Approval of January 25, 2018 AC Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Member Duncan, seconded by Member Falk and unanimously carried, the Minutes of the January 25, 2018 AC Meeting were approved as written.

F. Updates from the Core Team

a. \$1M Proposition 1 Funding

Geoff Poole referred to the Proposition 1 GSP implementation grant application filed by the County of San Diego (County) and BWD. Of the total \$1 million requested, the County would use its half for GSP-related environmental studies, and BWD would use its half for Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) economic studies and modeling, meter installation, and a well siting study. The application has been initially approved, public review completed, and a final decision is expected shortly. Meanwhile, BWD is proceeding with its projects and has entered into contracts for community outreach, modeling and the first phase of the well siting study. The County and BWD are working on a cost reimbursement agreement.

President Hart reported that the March 28, 2018 BWD Town Hall Meeting was well attended. The agenda and slide presentations will be on the BWD website. BWD Director Brecht reported that Trey Driscoll, Dudek, made a presentation on water quality, similar to the one he presented to the AC. There was also a presentation on the impact of SGMA on water rates, and two attorneys spoke about water rights and water transfers.

b. Water Supply and Water Quality Act of 2018 with \$35M Earmark for Borrego
Director Brecht reported that he was still awaiting certification by the Secretary of State on the ballot initiative for water supply and water quality, but the proponents believe there are more than enough. Following certification, fundraising for marketing begins.

c. Other

Julia Chase invited the Committee's attention to the GSP development schedule in the Agenda Package. In June, there will be a preliminary outline draft of the GSP, followed by the draft GSP going out for public review in December 2018. The Core Team will respond to public comments following public review, plan to adopt the GSP in the summer of 2019, and then will work on community planning and environmental review.

Member Johnson reported that she and Member Falk were working with Rachel Ralston, the SDAC consultant, who predicts meetings with the community will take approximately 12 months. She questioned whether that input could still be used after June, and Ms. Chase assured her that it could. Jim Bennett envisioned the AC meeting every other month for the rest of this year, with community meetings on the alternate months. Mr. Bennett added that the revised schedule would be distributed at the next meeting. Metering will also be discussed then.

Member Falk requested an update on sector reductions and allocations, and asked if the AC could be informed of any negotiations by the Core Team and given a chance to comment. Member Duncan pointed out that the AC did not reach consensus on the baseline pumping allocation at the last meeting. Ms. Wylie explained that the issue has been deferred to the Core Team, and Mr. Driscoll will discuss this further during his presentation. Mr. Poole noted that the Core Team has not made a formal decision on this topic, but will inform the AC when they do.

G. Updates from Advisory Committee Members

Member Johnson reported that the Stewardship Council's main goal is to create a sustainable tourism economy in Borrego Springs. Tourists need water, and she was concerned that basing the Human Right to Water on sewer use was not taking them into consideration. Mr. Poole replied that Mr. Driscoll would address this issue in his respective presentation.

Member Duncan reported that another ratepayer meeting was held Monday March 26, and many constituents have also visited his store to discuss issues. Two issues seem to be rising to the surface. The ratepayers are increasingly concerned about the equity in a proportional sharing of the reduction. Many recognize proportional sharing as being asked to share a cost that should not be theirs to share, particularly when they see that cost imposed on an economically disadvantaged community. There is a growing consensus that there needs to be a community set aside which is not subject to reduction. The second issue is the time frame to achieve sustainability. Water quality and storage capacity are very important to ratepayers. Most want to err on the side of conservation and feel that the short-term economic disruption to pumpers is far outweighed by the economic cost of treatment shifted to the ratepayers.

Member Falk reported that most of those present at a recent Sponsor Group meeting agreed there should be no development in Borrego Springs until there is more information available on how much water we have.

Member Seley reported that the farmers were continuing to discuss issues, gather information and assess the information from Dudek.

