Borrego Springs Watermaster Board Meeting

April 16, 2025

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

- April 8, 2025 email from Diane Johnson

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 – March 19, 2025

B. Approval of March 2025 Financial Report

C. Receive and file Watermaster Staff invoices from January 2025

The Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) Identification, Assessment, and Monitoring Program

April 16, 2025

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE)

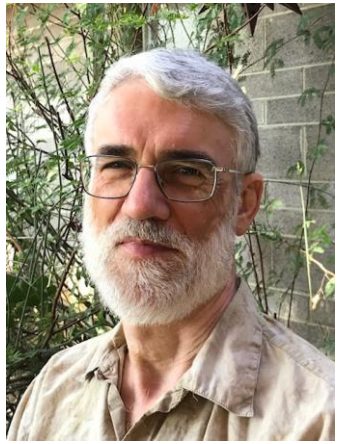
Identification, Assessment, and Monitoring Program - Prop 68 SGMA Grant

Nikki Fiore

Laurel Brigham

Travis Huxman

Robert Staehle



Daniel Donovan

Jon Rebman

David Garmon

Lori Paul

Research Team & Partners

University of California, Irvine

theNAT SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy

Guiding Framework

The Nature Conservancy's

SGMA Guidance for Identifying, Monitoring, and Managing GDEs:

