



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service



ACTION MINUTES

NAPA COUNTY GROUNDWATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 27, 2014

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

The Napa County Groundwater Resources Advisory Committee (GRAC) met in regular session on Thursday, February 27, 2014 with the following members present:

Vice-Chair Michelle Benvenuto; Tucker Catlin; Alan Galbraith; Dave Graves; Michael Haley; Charles Slutzkin; Steve Soper; Marilee Talley; Jim Verhey; Susanne von Rosenberg; Duane Wall; and Dale Withers. Don Gleason and Chair Peter McCrae were excused.

2. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

Vice-Chair Michelle Benvenuto provided opening comments, noting that this was the last meeting of the GRAC and it was good that this process began ahead of the current drought and will demonstrate how Napa County is being proactive on groundwater monitoring.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS

a. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES AND MEETING SUMMARY

Action Minutes and Meeting Summary of December 12, 2013 were approved as amended.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| MB | TC | AG | DG1 | DG2 | MH | PM | CS | SS | MT | JV | SVR | DW1 | DW2 |
| | | | X | | | X | | | | | | | |

b. REVIEW MEETING AGENDA AND COMPLETED WORK PLAN

Patrick Lowe, Natural Resources Conservation Program Manager, Public Works, went over the final work plan/schedule that was distributed at the meeting. Mr. Lowe mentioned the GRAC has finished its work ahead of the originally anticipated schedule and noted the items of business for today's meeting, as well as public/industry outreach workshops, spring groundwater monitoring scheduled for March, and the GRAC's final report to the Board of Supervisors scheduled for early April. Education and outreach efforts will increase starting in April, and the County will have a monitoring update within the next few months.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

John Pearson, a resident of the MST area who signed up for the voluntarily groundwater monitoring program (if his well is needed), expressed his appreciation of the GRAC's efforts and to staff member Jeff Sharp for providing information, which has been shared with the Master Gardeners at one of their workshops and will be shared at a subsequent workshop. Mr. Pearson inquired if there were programs for monitoring residential vs. agricultural well use and if the County has thought about water conservation incentives other than rainwater barrels, as the cities have a variety of other incentives. Mr. Pearson also suggested having some kind of program that encourages groundwater users to not only conserve but to coordinate with neighbors, as it is difficult to know who is tapping into the same source. Patrick Lowe, Natural Resources

Item No. 4...Continued

Conservation Program Manager, Public Works, replied that the voluntary groundwater monitoring program has a number of residential wells located throughout the Napa Valley, such as in Napa, Yountville, St. Helena and north of St. Helena before Calistoga. Deborah Elliott, Water Resources Specialist, Public Works, handles water conservation outreach efforts for the County, and the County has other water conservation incentives in addition to rain barrels.

5. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. REPORT ON NAPA COUNTY DROUGHT CONDITIONS, WATER SUPPLIES AND DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

Phil Miller, Deputy Director-Flood Control and Water Resources, presented a PowerPoint presentation on California's current drought situation. The cities in Napa County receive some of their water through the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) State Water Project (SWP). Potable water comes through Jameson Canyon and is dispersed to two treatment plants for Napa and American Canyon and is then distributed to the cities. Water for the entire SWP is stored in three large reservoirs in the Sierras (Lake Oroville, Lake Folsom and Lake Shasta). Of the 29 contractors, Napa County makes up 1.5% of the total SWP. Mr. Miller went over a national drought map as of February 4 and a local drought map as of February 18; current and past precipitation levels that involved drought; current reservoir conditions throughout the State; photos of Lake Oroville, Lake Folsom and Lake Shasta with receded water levels; the economic impact to agriculture with statistics based on the drought of 2009 – such examples as produce and hydroelectric energy being adversely affected; examples of the DWR'/California Water Agencies' public outreach program; groundwater (prior monitoring data shows Napa Valley is mostly healthy with localized and anecdotal problems, and spring monitoring has been moved up from April to March as requested by the DWR); trends that show critical, dry, below normal, above normal and wet years since 1970 for unimpaired runoff in the Sacramento River; a current storm estimated to yield three inches of rain; and suggestions for the future. A pdf version of the presentation will be posted to the GRAC's website, as well as updated numbers for rain accumulation.

b. GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES RECOMMENDATIONS

Dorian Fougères, Ph.D., Mediator, Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS, went over the sustainability objectives and table in the agenda packet. The GRAC approved the table in December and it is included in today's agenda packet for reference. The sustainability objectives were presented to the GRAC in October to which they provided comments. The Sustainability Objectives Ad-Hoc committee met in November and made revisions to the sustainability objectives, which were intended to be included in the December packet but were inadvertently omitted and are now being presented to the GRAC. Mr. Fougères went over the following content and revisions:

- 1. Goal for Developing Groundwater Sustainability Objectives – This paragraph focuses on everyone in the community being involved and the quality of life.**
- 2. Definition of Groundwater Sustainability – Reference to environmental changes was changed to be broad rather than specific so as to not raise further questions.**
- 3. Shared Responsibility for Groundwater Sustainability – This paragraph continues the theme of everyone being involved and all parts of the community being important.**

Item No. 5.b...Continued

4. **Monitoring as a Means to Achieving Groundwater Sustainability – The Ad-Hoc Committee wanted to stress how groundwater monitoring supports having water over time for future generations for current activities.**
5. **Principles underlying the Objectives – This paragraph summarizes the context of the sustainability objectives.**
6. **Groundwater Sustainability Objectives – The sustainability objectives match those in the table except for No. 2 where it begins with “Make better use of,” it begins with “Optimize” in the table, but they both have the same intent. Under Supplemental recommendations, No. 2 is not included in the table; it is a recommendation going forward that if there is further work down the road on groundwater stewardship or sustainability that people start with the sustainability objectives.**

Mr. Fougères requested the GRAC provide comments/suggestions and then approve the sustainability objectives. The GRAC suggested the following revisions: Under No. 6 – Groundwater Sustainability Objectives, change “Make better use of” to “Optimize” under No. 2 to be consistent with the table, and under No. 1 – Goal of Developing Groundwater Sustainability Objectives, change the first sentence to read as follows: “The use of groundwater is essential to protecting the quality of life in Napa County.” The GRAC approved the sustainability objectives with the suggested revisions as noted.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| MB | TC | AG | DG1 | DG2 | MH | PM | CS | SS | MT | JV | SVR | DW1 | DW2 |
| | | | X | | | X | | | | | | | |

c. REPORT FROM THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GRAC FINAL REPORT AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PRESENTATION

Dorian Fougères, Ph.D., Mediator, Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS, referred to the Board Letter Ad-Hoc Committee’s draft meeting summary and Board letter in the agenda packet. The draft Board letter was based on the previous report that went to the Board in April 2013. The Ad-Hoc Committee made the draft more concise and did some sequencing to move the goal of protecting the quality of life and education and other pieces to the beginning of the letter and put the Groundwater Monitoring Program at the end to support those efforts. The Ad-Hoc Committee worked with Vicki Kretsinger Grabert, Principal Hydrologist, LSCE and County staff to verify technical phrases pulled from the Groundwater Monitoring Plan and other technical documents. Mr. Fougères briefly touched on the content of the draft Board letter, noting the Groundwater Monitoring Plan, community education, the GRAC’s accomplishments, technical findings and the GRAC’s recommendations, such as: 1) The County should focus on education and outreach and advocate the use of best sustainable practices; 2) Revise the Tier 2 analysis section of the Water Availability Analysis (WAA); 3) Build a long-term understanding of groundwater and reduce scientific uncertainty; and 4) Use the Groundwater Monitoring Plan as a primary tool to monitor countywide progress toward achieving groundwater conservation, quality and stable groundwater levels and pursue ways to enhance confidentiality. The end of the letter focuses on the voluntary approach to maximize public support to optimize future water supplies while helping to determine changes that may occur in groundwater conditions. Patrick Lowe, Natural Resources Conservation Program Manager, Public Works, referenced the supporting documents that will be attached and noted that summaries of the WAA and Groundwater Ordinance will be included rather than the entire documents. Alan Galbraith suggested having a supporting document that summarizes how many wells the County originally had in its groundwater monitoring program, how many they currently have and how many more are needed as a quantified way to see the GRAC’s progress. Dave Graves added there could be a reference of the distinction between CASGEM wells and the

Item No. 5.c...Continued

monitoring program’s wells. Jim Verhey suggested having the new supporting document titled as “F. Status of Groundwater Monitoring” and to include an updated map of the 18 areas of interest. Susanne von Rosenberg suggested removing reference to LSCE under Recommendation No. 3 and to verbally acknowledge their work during the Board presentation. The draft Board letter was approved with the suggested revisions as noted. Mr. Lowe stated the presentation is tentatively scheduled for the Board of Supervisors’ April 8 meeting but staff will let the GRAC know if this should change, and Steve Lederer, Director, Public Works, added that staff can advise the GRAC of the set time as the date approaches. The Ad-Hoc Committee was commended for their efforts. The GRAC complimented Ms. Krestinger Grabert on her work, who, in turn, expressed her appreciation of being involved with the GRAC and how it was motivating to see their level of interest and engagement.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| MB | TC | AG | DG1 | DG2 | MH | PM | CS | SS | MT | JV | SVR | DW1 | DW2 |
| | | | X | | | X | | | | | | | |