II. TECHNICAL AND POLICY ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION OR INTRODUCTION

A. Recommendation for Considering Human Right to Water Use

Mr. Poole reported that the State Legislature had taken action regarding the protection of the Human Right to Water for cooking, drinking and sanitation. BWD and the County are considering including these provisions in the baseline pumping allocations for the ratepayers. A certain portion of the allocation would be exempt from reduction. Mr. Poole pointed out, however, that this is new legislation that has not been tested in

court. Mr. Driscoll added the Human Right to Water per equivalent dwelling unit would be approximately 380 acre-feet per year, or about 25 percent of the current BWD demand.

B. Municipal Allocations

Mr. Driscoll explained that under SGMA, the GSA can adopt an allocation plan but has no authority to determine water rights. They need to respect water rights while following established State policy. The Legislature has provided that domestic water use has the highest priority. Assembly Bill 685 was enacted in 2012 and codified as Water Code section 106.3(a), memorializing the Human Right to Water for indoor domestic use. The GSA is exploring options to protect this right. In order to calculate the amount for possible exemption from reduction, Mr. Driscoll had analyzed flows at the wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Driscoll went on to explain that GSP implementation requires continual water quality monitoring and avoidance of contaminants such as arsenic and nitrates. He then presented a slide showing Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water affordability standards, i.e. 2.5 percent of income. Information on water accessibility was presented, and Mr. Driscoll reported that the SDAC study would identify homes not connected to water and what assistance might be available. The Water Code provides that all sectors should be treated equally under a reduction plan. Mr. Driscoll presented a chart showing possible municipal baseline pumping allocations, including a Human Right to Water exemption. The scenario contemplated a 3.6 percent per year reduction over 20 years. Current BWD pumping was shown as 2,385 acre-feet per year. Mr. Poole asked whether that included Rams Hill, and Mr. Driscoll agreed to find out. He agreed to have data available on which his calculations were based. Suzanne Lawrence requested that seasonal residents and tourists be accounted for in the calculations. A number of others shared her concern. Mr. Driscoll agreed to check into the typical number of EDUs for restaurants and other businesses.

A member of the audience asked whether, if he built a house, his water rates would be higher than existing residents. Mr. Driscoll explained that his rates would be the same as everyone else's, but he would be required to pay development fees and buy water credits.

The Committee broke for lunch at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 12:40 p.m.

C. Projects and Management Actions to be Considered

Mr. Bennett reported that the Core Team and consultant had identified six projects for consideration, and Mr. Driscoll would present the first three today. Ms. Wylie added that a description of all six projects was available on the County website. Mr. Driscoll described the water conservation and efficiency programs, which would apply to all sectors. The preliminary estimate of water saving is 1,337 acre-feet per year. He presented a breakdown of costs over 25 years and comparison to other conservation measures. The benefits would be reduced water use and increased reliability and sustainability. Mr. Driscoll pointed out that BWD has an existing conservation program, including a rate structure, rebates and turf replacement. Both agriculture and BWD would benefit from irrigation audits. Approximately 75 percent of domestic water use is for irrigation, and homeowners' associations' turf reduction could result in a one-third water saving. Indoors, measures could include fixing leaks, aerators, turning off water while brushing teeth or shaving and high efficiency toilets. For recreation, some turf could be converted to desert landscaping. Mr. Driscoll also suggested a dedicated conservation coordinator and implementation of school programs.

Member Duncan asked whether the suggested management actions would be considered as elements of the GSP. He suggested that homeowners' associations be included in the turf removal rebates. Mr. Driscoll replied that the current discussion was what is possible and economically feasible. Ms. Wylie added that ultimately the selected projects would be included in the GSP. Member Berkley was interested to see the percentage water saving for each sector compared to current use, and the savings compared to other areas. Member Moran asked whether the cost of these programs could be taken out of the \$35 million earmark if the Water Supply and Water Quality Act is successful, and Director Brecht replied that it could. Discussion followed, and Director Brecht explained that if the Act passes, eligible projects could be reimbursed three years prior to funding and three years after. However, funding may not occur until two or three years after passage. Mr. Driscoll asked the members to document projects that could be eligible and provide them to the Core Team,

and Member Duncan agreed to look into a turf reduction situation at his homeowners' association. Director Brecht asked him to include how much money was invested and how much water is saved. Ms. Wylie offered to work with BWD to put together a reporting form. Mr. Poole and his staff will investigate a prior BWD turf removal rebate program. Member Berkley reported that Rams Hill was considering a \$400,000 conservation project and wondered if it could be funded. Mr. Driscoll asked him to bring it to the GSA.