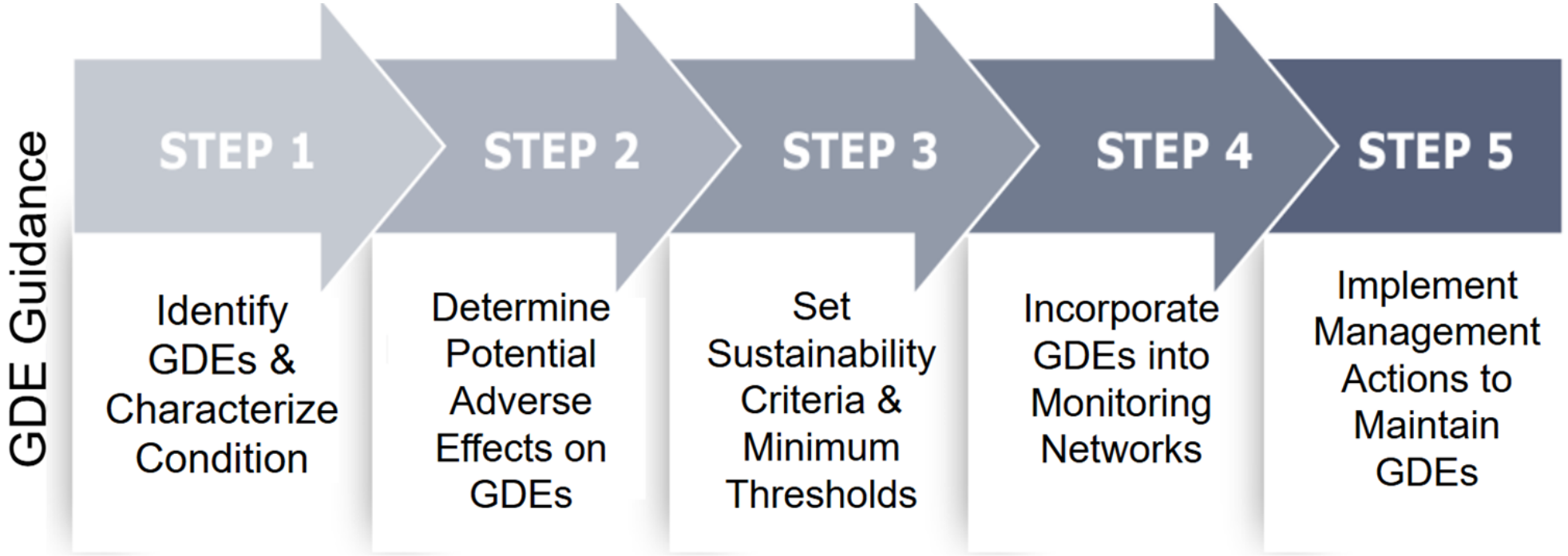
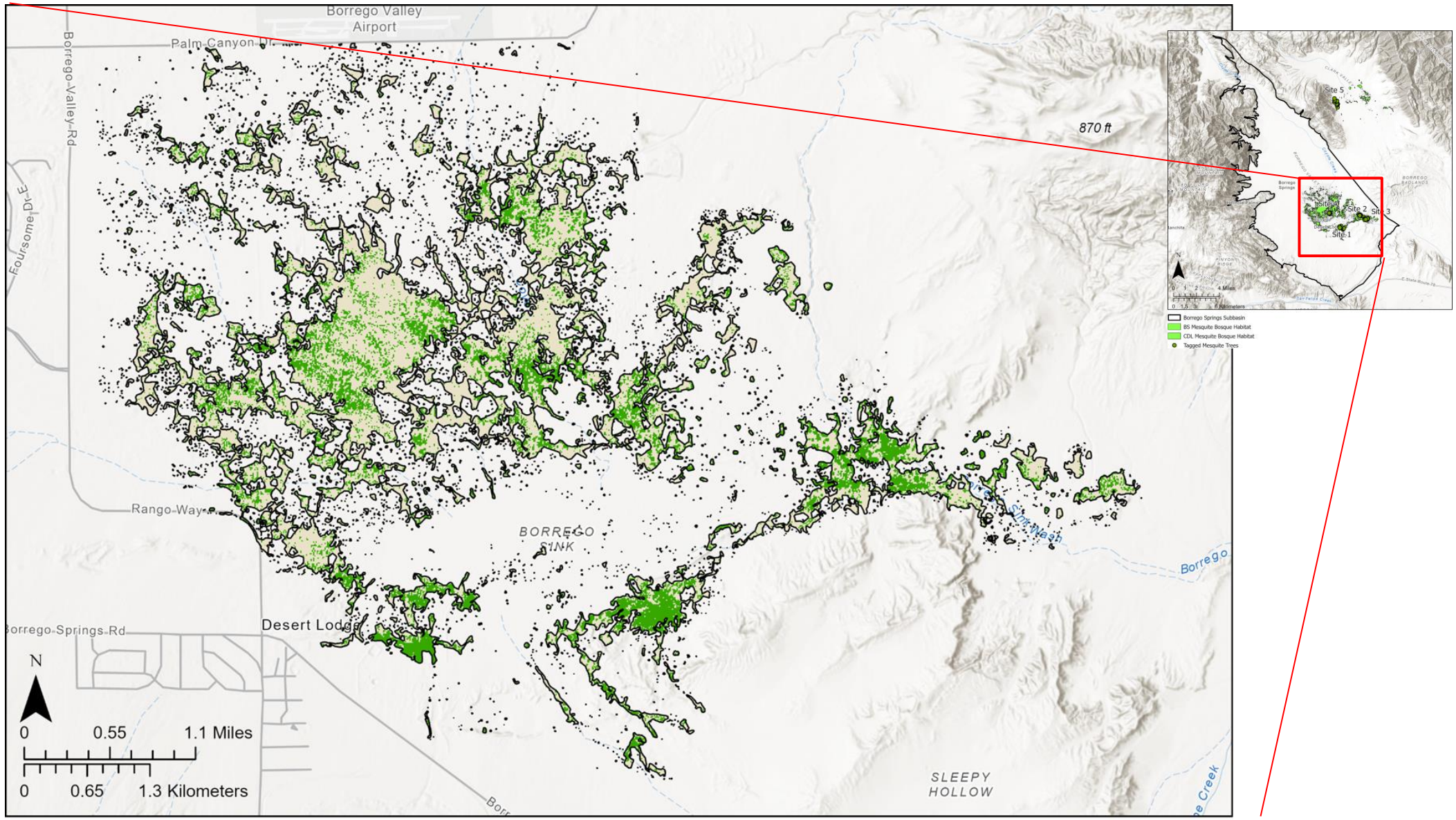


Figure modified from: Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: Guidance for Preparing Groundwater Sustainability Plans
Available at: https://www.groundwaterresourcehub.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/GWR_Hub_GDE_Guidance_Doc_1-31-18.pdf