d. UPDATE ON INDUSTRY/PUBLIC OUTREACH & WELL OWNER OUTREACH

Patrick Lowe, Natural Resources Conservation Program Manager, Public Works, reported that due to the Governor’s drought declaration, DWR has a deadline of April 30 for their report, so they are requesting CASGEM well data to be submitted by April 1. The County will be conducting monitoring from March 17 to March 31 because the groundwater monitoring wells can be captured in a short amount of time, but it will take more time to get all of the new wells added to the program. The number of wells currently in the program is about 45, and an additional 35+ have been added to this number, with five or six of them being located in St. Helena, bringing the total to 70+ wells. Spottswoode Winery has volunteered their well, and the City of St. Helena has volunteered a well site near the Napa River that can be used to monitor groundwater/surface water interaction. Mr. Lowe believes all of the areas of interest are covered and he will follow up on previous contacts. Mr. Lowe also mentioned two upcoming workshops both occurring on March 10. The Napa Valley Vintners (NVV) sent out a “save the date” notice for their workshop scheduled for 1:00 p.m., which generated 100 R.S.V.P.s from their members. At 5:00 p.m., there will be a workshop for the public at Tucker Farm Center in Calistoga. Mr. Lowe mentioned Peter McCrae will be at the NVV meeting and will give an introduction and overview. Susanne von Rosenberg will be at the public meeting and other GRAC members are welcome to attend as well. District 3 Board of Supervisor Diane Dillon will host the public meeting and give introductions.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. UPCOMING EVENTS OR ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE COMMITTEE AND STAFF

John Pearson complimented Susanne von Rosenberg for sharing information at the Master Gardeners’ training workshop yesterday and at an upcoming workshop on March 4, as it is helpful to get a perspective on the GRAC’s work.

Dorian Fougères, Ph.D., Mediator, Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS, commended the GRAC on their incredible hard work and cited their strong commitment and how they are a great example of how educated citizens can get involved to guide and shape policy. Statewide, Napa County is now one of the leaders in terms of developing and implementing a voluntary groundwater monitoring program.

Item No. 6.a...Continued

Mark Nordberg, DWR, also complimented the GRAC on their efforts and was happy to watch the process evolve from the initial phase to completion. The GRAC is finishing their work at a very good time in California policy. DWR works for the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), which governs and regulates water rights and quality. Legislation is being voted on today to radically change how groundwater is monitored in California. There is a big push to establish high/medium priority basins, of which the Napa Valley would be designated a medium priority basin. One of the recommendations that will be made for high/medium priority basins is that there must be a groundwater management plan developed in accordance with suggestions yet to be determined. When the next phase of groundwater management comes where counties may be responsible for becoming the lead for groundwater management plans, with what the GRAC has developed so far with groundwater elevation and quality monitoring and sustainability objectives, Napa County will have an excellent place to start.

b. THANK YOU

District 2 Board of Supervisor Mark Luce personally thanked the GRAC for their work, time and efforts on behalf of the Board of Supervisors. The drought puts an accent on why groundwater monitoring is critical, and groundwater is a key property right that is very important to people who own property and depend on groundwater as a resource to do what they do. So it is really important that we have an accurate understanding of what is going on in the valley and to not have abuse of regulations because we don't understand; but, at the same time, we are managing the resource in a responsible way, and the GRAC is an important first step in making sure the County is doing the right thing. The GRAC's recommendations will help us understand our groundwater system and take reasonable and appropriate actions that everybody will understand why we're doing it, and it is in everybody's interest to participate and collaborate.

Vice-Chair Michelle Benvenuto thanked the members of the GRAC, Dorian Fougères, Ph.D., Mediator, Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS, Vicki Kretsinger Grabert, Principal Hydrologist, LSCE and County staff for all of their efforts.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The final meeting of the Napa County Groundwater Resources Advisory Committee was adjourned on Thursday, February 27, 2014 at approximately 3: 12 p.m.

Voting Key

If not unanimous, member votes will be tallied (N = No; X = Excused; A = Abstained) using the following Committee Member abbreviations:

MB = Michelle Benvenuto; TC = Tucker Catlin; AG = Alan Galbraith; DG1 = Don Gleason; DG2 = Dave Graves;
MH = Michael Haley; PM = Peter McCrea; CS = Charles Slutzkin; SS = Steve Soper; MT = Marilee Talley;
JV = Jim Verhey; SVR = Susanne von Rosenberg; DW1 = Duane Wall; DW2 = Dale Withers

Example Key:

MB TC AG DG1 DG2 MH PM CS SS MT JV SVR DW1 DW2