Hugh McManus of Dudek presented the agricultural land fallowing program, i.e. converting high water use agriculture to open space, public land or development. The subbasin currently has 3,373 acres of active agriculture, and fallowing will be required to achieve sustainability. Up to 2,483 acres have been fallowed already, 560 of which were under the water credit and mitigation program. There is a risk of airborne emissions, and the question of what we want Borrego Springs to look like in the future. Mr. McManus explained that trees could be cut, chipped and spread over the fallowed land (mulching), or a bonded fiber matrix could be used, which is more expensive. Those are short-term solutions. There are challenges in restoration. Active restoration consists of reseeded the land and maintaining it, which is faster but more expensive. Passive restoration primes the areas, maybe add some seeds, and then leaves it be. Other considerations include pesticides, nitrates, removal of equipment and abandonment of wells. Member Falk suggested that a restoration assessment and cost estimate be included in the fallowing package. Member Seley pointed out that removal of tamarisk trees that surround many citrus groves should be taken into consideration.

Mr. Driscoll explained the next project, intrabasin water transfer. Clark Lake was previously considered as a possible water source, as was Alegretti Farms. They are both in the Ocotillo Wells Groundwater Subbasin. The Clark Lake water was high in salinity and the importation pipeline was cost prohibitive. The same problems existed with Alegretti Farms. The Colorado River is over-allocated, and we would have to have water to trade. Trading imported water for water storage in the Borrego Basin was considered, but found not to be viable. Consequently, intrabasin water transfer is being considered, between the north, central and south management areas. A new well site is being investigated as part of the Proposition 1 grant. Lower quality water could be moved from one management area to another for irrigation use. Member Falk inquired about the impact to the aquifer of introducing lower quality irrigation water. Mr. Driscoll explained that it depends on the use of the water, but typically a very small amount goes into the aquifer. Ms. Lawrence expressed concern about environmental impacts associated with fallowing, and Mr. Poole agreed to provide information to her on restoration proposals. Bob Krasowski asked whether a farmer could fallow a high-water use crop and replace it with a more drought tolerant one. Jan Krasowski expressed concern about the unsightly character of dead trees remaining on some of the fallowed property. Mr. Bennett replied that under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), aesthetics must be taken into consideration.

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Updates from Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) Proposition 1 Grant Pre-Scoping Meeting held March 5, 2018

Mr. Poole reported that 122 people attended the March 5, 2018 SDAC pre-scoping meeting. The meeting was successful, and the Hispanic community was well represented. Ms. Ralston will be gathering information, organizing it and bringing it back to BWD, the Core Team and the AC. Another community meeting will be scheduled prior to the next AC meeting. Member Falk suggested forming an ad hoc committee to support LeSar on the socioeconomic component of the GSP. She and Member Johnson volunteered to serve on the committee, and she suggested inviting Martha Deichler, Esmeralda Garcia, Dale Jones and Tonya Gadbois. President Hart questioned whether members of the public could serve on an AC committee, and agreed to check with BWD counsel Steve Anderson. Mr. Poole agreed to work with the ad hoc committee, and Ms. Wylie will include a committee report on future AC agendas.

B. Public Outreach Efforts

Mr. Poole reported that he continued to welcome suggestions about how to improve public outreach. Ms. Krasowski pointed out that many members of the SDAC community, such as farm workers and parents of

schoolchildren, did not attend water-related meetings. President Hart and Mr. Poole cited the recent community meeting.

C. Bill Mills Study

Ms. Wylie invited the AC's attention to Mr. Mills' study, included in the Agenda Package. Mr. Driscoll replied to some of the questions raised. Do return flows alter baseline pumping allocations? No. Do return flows alter pumping allocations under reductions? No. Do return flows affect the water budget? They are accounted for, as required by SGMA. Do return flows change the reduction amount? No.