Project Outcome - Significant Evidence of GDE

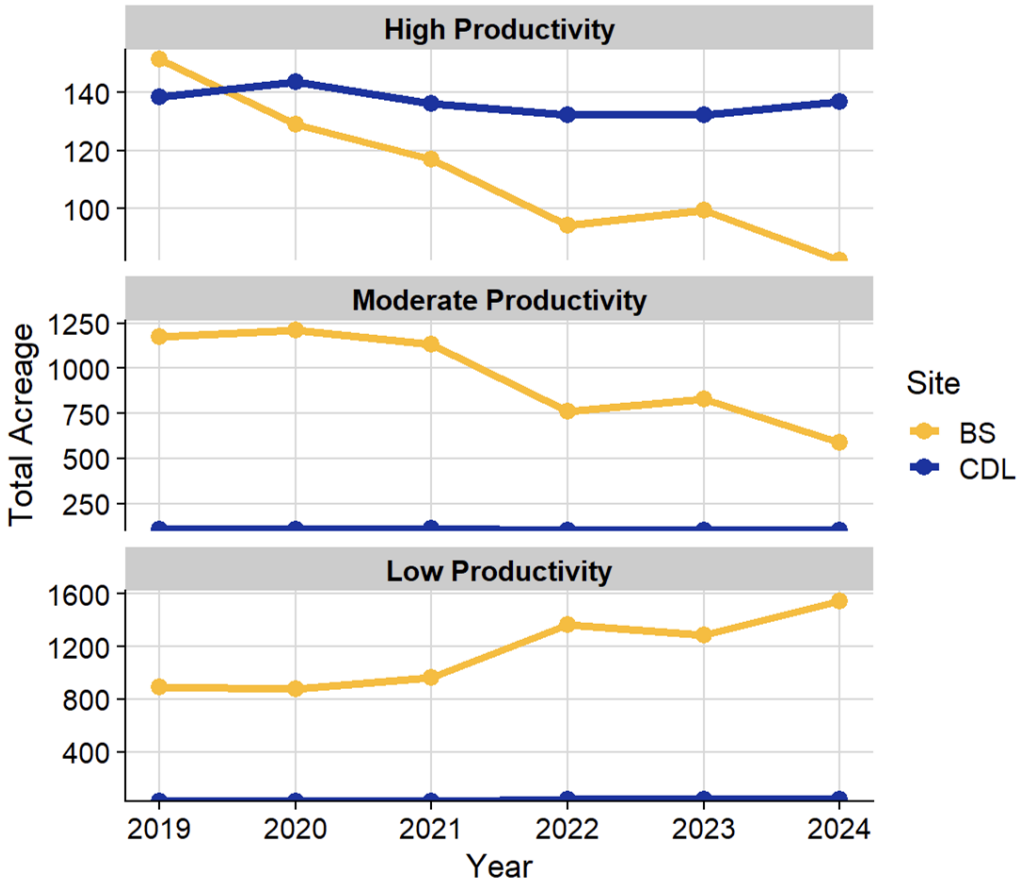
- 1,850 acres of mesquite near the Borrego sink classify as GDE
  - Groundwater across this area is accessible to mesquite roots
  - Isotope data from trees across this area indicate groundwater use
  - Remote sensing data indicates GDE behavior
  - ET sensors confirm groundwater use

