

Borrego Springs Watermaster Board Meeting

July 11, 2024

I. Opening Procedures

****This meeting is being recorded*

- A. Call to Order and start meeting recording
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll Call
- D. Approval of Agenda



II. Public Correspondence

II.A – Written Correspondence - *None*

II.B – Public Comment

Instructions for Public Comment

The public may address the Board on items within the Watermaster's Jurisdiction that are included or not included on the meeting agenda.

To address the Board on items that are not included on the meeting agenda, the public may request to speak during **Agenda Item III – Public Correspondence**. Comments may be limited to three minutes per speaker.

To address the Board on items that are included on the meeting agenda, the Board Chairperson will call for public comments immediately following the agenda item's staff report presentation and prior to Board discussion.

The Board may direct staff to include topics brought forward during Public Correspondence and Comment on a future meeting agenda. No action or discussion is otherwise taken by the Board.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting – June 13, 2024
- B. Approval of June 2024 Financial Report
- C. Receive and file Watermaster Staff invoices from March 2024
- D. Receive and file Watermaster Staff invoices from April 2024

IV.A Spring 2024 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report

Recommended Actions:

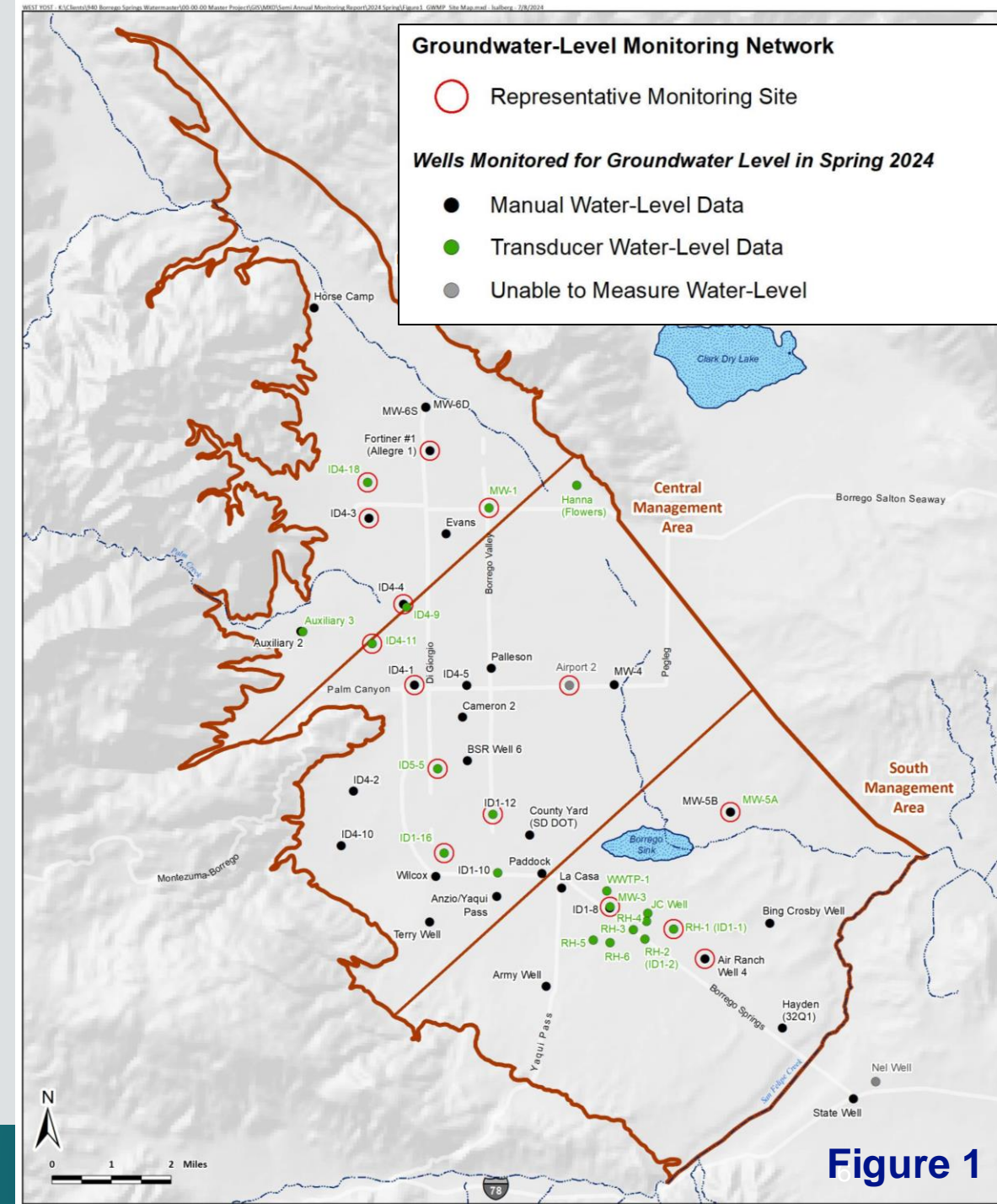
Board discussion.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

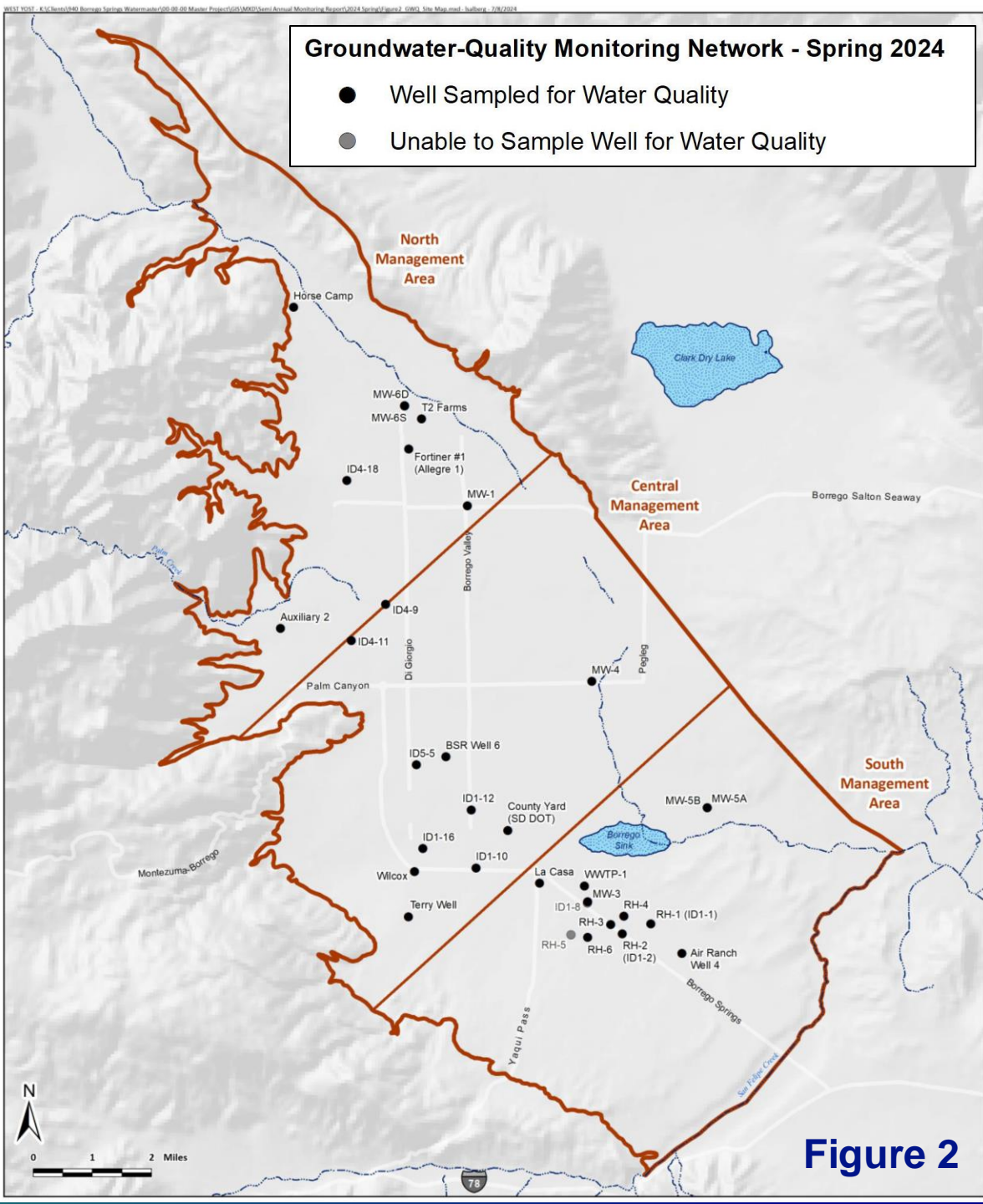
Spring 2024 Monitoring Event – Groundwater Level