IV. CLOSING PROCEDURES

A. Correspondence

None.

B. General Public Comments

None.

C. Review Action Items from Previous AC Meetings, Next AC Meeting Date(s), and Next Steps

The next AC meeting was scheduled for May 31, 2018. Ms. Wylie is working with Ms. Ralston to schedule the next socioeconomic meeting in April.

Action items included updating the AC on "third party" meetings such as with the Agricultural Alliance for Water and Resource Education (AAWARE), Mr. Driscoll to prepare a slide breaking down the calculation of the Human Right to Water amount, Mr. Driscoll to work with BWD to further document the water efficiency projects, consulting the BWD attorney about the new ad hoc committee, and including standing action items like posting meeting presentations on the County website. Member Duncan asked how the socioeconomic data gathering and economic impact analysis would fit in with Dr. Jones' modeling. Mr. Poole replied that the parties were in the final stages of figuring that out, and he would keep Member Duncan informed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Borrego SGMA Advisory Committee Meeting
**Update on Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC)
Engagement and Socioeconomic Modeling Projects**
Thursday, May 31, 2018

1. Community Engagement Kickoff Meeting – March 5, 2018

The kickoff meeting took place at the Steele Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center. Approximately 100 community members attended, in addition to 20 members of the Advisory Committee, GSP Core Team, Borrego Water District Board, and consultants. The meeting began with a brief overview of SGMA and the GSP process and then attendees provided feedback related to GSP development. These concerns, suggestions, and other comments are summarized as follows:

- a. Rising Water Rates
 - Fees for residential use
 - Water rates/usage related to homeownership and landscaping
 - There should be state and local assistance to switch to desert landscaping
 - Business concerns
 - Water rates increases operational costs for businesses and organizations potentially impacting donations
 - Rates should be subject to consumption increase; those using more should pay more
 - Increased EDU rates (sewer)
- b. Economic Impacts
 - Job loss due to sustainability measures, e.g., agriculture, golf course reductions
 - Economic viability of town in the face of reductions
 - Businesses
 - Residential population
 - Home values
- c. Land Use Designations
 - Identify alternate land uses for major economic shifts such as large percentage of agricultural land being fallowed
- d. Water Use Allocations
 - Delivery of water to subdivided lots that are not yet developed
 - Golf course water usage
 - Historic usage percentages (70% agriculture, 20% golf course, 10% municipal) are not sustainable – reconsider these allocation percentages when developing GSP
 - Establish a baseline in acre feet per year within Borrego Springs first and then consider allocations for other water users
- e. Sustainability Strategies
 - Bring water in to Borrego through “primary water” strategies
 - Intra-basin transfers are being considered
 - Careful planning for rollout of reductions will be important to GSP success
- f. Water Quality
 - Concerns about nitrate levels in aquifer
- g. Environmental Impacts
 - Concerns with wildlife loss due to critical overdraft
 - Concerns with dust due to ongoing drought and land use changes
- h. GSP Development
 - Adequate representation in GSP outcomes in all facets of the Borrego community, including small businesses, tourism industry, and residents
 - Careful consideration of timing for fee increases will be important

- Balance economic and community impacts of the GSP in Borrego
- i. Community meetings
 - Request for Spanish interpretation and translation at all community meetings
- 2. Community Engagement Planning and Implementation – April 2018 – June 2019**
 - a. Ad Hoc Committee on SDAC Engagement participants include Advisory Committee members and members of the public, including from the library, American Legion, school district, and local businesses.
 - b. The committee held its first meeting on April 27, 2018. The Ad Hoc committee is meeting every other Friday throughout the next several months to provide feedback on educational/outreach materials and guidance for appropriate outreach channels, meeting venues, etc.
 - c. BWD circulated a survey (also available online) to all municipal users with April water bills. Survey content included questions regarding income, expenditures, perceived tolerance for rate increases, and an open-ended area for additional comments. Results are pending.
 - 3. Community Characteristics Report – to be completed in mid-June 2018**
 - a. The report provides baseline data on the following:
 - Area demographics: income, education, employment, housing, public health statistics, etc.
 - Economic landscape: industries, land use, real estate, workforce, etc.
 - Drinking water assessment: water quality, number of private wells, estimated pumping records, etc.
 - b. BWD staff and the consulting team have developed a survey for local businesses to capture detailed information about revenue, workforce, water use, water-reduction efforts, and an open-ended question for water-related concerns and suggestions. Results are pending.
 - 4. Socioeconomic Baseline Data and Analysis – estimated completion in early June 2018**
 - a. Began data compilation and review for the baseline water use summary report. This report will be used to develop SDAC- specific metrics for subareas of the Borrego Valley. Costs for the BWD to supply subareas will be developed based on consultation with BWD specific to their overall water supply, water treatment, and distribution system. Areas outside of the BWD service area will also be evaluated.