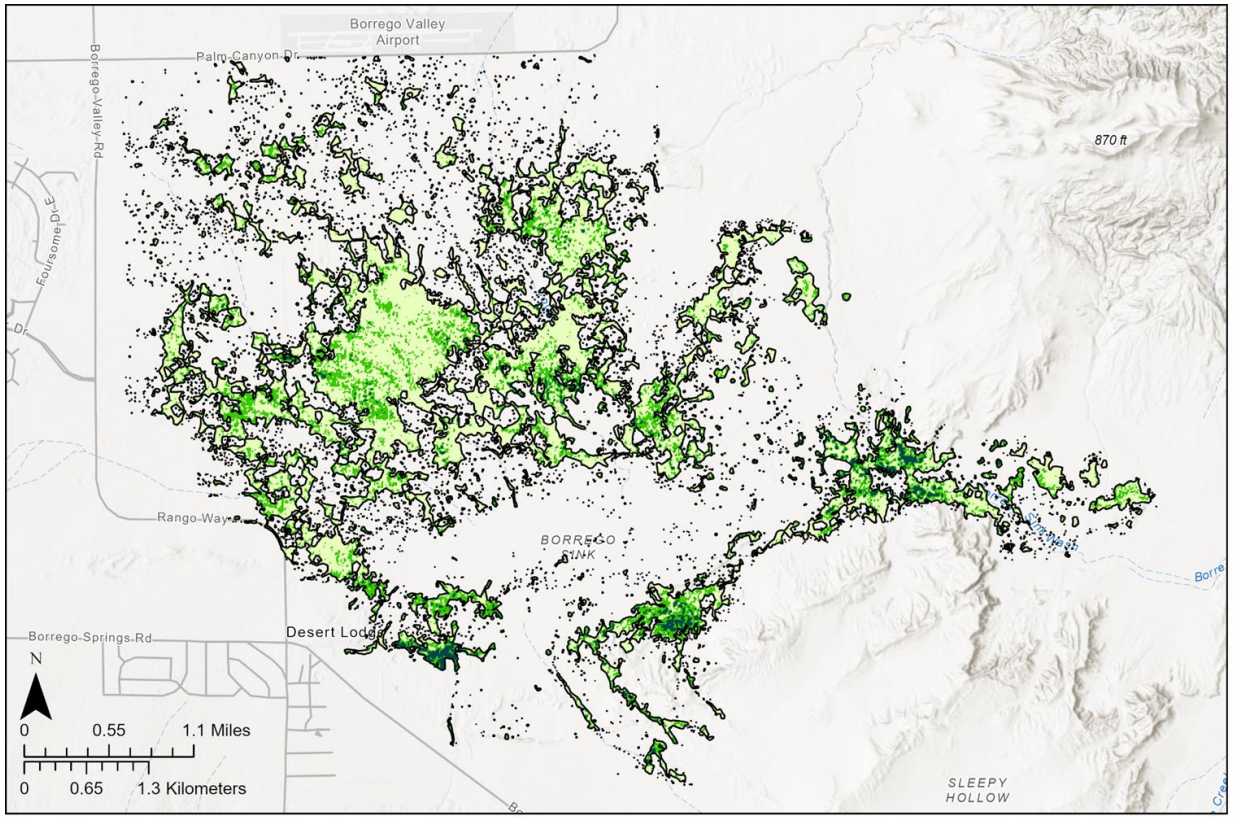
Spatial GDE Behavior



Mesquite Bosque Health Assessment

- ~ 82 acres of high-productivity vegetation
- ~ 590 acres of moderate productivity
- ~ 1,545 acres of low productivity