- Groundwater levels were measured at 49 of the 51 wells in the program
 - 1 well added to program
- Reason(s) why wells weren't sampled are documented in Table 1
- Figure 1 shows the methods used at each well



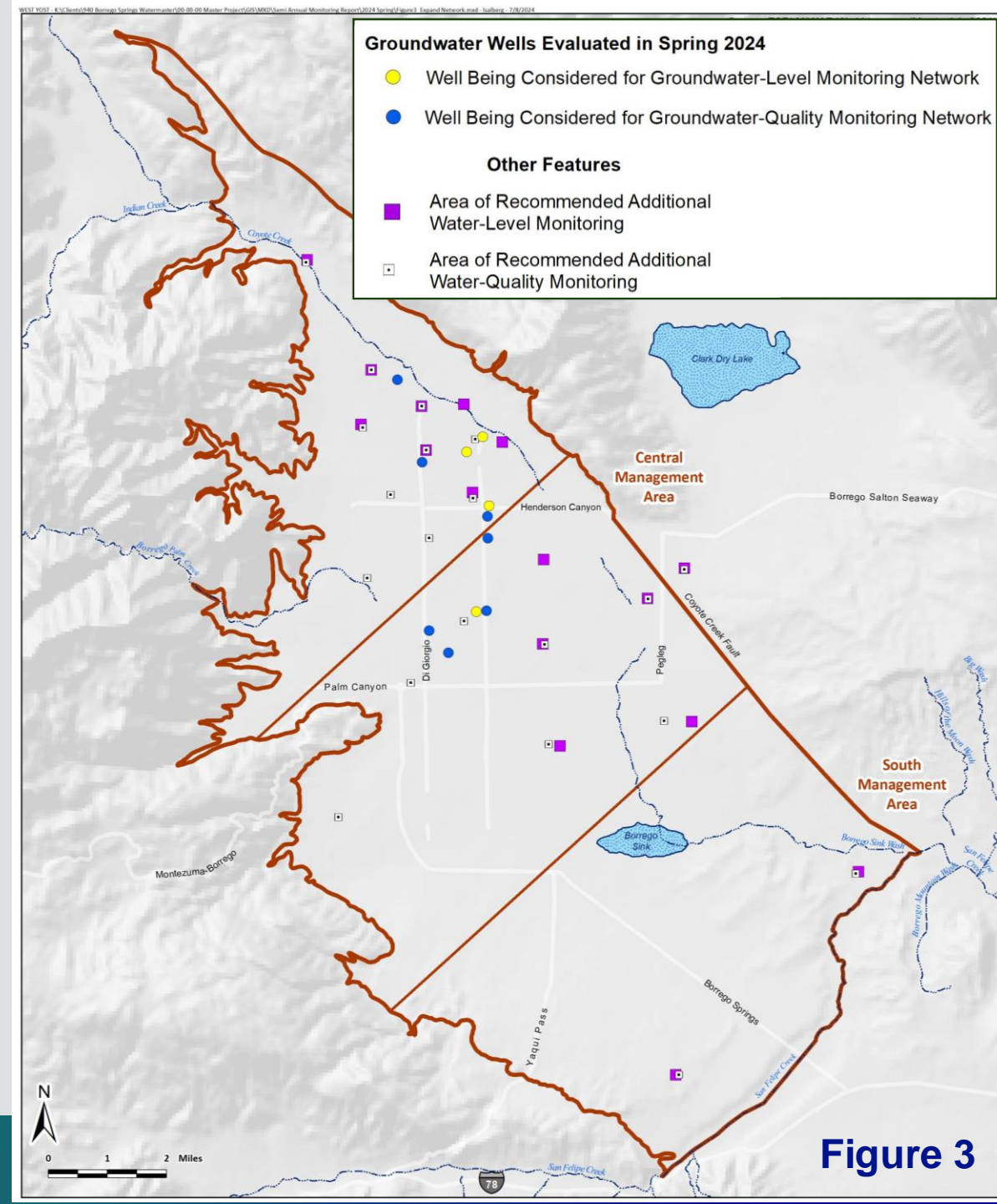
Spring 2024 Monitoring Event – Groundwater Quality

- Groundwater quality samples were collected at 30 of the 32 wells in the program
- Reason(s) why remaining wells weren't sampled are documented in Table 1



Expansion of Groundwater Monitoring Program

- Evaluated **11 wells** as potential candidates to add to the monitoring network
 - 4 for groundwater-level
 - 7 for groundwater-quality
- Next steps:
 - Use results to determine which wells to add to each monitoring network
 - Engage with well owners to obtain approval for long-term monitoring