Borrego SGMA Advisory Committee (AC) & Core Team (CT)

Work Planning & Timeline Chart

Draft Version 05/21/2018

Date	Meeting / Milestone / Action	Topics to Discuss / Notes
May 2018		
May 31, 2018	Borrego AC Meeting #11 UCI Research Center 10:00am – 3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on Baseline Pumping Allocations (Agricultural, Municipal, and Recreational) • Projects and Management Actions to be Considered, continued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water Trading Program ○ Land Use ○ Long Term Water Potability Program • Discussion of draft Well Metering Plan
June 2018		
June 30, 2018	GSP Framework Likely Available for CT review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Estimated date subject to change</i>
July 2018		
July 26, 2018	Borrego AC Meeting #12 Location TBD 10:00am – 3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on Baseline Pumping Allocations (Agricultural, Municipal, and Recreational) • Financing Plan (Fees and Penalties) • SDAC Updates on LeSar efforts
August 2018		
August 30, 2018	Joint SDAC/ Borrego AC Meeting #13 Location TBD Time: TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDAC Tasks: Decision Support System Model, GoldSim Applicability, SDAC Community Engagement • Overview of SDAC Components to be incorporated into GSP
September 2018		
September 2018	SDAC Components incorporated into GSP for CT review	
September 27, 2018	Borrego AC Meeting #14 Location TBD 10:00am – 3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Overview of Elements of the GSP: a series of 3 AC meetings will be held in September, October, and November to allow the AC to review the key components of the GSP prior to public review.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After a comprehensive overview by core team and consultants, the AC will be able to highlight any issues of concern and identify aspects that they would like further discussion on.
October 2018		
October 25, 2018	Borrego AC Meeting #15 Location TBD 10:00am – 3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Overview of Elements of the GSP (continued from September) GSP review meeting in October will focus on the issues highlighted by AC in the September meeting Discussion of SDAC Components Incorporated into GSP
November 2018		
November 29, 2018	Borrego AC Meeting #16 Location TBD 10:00am – 3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Overview of Elements of the GSP (continued from October) The AC and Core Team will have additional time to work through any remaining items of concern and/or to discuss any aspects of the GSP that still need clarification. AC straw poll consensus recommendation to support the adoption of the GSP as a whole.
December 2018		
December	Draft GSP made available for 45-day public review and comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Estimated date subject to change</i>
January through April 2019		
January through April 2018	GSA Development of Responses to Public Comments and Preparation of Final GSP	
Spring 2018	Borrego AC Meeting #17 Location TBD Time TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting to discuss any changes made to the GSP in response to public comments The AC will provide formal consensus recommendation to support the adoption of the GSP as a whole.
Summer 2019		
	GSP Adoption by BWD and County Boards of Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Estimated date subject to change</i>

May 31, 2018

TO: Advisory Committee

FROM: Core Team

SUBJECT: Item II.A Baseline Pumping Allocations Update

The Core Team has presented background Baseline Pumping Allocation information at multiple previous AC meetings.