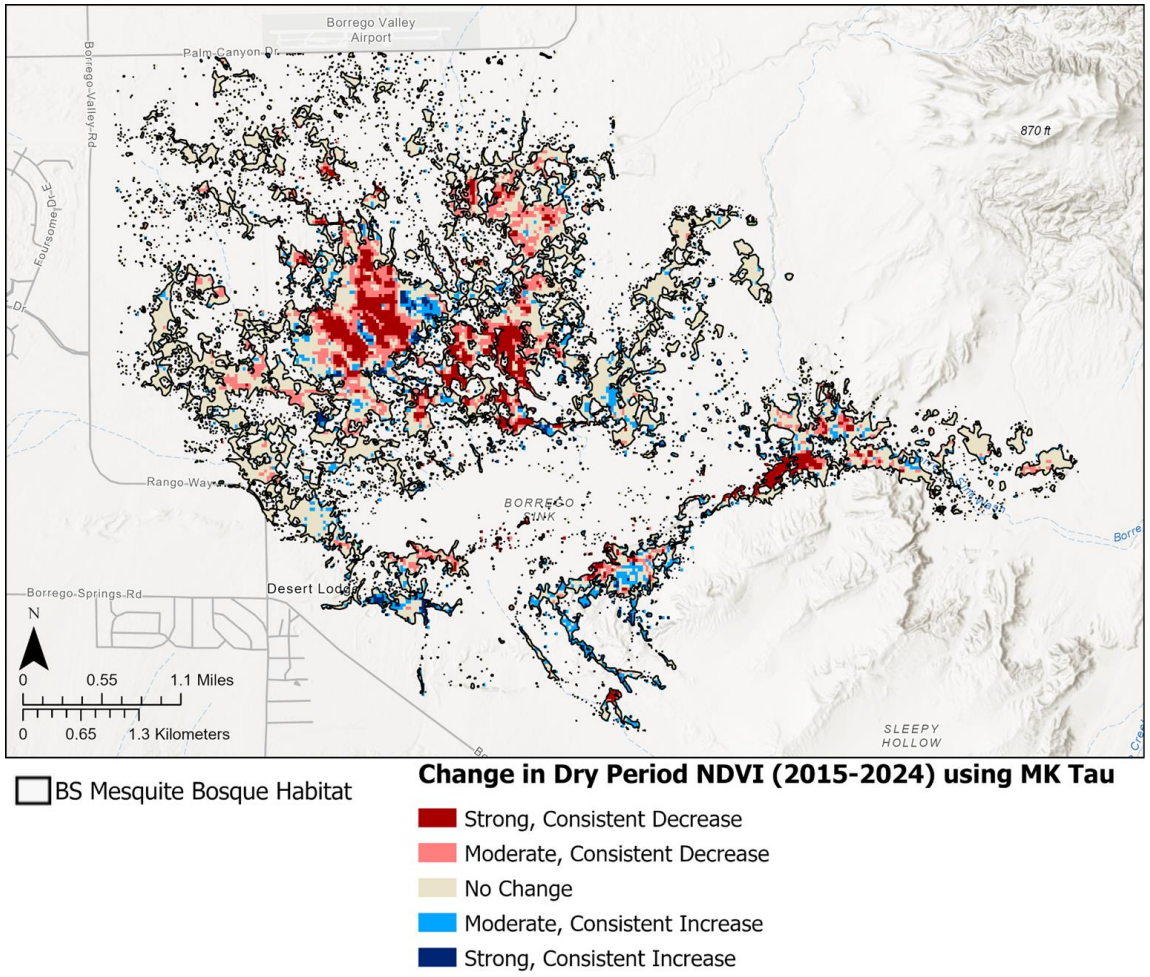
Potential SGMA undesirable impacts

BS SGMA Implementation Period 2015-Present:

- 12% of mesquite habitat has improved
- 61% of mesquite habitat has remained stable
- 27% of mesquite habitat has declined

CDL contrast (same period):

- 64 % of mesquite habitat has improved
- 33% of mesquite habitat has remained stable
- 3% of mesquite habitat has declined



Significant Habitat Value of Productive GDE

- There is significant GDE reliant biodiversity in the mesquite:
  - **276** animal or fungus subspecies, species, or genera near Borrego Sink, **43** of which are at-risk species
  - **142** native plant species near Borrego Sink; **9** of which are threatened, endangered or rare

A rare species, *Johnstonella angelica* (Angelic Johnstonella) was discovered in mesquite bosque habitat at Clark Dry Lake. This is only the second U.S. observation of this plant, with the first at the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center in Borrego Springs in 2019.