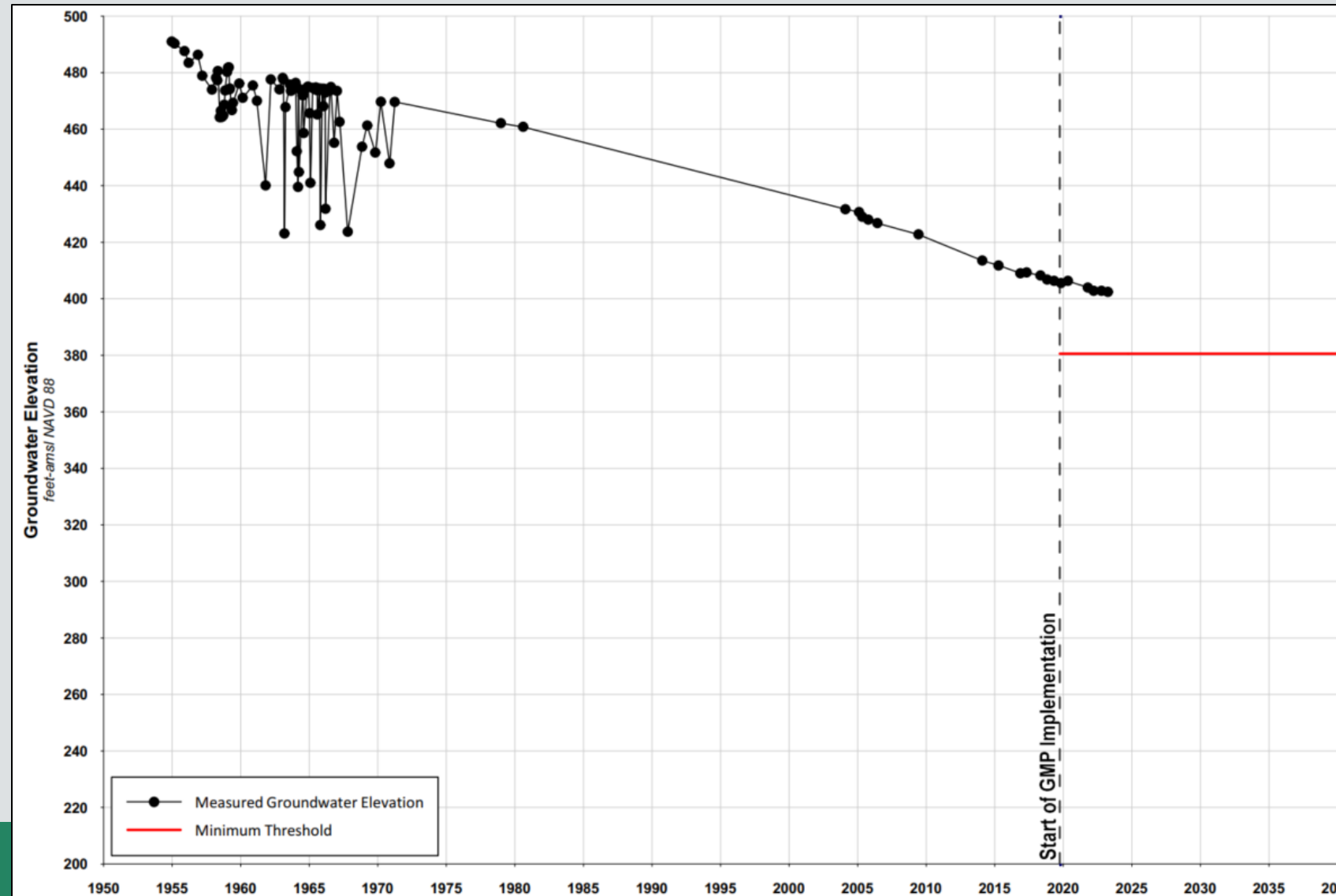
Spring 2024 Groundwater Levels Compared to Minimum Thresholds and Historical Trends

- For the 16 Representative Monitoring Wells, Spring 2024 groundwater level compared to:
 - Minimum Thresholds - **No well exceeded its Minimum Threshold**
 - Fall 2019 groundwater level – **groundwater levels have declined since fall 2019**
 - Historical rate of change – **rate of decline is slower, except at 1 well**
- Comparisons made in Tables 2 and 3

Table 2. Current Groundwater Elevations at Representative Monitoring Wells Compared to Minimum Thresholds				
Local Well Name	State Well ID	Spring 2024 Groundwater Elevation ^(a) (ft-msl)	Minimum Threshold ^(b) (ft-msl)	Spring 2024 Groundwater Elevation minus Minimum Threshold (ft)
		<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c = a - b</i>
North Management Area				
MW-1	010S006E21A002S	376.68	336	40.9
ID4-3	010S006E18R001S	375.25	336	39.3
Fortiner	010S006E09N001S	377.32	331	46.5
ID4-18	010S006E18J001S	371.36	330	41.0
ID4-4	010S006E29K002S	364.28	128	236.7
Central Management Area				
ID4-1	010S006E32R001S	389.43	359	30.8
Airport 2	010S006E35N001S	401.73	381	21.2
ID1-16	011S006E16N001S	385.55	355	30.1
ID4-11	010S006E32D001S	374.54	164	210.8
ID1-12	011S006E16A002S	384.16	285	99.5
ID5-5	011S006E09E001S	385.96	176	209.6
South Management Area				
MW-5A	011S007E07R001S	407.54	396	11.6
MW-5B	011S007E07R002S	406.48	395	11.7
MW-3	011S006E23J002S	447.79	438	10.1
Air Ranch	011S007E30L001S	471.10	462	9.3
RH-1	011S006E25A001S	467.18	459	8.3

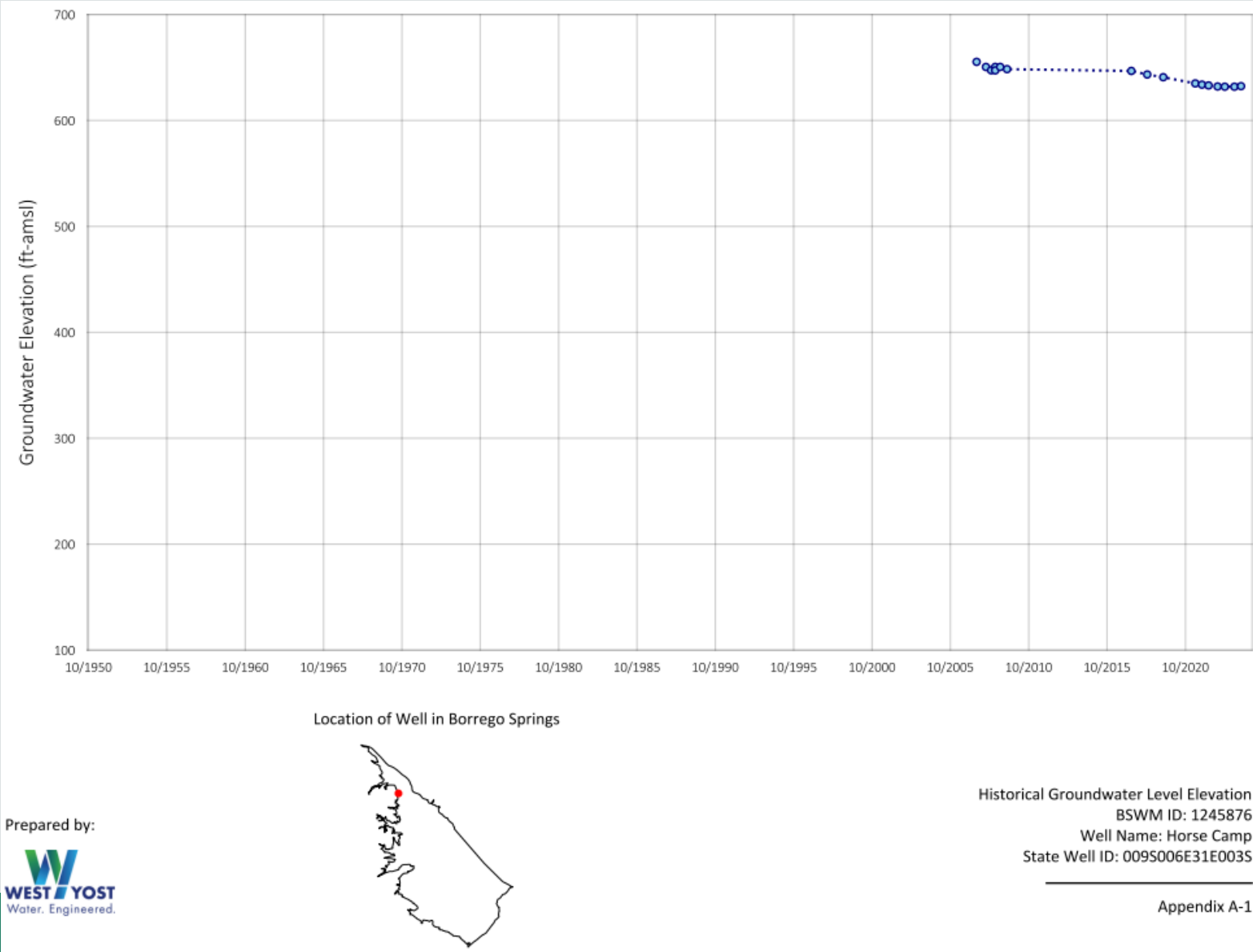
Groundwater Levels Compared to Minimum Thresholds at Representative Monitoring Wells

