

MINUTES OF THE  
BUTTE COUNTY WATER COMMISSION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 4, 2021 1:00 PM  
Online Meeting

1. Introductions and TAC Roll Call:

TAC members present: Chair Joe Connell, Vice-Chair Richard Price, Mike Crump, Jeff Davids, Todd Greene and Kyle Morgado

TAC members absent: Debbie Spangler

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2021

A motion was made by Richard Price to nominate Joe Connell as Chair and it was seconded by Kyle Morgado. A motion was made by Joe Connell to nominate Richard Price as Vice Chair and it was seconded by Mike Crump. Both motions were handled in a single vote which carried 6-0 with no abstentions.

No public comments were received.

3. Approval of minutes for the November 10, 2020 meeting

A motion was made by Mike Crump to approve the minutes with two amendments discussed by the TAC (one to 3d and one to 5a). The motion was seconded by Richard Price and carried 6-0 with no abstentions.

4. Review and comment on 2020 Annual Groundwater Status Report

TAC members suggested formatting edits and minor typo corrections throughout the report as well as specific suggested edits to the narrative and figures in the report regarding:

- Precipitation data for WY 2020 (Figure 1)
- Hydrological classifications (Figure 2)
- Extensometer station maps (Figure 5 and Appendix E)
- Groundwater elevation change tables (Tables 5-8)
- Cumulative average change of spring groundwater level changes (Figure 6)
- Basin Management Objectives section
- Groundwater contour and elevation change maps (Appendix G)

Jim Brobeck commented on the reference to groundwater as a source of frost protection section and posed a question about further analyses of future snowpack and precipitation patterns and how the timing of precipitation in the form of snow and rainfall affects hydrological conditions.

The TAC and staff discussed using snow water equivalents as a potential way of assessing how wet each “wet year” is in comparison to precipitation received in the area and the timing of the precipitation. The timing of snowfall can reduce or extend the duration of snowmelt runoff. Staff mentioned this is another reason for the value of using an integrated surface and groundwater model which can take these factors

into account. Staff also noted that the surface water diversions table in the report also helps to inform this topic by showing which years were cut-back years with reduced available runoff.

The high number of Alert Stages seen in wells as part of the Basin Management Objectives program were discussed by the TAC. They noted that it appears the number of wells recovering after recent wet years are not recovering as well in previous years with similar hydrological conditions. Staff discussed how the GSPs currently under development will describe plans on how to address future significant and unreasonable declines in groundwater level trends if observed.

Jim Brobeck spoke about interbasin coordination and how water use in subbasins adjacent to Butte County can affect those within the County. Jim Brobeck and Pat Vellines both commented on the groundwater contour and water surface elevation change maps.

TAC members discussed how Alert Stages are determined between spring and fall. Staff explained that one specific well could be in an Alert Stage 2 in the spring and also be in an Alert Stage 1 in the fall because the Alert levels are based on actual data from each well from each season separately as described in further detail in the report.

## 5. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Updates

### a. Wyandotte Creek Subbasin updates

- The GSA Board has met 10 times to date. Meetings are the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month @ 2 p.m.
- Planning is underway for the first multi-completion well in the subbasin, funded through DWR's Technical Support Services Program with some financial support from the Wyandotte Creek GSA.
- The Wyandotte Creek GSA Advisory Committee (WAC) began meeting last month. They have approved a charter, reviewed Basin Setting chapters of the GSP. Meetings are the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month from 9 am – 12 noon.

### b. Vina

- The next GSA Board mtg. will be the Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) workshop
- Board meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of each month @ 5:30 p.m.
- The Vina GSA Advisory Committee (SHAC) has a fully seated committee. The vacancy for a domestic well user representative was recently filled.. they will be reviewing SMC at the next meeting. They meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 9 a.m. – 12 noon.

### c. Butte

- The Butte Advisory Board (BAB) has been meeting about every two months to discuss the components of the Butte GSP.

### d. Groundwater Sustainability Plans update

- Butte subbasin will be the focus for the TAC, Water Commission and Butte County Board of Supervisors to weigh in on, since Butte County is a GSA in this subbasin. The SMC and monitoring network descriptions can be commented on once when they are drafted.
- Staff presented a PowerPoint on the components of the Butte GSP.

Pat Vellines commented on the positive progress that each of the three subbasins have made. Jim Brobeck commented on the interbasin coordination meeting topics including a desire for transparency and public invitation to future meetings. Staff explained that the meetings are staff-level meetings at this time and updates are being provided by GSA managers through their regular avenues and that no future meetings are yet scheduled. Jim Brobeck discussed PMAs and the legal implications of artificial recharge projects and encouraged others to read a paper developed on the topic by counsel for the Vina GSA.

6. Departmental updates  
No additional updates were provided.
7. Update on monitoring well network analysis using AEM data set  
Staff introduced the topic providing background on how the Airborne Electromagnetic Method (AEM) survey work was performed through helicopter surveys a couple of years ago. This additional work performed by Todd Greene is aimed at understanding what portion of the aquifer the monitoring well data captures. Todd Greene provided a presentation on this initial work.
8. Future Meeting topics, dates and locations  
The TAC decided to schedule a future meeting date later using an online poll.