

MEETING MINUTES
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BORREGO SPRINGS WATERMASTER
Meeting Conducted via GoToMeeting
Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 11:00 a.m.

I. Opening Procedures

Andy Malone (Lead Technical Consultant, Borrego Springs Watermaster) called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m., at which time he confirmed the meeting was being recorded.

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:

Technical Advisory Committee Members	Bob Wagner, PE (Principal Water Resources Engineer, Wagner & Bonsignore) – <i>representing AWARE</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, CHG (retired) – <i>representing Roadrunner Golf and Country Club</i>
	Andy Malone, PG (Principal Geologist, West Yost)
	Eric Chiang (Principal Engineer, West Yost)
	Samantha Adams (Executive Director, West Yost)
Others Present	Lauren Salberg, GIT (Staff Geologist, West Yost)
	Diane Johnson (BWD Board Member)
	Leanne Crow (Board Alternative – County of San Diego)
	Bob Abrams (Aquilogic)
	David Peterson (Wagner & Bonsignore)
	Russ Detwiler (University of California Irvine)
	Jessica Clabaugh (BWD Finance Officer)
	Steven Humphrey (INTERA)
	Tammy Baker (BWD Board Member)

II. Public Comments

Mr. Malone reviewed the agenda and called for public comment. Public comments included:

- Diane Johnson introduced Russ Detwiler of the University of California Irvine (UCI), who then introduced himself to the group.

III. Review results of performing Task 3 to Redetermine the Sustainable Yield – *Correct Errors in the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM)* (begins at 04:44 in [the meeting recording](#))

Lauren Salberg presented on the methods and preliminary results of Task 3 – *Correct Errors in the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM)* (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

- Recommendation to review the pattern of historical farming, fallowing, and groundwater pumping at Farm 23 in the FMP. This could assist in BVHM calibration.

IV. Draft results of the Storage Change Calculation for Spring 2022 to Spring 2023 (begins at 31:56 in [the meeting recording](#))

Lauren Salberg presented the results of the storage change calculation for spring 2022 to spring 2023 (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

- The methodology used to calculate the change in storage calculation will be re-evaluated after the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield in 2025. The evaluation for a new methodology may consider:
 - The number and distribution of wells used in the storage change network.
 - Incorporating and/or using results from the BVHM.
 - The appropriate interpolation method used to generate contours and rasters of groundwater elevation.
- Recommendation to add a caveat that the groundwater-elevation contour maps are intended to be used regionally and are not for site-specific purposes.
- Agreement that the storage change method used is appropriate for annual reporting and captures the expected changes in storage from reduced pumping and a wet year.

V. Discuss the Five-Year Assessment of the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) (begins at 52:33 in [the meeting recording](#))

Andy Malone provided a summary of the contents of the current GMP and the California Department of Resources (DWR) minimum requirements for the five-year assessment of the GMP, and then led a discussion on the preliminary recommendations for each DWR requirement. TAC discussion and questions included:

- Recommendation to incorporate data and study results available since the GMP was developed to update the description of the hydrogeology in Chapter 2 – Basin Settings, specifically:
 - Depth-specific changes in the hydrogeology and water quality across the Basin
 - Incorporating results from the studies in the South Management Area (SMA) and Rams Hill wells in the GMP.
- Recommendation to review and potentially update the Representative Monitoring Sites and sustainable management criteria for the Representative Monitoring Sites based on new data collected since development of the GMP.
- Recommendation to describe the legal actions described in the Judgment (such as the settling of water rights) to address DWR requirement (h).
- Recommendation to include a discussion on the coordination with the Borrego Water District and, potentially, University of California Irvine (UCI) on DWR requirement (j).

- Clarification that the five-year assessment will be standalone report that will document the assessment and recommendations, if any, to update the GMP.
- Request for West Yost to produce and circulate an outline of the five-year assessment report, with the understanding that DWR's comments on the GMP may influence the outline.
- West Yost will circulate DWR's newly released guidelines on the five-year assessment of the GMP to TAC members.

VI. Status Update on the Expansion of the Groundwater Monitoring Program (begins at 01:34:26 in [the meeting recording](#))

Mr. Malone provided a summary of the efforts completed and a preview of the efforts to expand the Groundwater Monitoring Program. TAC discussion and questions included:

- Wells suitable for groundwater quality monitoring are different than wells suitable for groundwater level monitoring.
- Concern that there are no wells identified to add to the Groundwater-Level Monitoring network in the North and Central Management Areas between Henderson Canyon and Palm Canyon.
- Obtaining well owner permission and agreement to participate in the monitoring programs may be time-consuming. Recommendation to rely on members of the community to make contact and perform outreach with well owners to obtain their permission.
- New developments may influence the network of wells identified as potential monitoring wells (e.g. sale of the property containing the Viking Ranch).
- DWR Prop 68 funding is available for monitoring well conversions. Watermaster staff is aiming to begin the conversion process in early 2024.

VII. Discuss the time period to evaluate for the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield (begins at 01:48:39 in [the meeting recording](#))

Mr. Malone provided a summary of the time period used to determine the current Sustainable Yield and outlined considerations for the TAC prior to the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield in 2025, as included in the Agenda package. TAC discussion and questions included:

- Agreement from a TAC member that only the Borrego Springs Subbasin portion of the BVHM should be considered when Redetermining the Sustainable Yield. The lower portion of the BVHM extent includes the Ocotillo Wells Subbasin, which has different hydrogeology and groundwater quality than the Borrego Springs Subbasin.

VIII. Groundwater Quality Results from the Technical Support Services (TSS) Wells (memo only)

IX. Status Update on the Groundwater Quality Risk Assessment Update for the Borrego Water District (memo only)

X. Public Comments (begins at 01:55:48 in [the meeting recording](#))

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

- The Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) Survey data will not be used for the change in groundwater storage calculation.

- Recommendation to revisit project and management action (PMA) #5 – *Water Quality Optimization* and reconsider the definition of “significant and unreasonable” changes in groundwater quality.
- Mr. Driscoll reminded the TAC that the draft *Groundwater Quality Risk Assessment Update* for the Borrego Water District is included in the agenda packet as an information item and encouraged the TAC to provide comments on the draft, which will be incorporated in the final report.

XI. Future TAC Meetings

The next TAC meeting will be scheduled for early to mid-December 2023. The proposed agenda items include:

- Review results and TAC comments on the TM for Task 3 to Redetermine the Sustainable Yield – *Correct Errors in the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM)*
- Discussion on Task 4 to Redetermine the Sustainable Yield – *Model Recalibration*

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Malone adjourned the meeting at 12:57 p.m.