- Figures 4a-4p compare groundwater-levels at Representative Monitoring Wells to Minimum Thresholds
- No well has exceeded its Minimum Threshold based on static levels



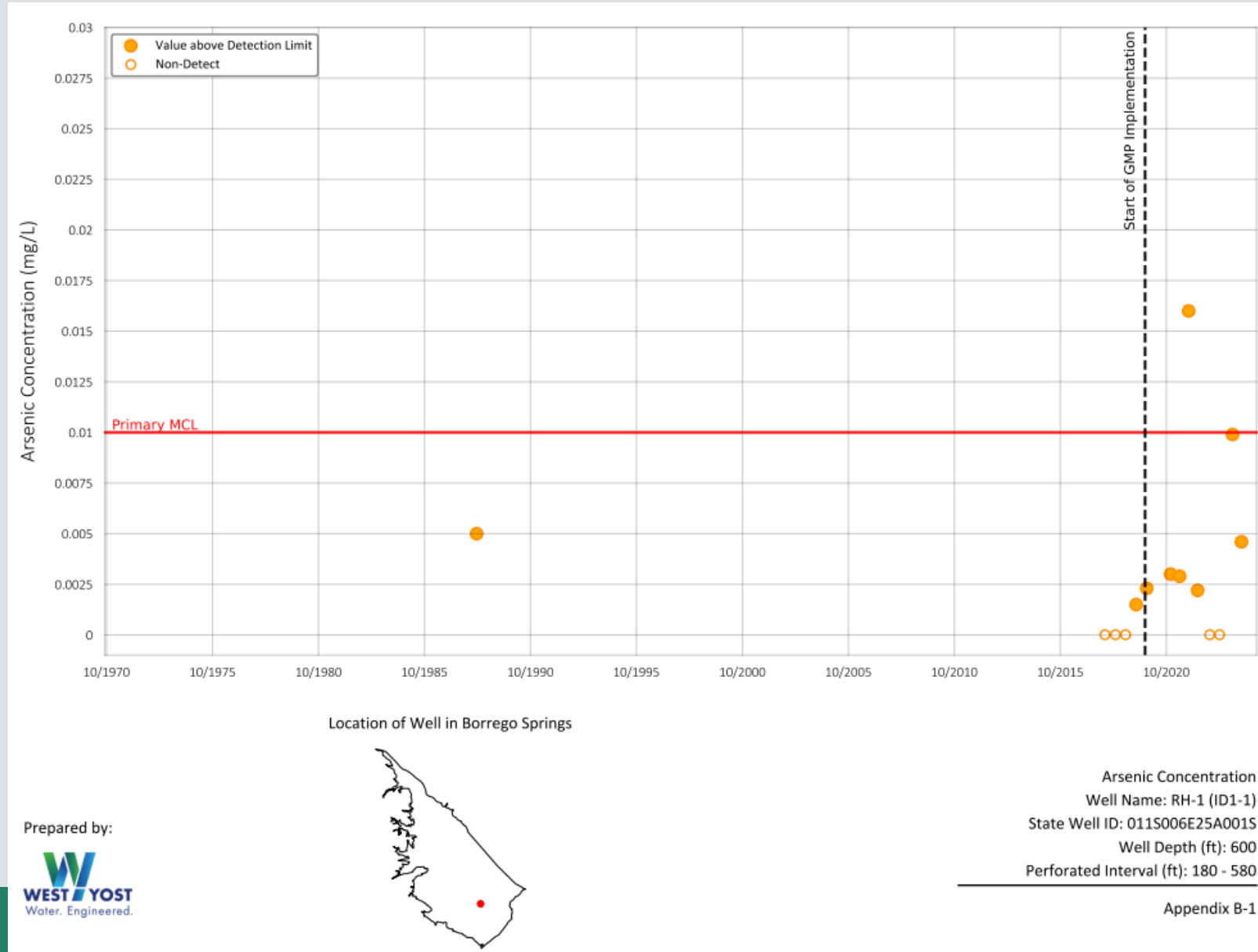
Appendix A. Groundwater Level Time-Series

- Figures showing the historical groundwater level measurements for wells measured in spring 2024
- Available as a handout on the Watermaster’s website



Appendix B. Groundwater Quality Time-Series

- Time-series charts of the 5 COCs for each well sampled in spring 2024
- Identifies location, depth, and screened interval of the well and constituent MCL
- Available as a handout on the Watermaster's website



Spring 2024 Groundwater Quality Results Compared to Drinking Water Standards

- Table 4 lists all water quality sample results, by well, that exceeded a California or EPA drinking water standard during the spring 2024 monitoring event
- Table 5 summarizes number of wells with water quality exceedances for each constituent of concern (COC)

Table 5. Summary of Exceedances of Water Quality Standard by Standard Type and Well Type					
Parameter	Standard	Standard Limit (units)	Number of Drinking Water Wells with Exceedance	Number of Non-Potable Water Wells with Exceedance ¹	Number of Observation Wells with Exceedance
TDS ²	CA Secondary MCL – lower limit	500 mg/l	3	8	5
TDS ³	CA Secondary MCL – upper limit	1,000 mg/l	0	4	2
Sulfate	CA and EPA Secondary MCL	250 mg/l	1	9	4
Nitrate (as N)	CA and EPA Primary MCL	10 mg/l	0	6	0
Fluoride	EPA Secondary MCL	2 mg/l	0	0	1
Arsenic	CA Primary MCL	0.01 mg/l	0	3	0