Recommendations

- Designate the mesquite bosque GDE as a **beneficial user of groundwater**

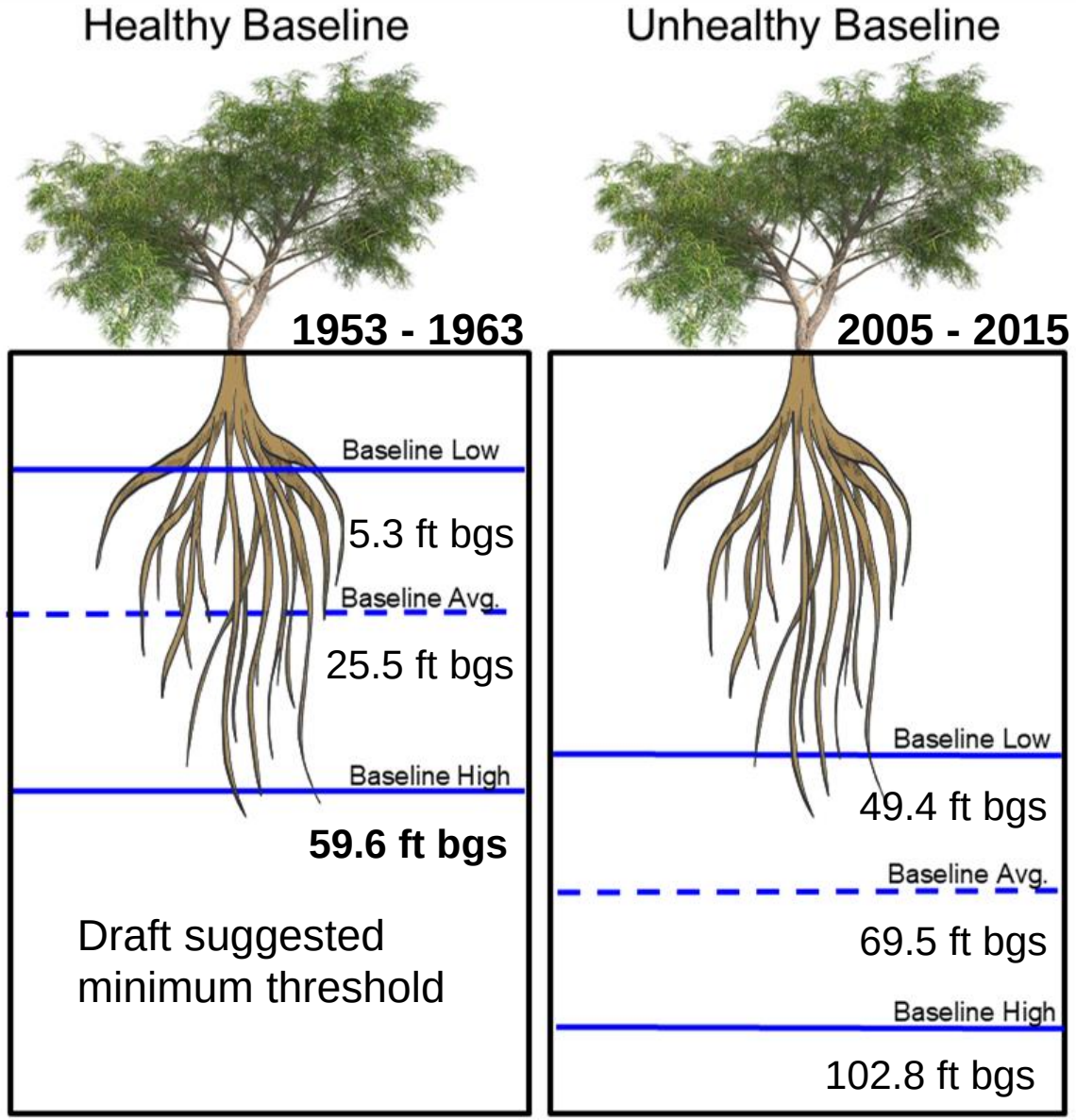
Recommendations

- Designate the mesquite bosque GDE as a **beneficial user of groundwater**
  - Correct contradiction in SGMA certification and judgement

Recommendations

- Designate the mesquite bosque GDE as a **beneficial user of groundwater**
  - Correct contradiction in SGMA certification and judgement
  - Establish threshold criteria for groundwater elevations

Characterizing the GDE: Baseline Groundwater Levels



Recommendations

- Designate the mesquite bosque GDE as a **beneficial user of groundwater**
  - Correct contradiction in SGMA certification and judgement
  - Establish threshold criteria for groundwater elevations
  - Continue ET monitoring for assessment of hydrologic modeling supporting water budget decision-making

Recommendations

- Designate the mesquite bosque GDE as a beneficial user of groundwater
- Conserve **high and moderate productivity** mesquite

Recommendations

- Designate the mesquite bosque GDE as a beneficial user of groundwater
- Conserve **high and moderate productivity** mesquite
  - Active restoration in areas with stabilizing groundwater levels
  - Minimize soil surface disturbance in mesquite bosque habitats