The “Baseline Pumping Allocation” allocates groundwater extraction based on historical rates of pumping over a defined period of time. The rate of pumping is based on the amount of groundwater actually pumped, which is typically based on documented flow meter data or, if flow meter data is unavailable, estimated based on water use by crop type. The five-year maximum period for determining “Baseline Pumping Allocation” shall be from January 1, 2010—January 1, 2015

The GSA is applying two methods to determine Baseline Pumping Allocation:

1. Validated flow metered data by production well and identification of land area irrigated in units acre-feet per year (AFY)
2. Area irrigated (acres) multiplied by water use by crop type (feet per year) in units AFY

The Core Team will present methodology and next steps to finalize development of the Baseline Pumping Allocation for the Borrego Springs Groundwater Subbasin.

May 31, 2018

TO: Advisory Committee

FROM: Core Team

SUBJECT: Item II.B Projects and Management Actions to be Considered

The Core Team has identified six projects and management action categories to be evaluated as part of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The six projects and management action categories include:

1. Project 1 - Water Trading Program
2. Project 2 - Water Conservation and Efficiency Programs
3. Project 3 - Modification of Land Use Designations
4. Project 4 - Agricultural Land Fallowing Program
5. Project 5 - Groundwater Quality Mitigation Program
6. Project 6 - Intrabasin Water Transfer

For the May AC meeting additional information will be provided regarding three of the six projects:

1. Project 1 - Water Trading Program
2. Project 3 - Modification of Land Use Designations
3. Project 5 - Groundwater Quality Mitigation Program

Projects and Management Action #1: Water Trading Program

The Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) is considering development of a new Water Trading Program in conjunction with the development of the GSP for the Subbasin. The Water Trading Program would enable transfer of Baseline Pumping Allocation and would replace the existing Water Credits Program.

The purpose of this program would be to provide stakeholders a tool to optimize the use of allocated water in the Subbasin by allowing water users to trade unused Baseline Pumping Allowance to other users in the Subbasin while maintaining groundwater use restrictions set forth in the GSP. The Water Trading Program will allow groundwater users to purchase needed groundwater resources to maintain economic activities in the Subbasin, encourage and incentivize water conservation, and facilitate adjustment of pumping allocations as water demands and basin conditions fluctuate.

The Core Team will present to the AC an introduction to the development of a Water Trading Program.

Project and Management Action #3: Modification of Land Use Designations

The Core team will present a summary of applicable plans, policies, ordinances and permitting processes that govern development in Borrego Springs. The Core team will discuss the interrelation of the GSP under development with future updates to the Borrego Springs Community Plan, General Plan and Borrego Water District Policies and Regulations including changes in future land use to bring planning processes in line with GSP sustainability goals including a transition to lower water intensity land uses.

Project and Management Action #5: Long Term Water Potability Program

The GSA is considering development of a Groundwater Quality Mitigation Program for the Subbasin. The purpose of the program would be to mitigate existing and potential future sources of groundwater quality impairment in the Subbasin to make the best use of available groundwater in the Subbasin for beneficial uses. Based on available data, in some cases, degradation of water quality appears to be correlated to groundwater level declines or pumping intensity (e.g., elevated arsenic in South Management Area). In other cases, degradation of water quality appears to be related to overlying land uses (e.g., elevated nitrate in agricultural area in the North Management Area). Thus, the potential exists for increase in arsenic concentrations due to groundwater level declines and nitrate concentrations due to overlying land use. The groundwater quality mitigation program will evaluate existing conditions and develop a contingency plan to ensure water availability for potable use.

The Core Team will present to the AC an introduction to the development of the Groundwater Quality Mitigation Program.

May 31, 2018

TO: Advisory Committee

FROM: Core Team

SUBJECT: Item II.C Well Metering Plan

The Core Team is considering adoption of a Groundwater Extraction Metering Plan (Metering Plan) as part of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan implementation. The objective of the Metering Plan would be to facilitate consistent and reliable reporting of groundwater extraction volumes from all non-de minimis wells in the Subbasin. Reliable metered data is necessary to manage the Subbasin, document compliance with individual water allocations, and track and calibrate the Subbasin water balance throughout GSP implementation.

The Core Team previously introduced the concept of the Metering Plan at the June 2017 AC meeting, and will present to the AC an overview of the Draft Metering Plan and provide and update regarding the development status.