Spring 2024 Groundwater Quality

For five COCs, *Figures 5 through 9* show:

- Spatial distribution of water quality concentrations at all wells sampled in spring 2024
- Time history charts of historical concentration trends at selected wells in each Management Area
- The CA MCL for each COC

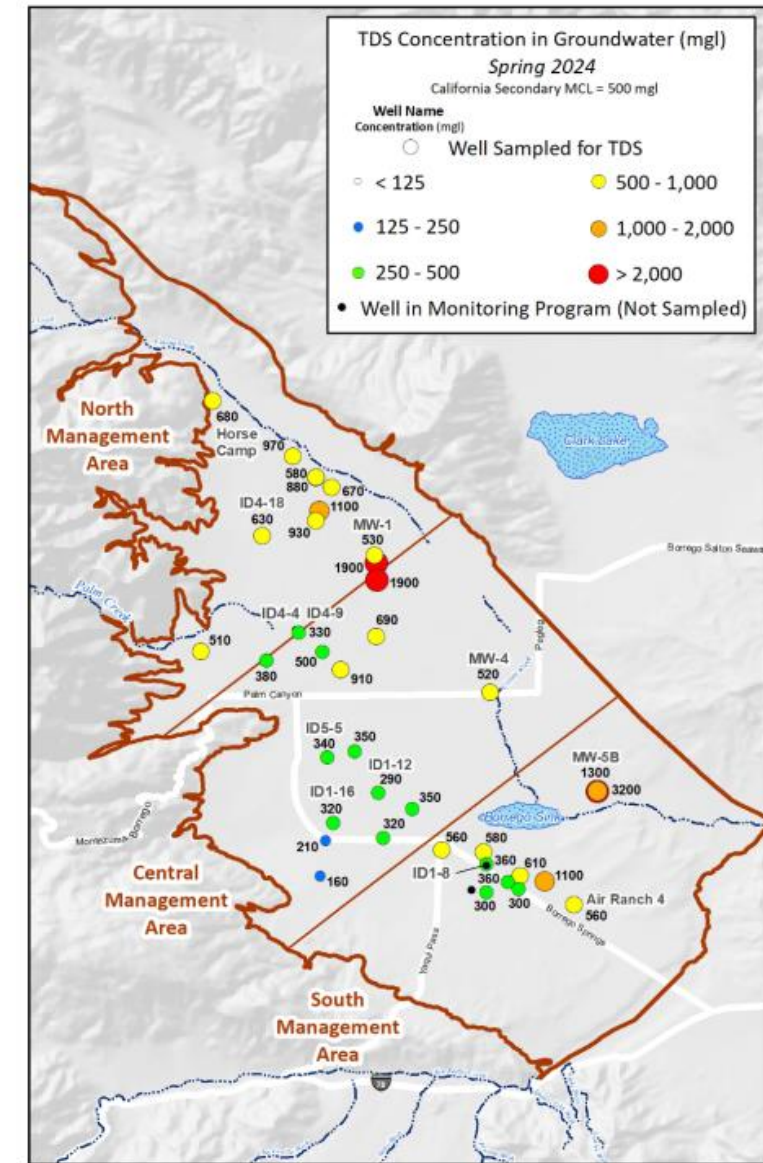
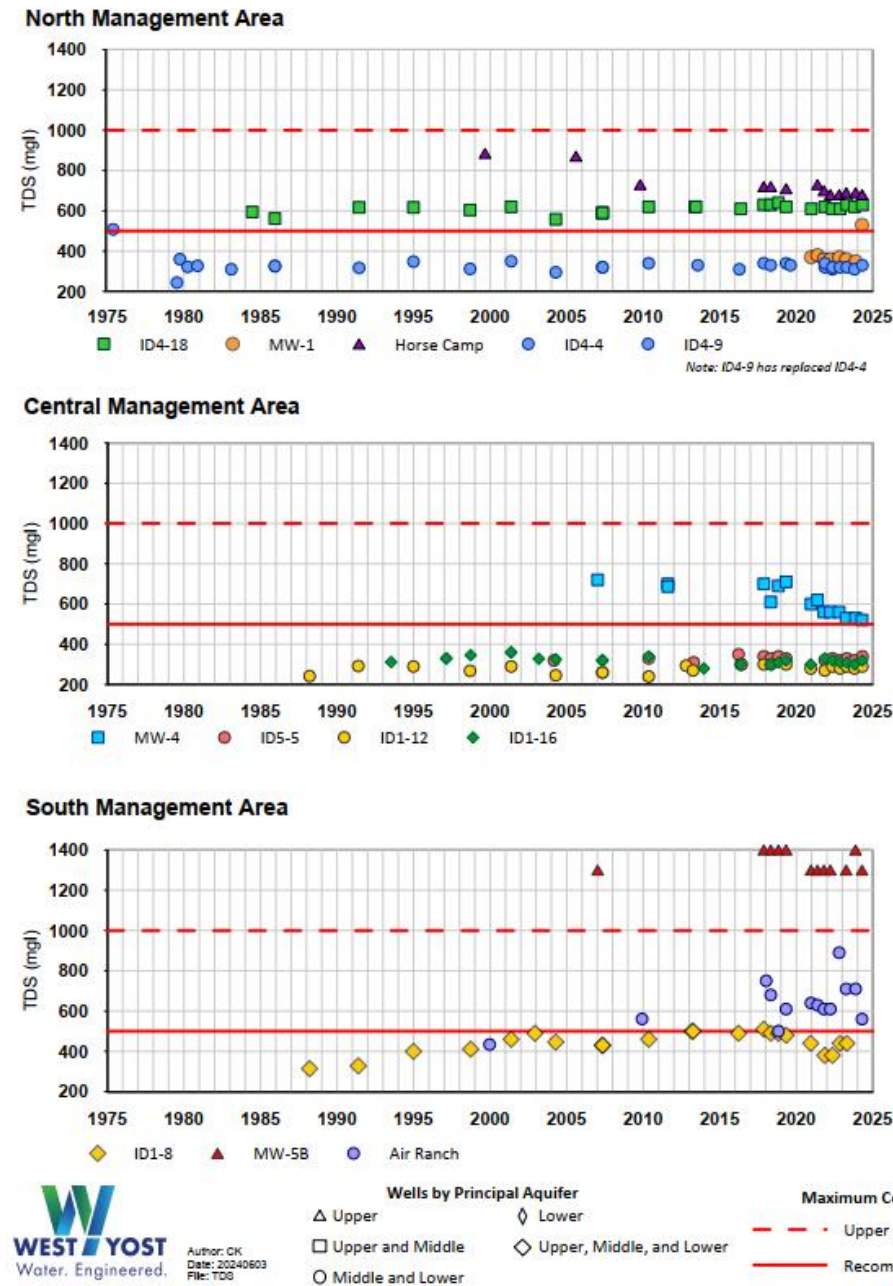
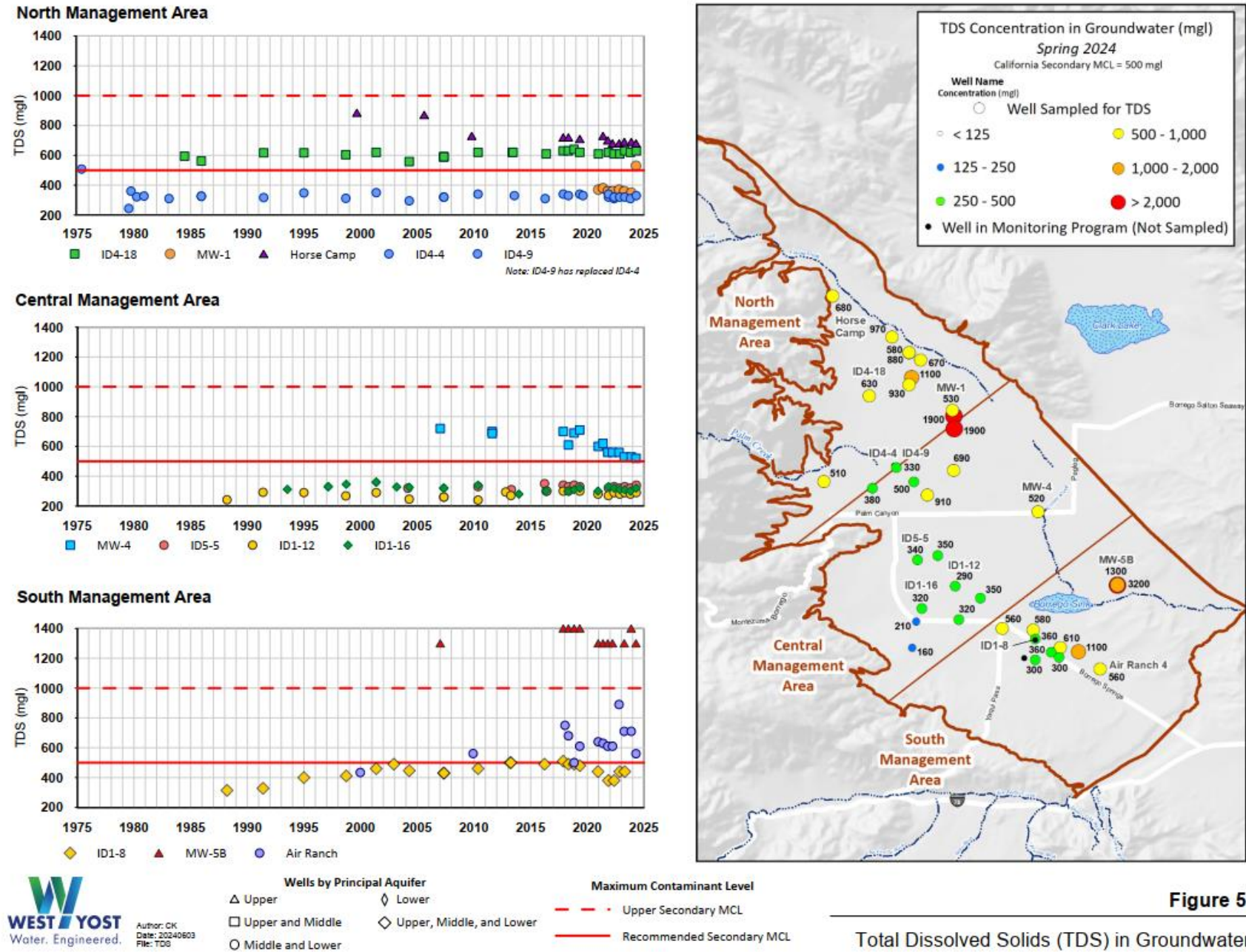


