

MEETING MINUTES
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BORREGO SPRINGS WATERMASTER
Meeting Conducted via GoToMeeting
Tuesday, August 29, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

I. Opening Procedures

Andy Malone (Lead Technical Consultant, Borrego Springs Watermaster) called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Malone called roll and confirmed that all five Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members were present at the start of the meeting. The following individuals were present at the meeting:

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| Technical Advisory Committee Members | David Peterson, CEG, CHG; alternate for Robert Wagner, PE (Principal Geologist, Wagner & Bonsignore) – <i>representing AAWARE</i> |
| | Tom Watson, PG (Principal Geologist, Aquilogic) – <i>representing T2 Borrego</i> |
| | Trey Driscoll, PG, CHG (Principal Hydrogeologist, INTERA) – <i>representing Borrego Water District</i> |
| | Jim Bennett (County of San Diego and Watermaster Board Member) – <i>representing County of San Diego</i> |
| Watermaster Staff | John Peterson, PG – <i>representing Roadrunner Golf and Country Club</i> |
| | Andy Malone, PG (Principal Geologist, West Yost) |
| | Eric Chiang (Principal Engineer, West Yost) |
| Others Present | Lauren Salberg, GIT (Staff Geologist, West Yost) |
| | Bob Abrams (Aquilogic) |
| | Tammy Baker |
| | Tyler Bilyk (Watermaster Board member) |
| | Jessica Clabaugh |
| | Leanne Crow |
| | Jim Dax |
| | Kathy Dice |
| | Erick Fox |
| | Mark Jorgensen (Watermaster Board member) |
| | Steven Humphrey (INTERA) |
| | Travis Huxman |
| | Diane Johnson |

TAC Meeting Guidelines. Mr. Malone covered the guidelines for Committee meetings, which specify that TAC meetings are open to the public and individuals from the public are allowed three minutes each for comments during the public comment periods at the beginning and end of each TAC meeting.

II. Public Comments

Public comments included:

- Jim Dax inquired about the status of the expansion of the groundwater monitoring program and if there are any additional actions the public can take to add wells to the monitoring program. Andy Malone responded that a status update on the groundwater monitoring program will be provided during the next TAC meeting and requested that members of the public should continue to notify Watermaster Staff of potential new wells to add to the monitoring network pursuant to the directions in the Groundwater Monitoring Plan.
- Diane Johnson asked for details on the conversations with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) regarding its comments on the Groundwater Management Plan. Mr. Malone responded that the Executive Director of the Watermaster has been in conversations with DWR regarding their comments on the GMP and their input on the content and schedule for the five-year update of the GMP, and that these conversations are ongoing.

III. Review results of performing Task 2 to Redetermine the Sustainable Yield – *Update Water-Use Factors in the Farm Process (FMP)* (begins at 08:55 in the [meeting recording](#))

West Yost staff presented on the methods, results, and recommendations of Task 2 – *Update the Water-Use Factors in the FMP* (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

- The proposed methodology to define the evolution of On-Farm Efficiency (OFE) values used in the Farm Process (FMP) based on historical irrigation practices in the Basin would be defined during Task 4 – *Model Recalibration* and would rely on TAC input. Jim Bennett noted that certain members of the public may have historical knowledge of the changes in irrigation practices in the Basin and could support this effort (e.g., Jim Soley).
- Resetting the scaling factor of the OFE had a greater influence on FMP-estimated pumping than resetting the scaling factor applied to the crop coefficient (KC).
- The influence of the recommendations for resetting the KC and OFE values on FMP-estimated pumping.
- Because the OFE values were scaled to nearly 100%, the FMP could be considered a reliable estimate of consumptive use in the Basin.
- Discussion on if the use of the FMP in the Borrego Hydrologic Valley Model (BVHM) was still appropriate considering that metered data for agricultural production wells is now available.
- Confirmation that FMP-estimated groundwater pumping is specific to agricultural and select golf course wells. Pumping from municipal wells is simulated with a different package (the multi-node well package) in the BVHM.
- The redetermination of the Sustainable Yield should use a multi-year to multi-decadal period. This long-term period is required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and is logical for desert environments, such as Borrego Springs which experiences infrequent but significant storm events.
- The efforts from Task 2 have significantly improved the ability of the FMP to estimate groundwater pumping.

- The reference ET (ET_o) data from the Basin Characterization Model (BCM) for water years (WY) 2021 and 2022 may need to be further evaluated to determine why the difference between BCM and CIMIS station data is less in recent years compared to the historical data.
- A task for estimating recharge was not approved by the Watermaster Board when the scope of work to Redetermine the Sustainable Yield by 2025 was being considered.

IV. Discuss the Five-Year update of the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP)

Mr. Malone announced that this agenda item was deferred to a later meeting date.

V. Discuss the DWR's Statewide Airborne Electromagnetic Survey (AEM) Project (begins at 01:36:04 in the [meeting recording](#))

Mr. Malone informed the TAC of the effort to fulfill the DWR's data request for the AEM project, which included providing the DWR with recommendations for survey coverage, well geophysical and lithology data, and a map and shapefiles of the recommended areas, flight lines, and locations of the wells with data. TAC member comments on the AEM project included:

- John Peterson recommended that one of the proposed flight lines be extended further across the Coyote Creek Fault.
- Trey Driscoll stated that the data from the AEM project may take up to 18 months to be published by DWR. Additionally, Mr. Driscoll requested that Watermaster Staff work with GEI in an iterative process to finalize the flight lines for the survey.

VI. Update on the Technical Support Services (TSS) Monitoring Wells (begins at 01:47:43 in the [meeting recording](#))

Mr. Malone informed the TAC that the construction and initial monitoring of the two TSS wells has been completed. The DWR has also completed the elevation surveys for both the wells, but that Watermaster staff is awaiting the elevation survey report. DWR staff has indicated that the wells will be equipped with pressure transducers and telemetry by the end of the year to continual monitor, record, and report on groundwater elevations.

Trey Driscoll described the results of the initial water quality monitoring performed by the DWR in Spring 2023, which showed that nitrate concentrations differed in the shallow and deep wells. Mr. Driscoll indicated that these results highlight the importance of an annular seal in production wells. Additionally, Mr. Driscoll recommended that the TAC review the results of the monitoring event at a future TAC meeting.

VII. Public Comments) (begins at 01:54:12 in the [meeting recording](#))

Mr. Malone asked for public comments and any final comments from TAC members. Comments included:

- John Peterson inquired about the dates of the next groundwater monitoring event and if the impact of the most recent storm event would be captured in the data. Mr. Malone responded that the next monitoring event is scheduled for Fall 2023 and that the transducers installed at select wells in the monitoring network may reveal the short-term responses of groundwater levels to large precipitation/recharge events.

- Diane Johnson commented on the relatively short schedule for the five-year update to the GMP.

VIII. Future TAC Meetings

The next TAC meeting will be scheduled for late October 2023. The proposed agenda items include:

- Results of Task 3 - *Correct Errors Identified in the 2021 BVHM*
- Draft results of the storage-change calculation in the Borrego Springs Subbasin for Spring 2022 to Spring 2023
- Discuss the five-year update of the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP)
- Status update on expansion of the Groundwater Monitoring Program
- Discuss the appropriate period and methods to redetermine the Sustainable Yield
- Groundwater-quality results from the TSS monitoring wells.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Malone adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.