May 31, 2018

TO: Advisory Committee

FROM: Core Team

SUBJECT: Item III.A: Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Based on recent information released by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Core Team will present an informational update on Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs). Additionally, the Core Team will present preliminary results of surface water flow monitoring conducted at Coyote Creek and historical information pertaining to extent of mesquite bosque habitat and groundwater levels in the vicinity of the Borrego Sink.



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Suites 110 & 111
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Fax (760) 767-0465

May 11, 2018

Board of the Borrego Water District

Beth Hart, President
Lyle Brecht, Vice President
Joe Tatusko, Sec./Treasurer
Harry Ehrlich, Director
Ray Delahay, Director

GSP Core Team

Jim Bennett
Leanne Crow
Julia Chase
Geoff Poole
Beth Hart

SENT VIA EMAIL

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to bring to your attention a Water Use Sector—Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems—that has not yet been included in your deliberations of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin (the Basin), and that this oversight is contrary to the statutory requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014.

The Basin contains multiple Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE's), which are plant and animal communities that require groundwater to meet some or all of their water needs. GDE's of note in the Borrego Basin include, but are not limited to, Coyote Canyon, Palm Canyon, Tubb Canyon, Glorietta Canyon, and the mesquite bosque that extends for several miles south of the Borrego Sink. GDE's support habitat associated with 30+ critical species.

The GDE's in the Borrego Basin provide critical biological services to the Borrego community and California's public, such as essential habitat for flora and fauna, water supply and purification for the human population, flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, and erosion control. Moreover, the GDE's in the Borrego Basin are a critical link in supporting and maintaining the biodiversity that drives the economic



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engine of the Borrego region—tourism. The concentrated biology present in such locations, surrounded by extreme aridity, is an iconic feature of desert landscapes worldwide, juxtaposing the expectation of an extreme environment with the biological adaptations that make deserts compelling conservation targets and destinations for travel.

Section 10723.2 of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), titled “Consideration of all Interests of all Beneficial Uses and Users of Groundwater,” states, “The groundwater sustainability agency shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans. These interests include, but are not limited to, all of the following ... (e) Environmental users of groundwater.” GDE’s are environmental users of groundwater.

More specifically, section 10727.4 of SGMA states, “In addition to the requirements of Section 10727.2, a groundwater sustainability plan shall include, where appropriate and in collaboration with the appropriate local agencies, all of the following ... (l) impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems.”

In 2016, the California Department of Water Resources adopted Title 23, Division 2, Chapter 1.5, Subchapter 2 of the California Code of Regulations, which is commonly referred to as the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Regulations (GSP Regulations), to detail the process and standards for the development of groundwater sustainability plans under SGMA.

The GSP Regulations provide significant guidance about GDEs. Specifically, Section § 351(m) defines a Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem as “ecological communities or species that depend on groundwater emerging from aquifers or on groundwater occurring near the ground surface.” Section § 351(al) defines a “Water Use Sector” as “categories of water demand based on the general land uses to which the water is applied, including urban, industrial, agricultural, managed wetlands, managed recharge, and native vegetation.” Native vegetation that depends on groundwater is a major component of GDEs. Examples of native vegetation relevant to the GSP for the Borrego Basin are the myriad species of plant life native to Coyote Canyon, Palm Canyon, Tubb Canyon, and Glorietta Canyon.

SGMA and the GSP Regulations are explicit in requiring GSA’s to consider the interests of GDE’s as a critical Water Use Sector in their creation of a groundwater sustainability plan. Furthermore, the GSP must account for its impact on GDE’s, as it must for other sectors such as ratepayers, agriculture, and recreation.



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In light of the above considerations, we respectfully request responses to the following questions: 1) To date, what consideration has been given to the GDE's in the Basin? 2) What GDE's have been identified in the Basin? Where are they located? 3) What analysis has been performed of the current GDE water requirement in the Basin? 4) How will the GSP monitor its impact on the Basin's GDE's? 5) What limits, if any, will be placed on any deleterious impacts the GSP may have on GDE's in the Basin? 6) What efforts will be made to measure near-surface water content and stream flows in GDE's to document sustainability indicators?

Sincerely yours,

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