Figure 5

Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in Groundwater

Spring 2024 Groundwater Quality

- Results from wells in monitoring program were similar to past results
- Results from new wells evaluated:
 - Exceedances of TDS, nitrate, and sulfate MCLs
 - Owners were provided with results and given time to discuss with staff



Considerations

- The Judgment outlines a process to address water quality
- It's not prudent to make groundwater-management decisions based on one sampling event/result
- Typically, groundwater-quality changes slowly in a Basin, so there is time to develop management actions
- The recent water quality results are new information, and will be considered in the GMP assessment

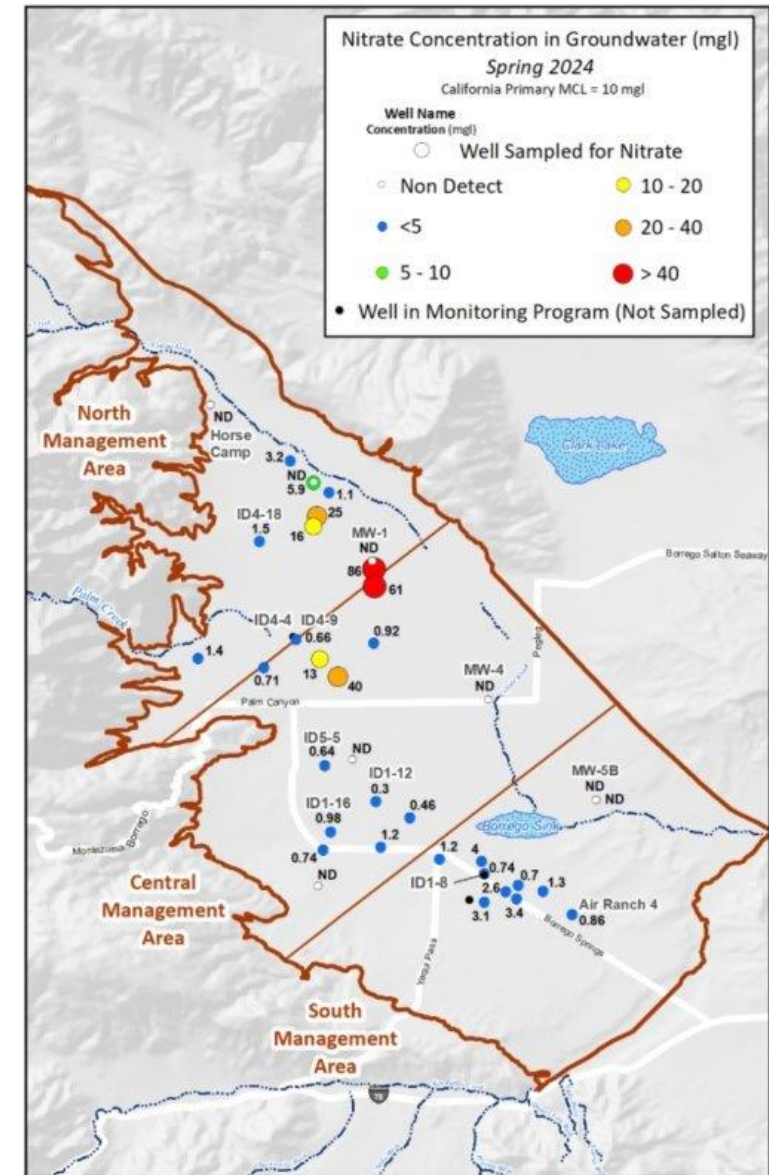
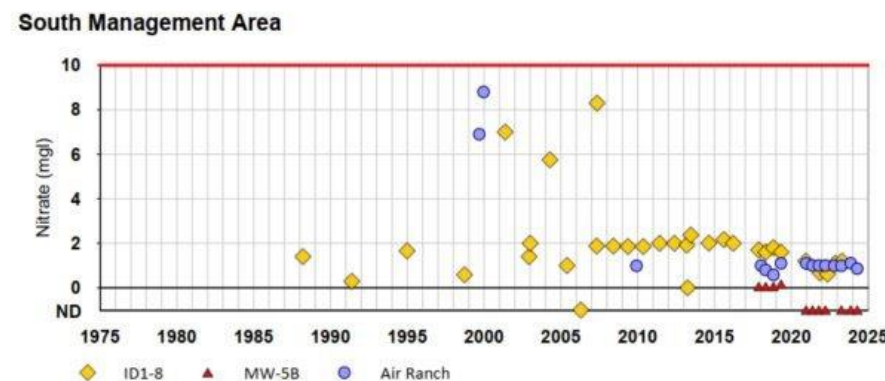
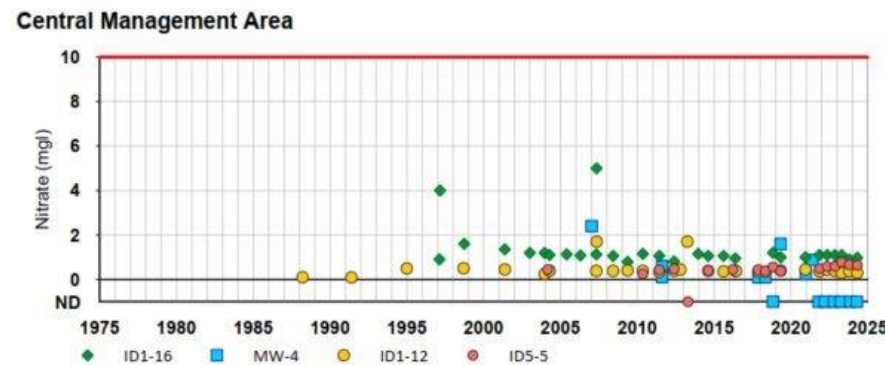
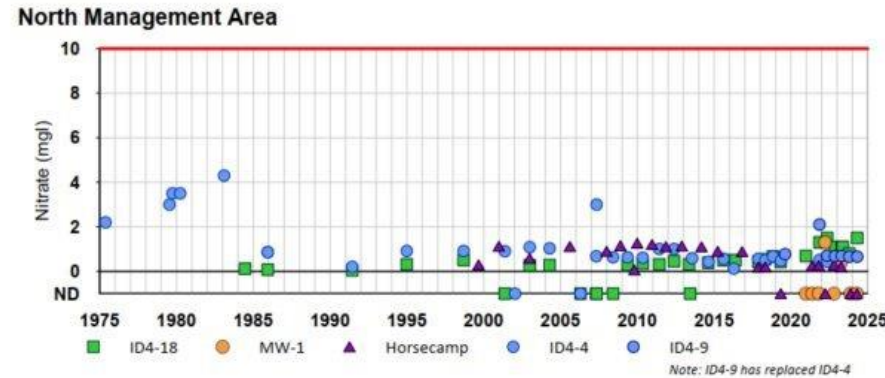


Figure 6

Nitrate (as Nitrogen) in Groundwater

IV.A Spring 2024 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report



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BOARD DISCUSSION

IV.B Budget Status Report as of June 30, 2024

Recommended Actions:

Board discussion.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

IV.B – Budget Status Report as of June 30, 2024

Table 1. Borrego Springs Watermaster Budget Status Report for WY 2024
as of June 30, 2024 (End of FY 3rd Quarter)

Revenues, Expenditures, and Reserves	Approved WY 2024 Budget (as Amended)	Actual WY 2024 Year-to-Date	Percent (%) of Budget	Variance to Date (Budget minus Actual)	Notes
Revenues	\$ 1,713,460	\$ 1,111,738.47	65%	\$ 601,721.53	See below note re: DWR Prop 68 Revenue
Pumping Assessments Invoiced	\$ 458,000	\$ 458,011.26	100%	\$ (11.26)	Have not recorded bad debt
payments received		\$ 412,270.99	90%		
Bad Debt (non-payment on Assessments)	\$ (4,000)	\$ -	0%	\$ (4,000.00)	
Overproduction Penalty Assessments	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Revenues Collected for Pass thru Expenses	\$ 6,469	\$ 6,468.96	100%	\$ 0.04	
payments received		\$ 5,660.34	87%		
DWR Prop 68 Grant Reimbursements Accrued	\$ 1,252,991	\$ 647,258.25	52%	\$ 605,732.75	This is accrued expenses in WY 2024 eligible for reimbursement
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,677,205	\$ 970,819.68	58%	\$ 706,384.98	