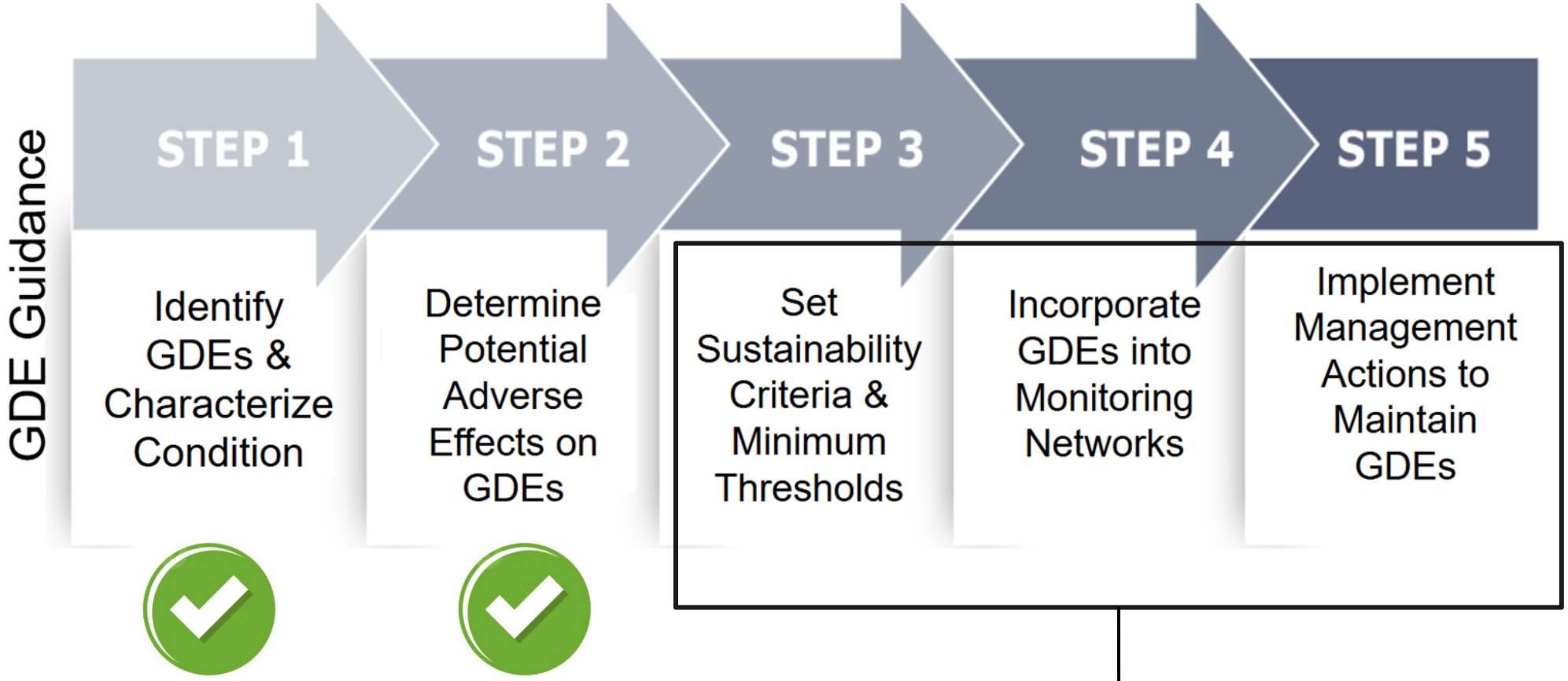
Recommendations

- Designating the mesquite bosque GDE as a beneficial user of groundwater
- Conservation of high and moderate productivity mesquite
- Implement strategies to **improve groundwater level**

Recommendations

- Designating the mesquite bosque GDE as a beneficial user of groundwater
- Conservation of high and moderate productivity mesquite
- Implement strategies to **improve groundwater level**
    - Develop scenarios describing stabilized groundwater elevations

Final Thoughts - Next Steps to Continue to Sustainability



How can our project support data-driven decisions by the WM to tackle these GDE management steps going forward?

Questions

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Travis Huxman
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Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy

the nat SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

UC IRVINE

V.A Overview of Work Completed with SGM Grant Funding

Recommended Actions:

Board discussion.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

- Watermaster was awarded $2,738,590 for two SGM projects to cover eligible spending from January 2022 to March 2025 (through May 2025 for PM):
  - Component 6: Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands Project - **$790,340**
  - Component 7: Monitoring, Reporting, and Groundwater Management Plan Implementation **- $1,948,250**

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

- Website page updated to provide information on all grant-related work, including links to deliverables:

https://borregospringswatermaster.com/dwr-prop-68-sgm-grant/

Borrego Springs Watermaster
The official site of the Borrego Springs Watermaster.

DWR Prop 68 SGM Grant

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) awarded two Watermaster projects with **$2,738,590** in Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) grant funding to support planning and implementation of projects that will help achieve groundwater sustainability in the Borrego Springs Subbasin pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The DWR SGM grant award for the Watermaster projects covers eligible work performed for the following projects from February 2023 through March 2025:

- **Component No. 6 Project – Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands: Awarded $790,340** (as amended)
- **Component No. 7 Project – Monitoring, Reporting, and Groundwater Management Plan Update: Awarded $1,948,250** (as amended)

On this page you can find information on each of the Watermaster's SGM grant funded projects.

Component No. 6 Project: Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands

Using SGM Grant Funding, the EWG developed a scope of work to develop data, information, and criteria to guide the use of biological restoration as a technique to mitigate the potential adverse impacts associated with the fallowing of lands that is expected to occur within the Basin in order to meet the sustainability goal of reducing groundwater pumping (*e.g.*, airborne dust emissions, introduction of invasive species, etc.). The anticipated benefits of restoring fallowed land include reduced water consumption, management of airborne dust emissions, increased natural biodiversity

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

- Component 6 – Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands
  - Task 1 - Review and Analysis of Existing Data
  - Task 2 - Existing Abandoned Farmland and Reference Natural Habitat Study.
  - Task 3 - Brush Pile Wildlife Sand Fence Case Study.
  - Task 4 - Farmland Fallowing Rehabilitation Strategies.
  - Task 5 - Farmland Fallowing Prioritization.
  - Task 6 – Environmental Working Group Meetings.