Administrative Services	\$ 402,861	\$ 306,506.23	76%	\$ 96,354.42	
Watermaster Staff Admin Services	\$ 280,284	\$ 206,960.39	74%	\$ 73,323.21	
Board Meetings	\$ 101,120	\$ 73,993.35	73%	\$ 27,126.25	
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings	\$ 45,326	\$ 29,516.00	65%	\$ 15,810.00	
Court Hearings	\$ 4,016	\$ 297.00	7%	\$ 3,719.00	
Stakeholder Outreach/Workshops	\$ 12,590	\$ 15,313.25	122%	\$ (2,723.25)	
Administration and Management	\$ 72,628	\$ 55,891.79	77%	\$ 16,736.21	
Prop 68 Project Admin and Grant Reporting	\$ 44,604	\$ 31,949.00	72%	\$ 12,655.00	
Other Administrative or Vendor Services	\$ 122,577	\$ 99,545.84	81%	\$ 23,031.21	
Financial Audit	\$ 10,000	\$ 7,840.00	78%	\$ 2,160.00	Note: This is a pre-paid expense - this reflects balance sheet accrual
Insurance	\$ 40,474	\$ 30,294.94	75%	\$ 10,178.79	
Misc. Expenses	\$ 2,500	\$ 77.00	3%	\$ 2,423.00	
Meter Accuracy Testing Vendors	\$ 13,500	\$ 12,200.00	90%	\$ 1,300.00	
Interest on Vendor Terms During Prop 68 Grant Period	\$ 56,103	\$ 49,133.90	88%	\$ 6,969.42	
Legal Services	\$ 100,000	\$ 90,616.79	91%	\$ 9,383.21	

Excerpt from Table 1 provided in Agenda package, compares Approved WY 2024 Budget (as amended) to actual as of June 30, 2024

IV.B – Budget Status Report as of June 30, 2024

- 65% of planned revenues have been accrued to date.
- 58% of planned expenditures have been spent to date.
- Payment liability to vendors with payment terms totals \$447,252
- Cash reserves are \$985,725
 - Represents about 8.8 months of operating expenditures
 - Held above target in anticipation of forthcoming vendor invoices for sand fence construction and well conversion work

IV.B – Budget Status Report as of June 30, 2024

- In Quarter 4, the following activities (in addition to routine work) are anticipated that will materially advance progress on the budget status:
 - Completion of draft Sustainable Yield Determination – about \$105,000 in expenses are anticipated.
 - First round of work on conversion of abandoned wells to monitoring sites – up to \$140,000 in expenses are anticipated.
 - Construction of sand fences for the Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands project – about \$170,000 in expenses are anticipated.
 - Payment of the 4th reimbursement request by DWR in the amount of \$228,508 is expected in September 2024.

IV.B Budget Status Report as of June 30, 2024



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BOARD DISCUSSION

IV.C Status Update on Redetermination of Sustainable Yield

Recommended Actions:

Board discussion

Fiscal Impact:

None.

Work Performed in June 2024

- Completed Task 4 – *Model Recalibration*:
 - Calibration of aquifer and storage properties and scalar multipliers assigned to subsurface inflow
 - Began preparation of figures and tables to present results of recalibration
 - Began preparation of draft TM on methods and results
- Held July 1, 2024 TAC meeting to review methods and results of Task 4.
Discussion included:
 - Validation of the Farm Process using select OpenET models
 - Recommendations on the presentation of recalibration results
 - Recommendation to prioritize and more highly-weight wells with long-term history of groundwater-level monitoring

Work Planned for July/August 2024

- Complete draft Task 4 TM and distribute to TAC for review
 - TAC may request Ad-Hoc meeting to review TAC comments and discuss final results
- Finalize Task 4 TM
- Continue work on Task 5 – *Determine the Sustainable Yield*, including:
 - Prepare draft pumping projections to use in Task 5
 - Schedule August 2024 TAC meeting to discuss methods and pumping projections
 - Schedule workshop with TAC and Board to discuss methods and pumping projections

IV.C Status Update on Redetermination of Sustainable Yield



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BOARD DISCUSSION

V.A – Legal Counsel Report

V.B – Technical Consultant Report

- Report out from July 1, 2024 TAC meeting
- Status update on Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands project
- Status update on Conversion of Abandoned Wells project

V.B – Technical Consultant Report

July 1, 2024 TAC Meeting:

- Preliminary results of Task 4 to Redetermine the Sustainable Yield – *Model Recalibration*
- Status update on the 5-Year GMP Assessment Report
 - Provided a status update on the progress of draft 5-Year Assessment Report
 - Summarized how Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) are established for Groundwater Levels and Groundwater Storage
 - Identified uncertainties and challenges related to the SMCs defined in the GMP
 - Provided initial recommendations for updating the SMCs for Groundwater Levels and Groundwater Storage, such as:
 - Use the Recalibrated BVHM to update the SMCs
 - Update the network of Representative Monitoring Wells based on the current monitoring program
 - More clearly define groundwater conditions that constitute an “undesirable result”

V.B – Technical Consultant Report

Status update: **Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands project**

- Task 2 – draft report on Existing Retired Farmland and Natural Habitat Field Study was published on July 9
 - July 16th EWG meeting will discuss draft report
- Task 3 –Sand Fence Pilot Study (Fredericks Services)
 - Kick-off meeting occurred June 14, 2024 between Land IQ, construction contractor (Fredericks), and parcel landowners
 - Construction anticipated to take 43 days to complete (end of July)
 - Monitoring will follow (6 months)
 - **BWD identified an issue with contractor's prevailing wage rates. Budget will be shifted from Task 2 to Task 3 to allow for the completion of Task 3 on both selected parcels.**

V.B – Technical Consultant Report

Status update: **Conversion of Abandoned Wells project**

- Continued work on Task 1, including:
 - Scheduled kick-off meeting between West Yost and Wel Tec
 - Prepared well summary materials to support Wel Tec's development of well-specific work plans and budget
 - Wel Tec initiated work on well-specific cost estimates for simple conversions
- Next steps:
 - Schedule field work for simple conversions
 - Perform site visits to assess well conditions for complex conversions
 - Update work plan with well-specific cost estimates and schedule for complex conversions

V.C – Executive Director Report

- Prop 68 grant update
 - New grant manager in place
 - Reimbursement requests #4 and #5 under review
 - BWD/DWR meeting scheduled for 7/12 at 10 am with new grant manager:
 - Request for schedule extension
 - Request for budget transfer between categories
 - Other clarifying questions
- Status update on DWR review of GMP and Judgment – nothing to report

V.D – Chairperson's Report

VI. Establishing Agenda for August 8, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

Recommended Actions:

Develop and approve agenda for August 8, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

Process:

1. Review the initial August agenda topics planned by Staff
2. Review the September and October tentative topics planned by Staff and previously requested items by Board members, as listed below
3. List out additional items that have arisen during the July 11, 2024 Board meeting
4. Call on Directors to request additional items for consideration of inclusion on the August 2024 or other future agenda
5. Consider motion(s) to approve the agenda (the agenda can be approved in a single motion or multiple motions to cover each item).

Note: The Agenda/items are approved by majority vote (3 of 5 directors)

Initial Agenda for August Regular Meeting

1. Consideration of Approval of Statement of Work No. 7 and Contract Amendment No. 10 for West Yost Administrative and Technical Services in WY 2025
2. Consideration of Approval of August TAC meeting agenda
3. Report out from July EWG meeting
4. Status update on the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield
5. Status update on the 5-year Assessment of the GMP
6. Discussion on DWR review of Judgment/GMP (if applicable)

Tentative Topics for September and October Meetings

September

1. Overview of Anticipated WY 2025 Calendar of Activities
2. Approval of WY 2025 Meeting Dates
3. Status Update on the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield
4. Discussion of DWR review of Judgment/GMP (if applicable)

October (*In-Person*)

1. Election of Board Officers
2. Process and schedule to complete WY 2024 Annual Report
3. Review of Draft WY 2024 Water Rights Accounting
4. Discussion of DWR review of Judgment/GMP (if applicable)
5. Board workshop on the draft Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield

Set Agenda for August Regular Meeting

1. Consideration of Approval of Statement of Work No. 7 and Contract Amendment No. 10 for West Yost Administrative and Technical Services in WY 2025
2. Consideration of Approval of August TAC meeting agenda
3. Report out from July EWG meeting
4. Status update on the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield
5. Status update on the 5-year Assessment of the GMP
6. Discussion on DWR review of Judgment/GMP (if applicable)

VI. Establishing Agenda for August 8, 2024 Regular Board Meeting



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BOARD DISCUSSION

VII. Board Member Comments

VIII. Next Meetings of the Borrego Springs Watermaster

- Regular Board Meeting – August 8, 2024
- Regular Board Meeting – September 12, 2024
- Environmental Working Group Meeting – July 16, 2024

IX. Adjournment

- Thank you for your participation!