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

- Component 7– Monitoring, Reporting, and Groundwater Management Plan Implementation
  - Routine monitoring, assessment, and reporting activities, such as collection and maintenance of monthly meter read data, semi-annual groundwater monitoring, database management assessment of groundwater conditions, and preparation of Annual Reports.
  - Comprehensive review and expansion of the groundwater monitoring program, including improving the monitoring network through well maintenance and rehabilitation activities which would not have been possible without grant funding.
  - Judgment-mandated efforts, such as the redetermination of the Sustainable Yield by January 1, 2025, including extensive improvements to the BVHM, which would not have been possible without grant funding.
  - Expanding stakeholder engagement and outreach efforts.

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

1 Groundwater Monitoring Plan	3 years of meter accuracy testing	4 Annual Reports	5 wells converted into monitoring wells
6 Stakeholder Open Houses	7 Semi-Annual Monitoring Events	23 new transducers for monitoring wells	39 Months of Meter Reads

Table 1. Grant Reimbursement Requests Submitted to DWR

Reimbursement Request and Period		Component 6. Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands	Component 7. Monitoring Reporting and GMP Update	Total	Status of Request and Payment
1	Jan 2022 to Mar 2023	$168,272.54	$456,607.83	**$624,880.37**	Approved and Paid
2	Apr to Jun 2023	$40,278.94	$106,402.75	**$146,681.69**	Approved and Paid
3	July to Sep 2023	$49,196.04	$64,918.25	**$114,114.29**	Approved and Paid
4	Oct to Dec 2023	$53,986.66	$174,521.28	**$228,507.94**	Approved and Paid
5	Jan to Mar 2024	$36,074.30	$143,741.25	**$179,815.55**	Approved and Paid
6	Apr to Jun 2024	$60,757.35	$179,052.89	**$239,810.24**	Approved and Paid
7	July to Sep 2024	$147,972.19	$147,992.60	**$295,964.79**	Under Review by DWR
8	Oct to Dec 2024	$117,604.78	$185,099.99	**$302,704.77**	Submitted
9	Jan to Mar 2025 [A]	$105,523.68	$483,975.00	**$589,498.68**	Due by May 15, 2025
10	April 2025 (estimated)[A,B]	$2,312.25	$5,844.00	**$8,156.25**	Due by June 15, 2025
	Total	**$781,978.73**	**$1,948,155.84**	**$2,730,134.57**	

Notes:
(A): The final ten percent of requested reimbursements is subject to retention by DWR. This potentially means that only a portion of reimbursement request 9 will be paid following approval of the request. The final payment will be made after DWR completes its final review of all grant deliverables and verification that all grant requirements have been met.
(B): Project management costs to complete grant reimbursement requests and final reporting to DWR are reimbursable through April 30, 2025. Watermaster staff plan to complete all reporting by this date.

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

Table 2. Final Budget Status of Grant Components

Grant Component		Budget	Spent [A]	Unspent Budget	Notes
6	Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands	$790,340	$781,978.73	$8,361.27	West Yost portion of scope was under budget
7	Monitoring Reporting and GMP Update	$1,948,250	$1,948,155.84	$94.16	
	Total	**$2,738,590**	**$2,730,134.57**	**$8,455.43**	

Notes:
(A): Includes estimated project management costs through April 30, 2025.

V.A – SGM Grant Funding Overview

Table 3. Assumed Schedule for Payment of Remaining Grant Reimbursement Requests

Reimbursement Request and Period		Component 6. Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands	Component 7. Monitoring Reporting and GMP Update	Total Reimbursement	Assumed Reimbursement Date
7	July to Sep 2024	$147,972.19	$147,992.60	**$295,964.79**	June 2025
8	Oct to Dec 2024	$117,604.78	$185,099.99	**$302,704.77**	September 2025
9	Jan to Mar 2025 [A]	$105,523.68	$483,975.00	**$324,641.47**	December 2025
10	April 2025 (estimated)[A,B]	$2,312.25	$5,844.00	**$0**	n/a
	10% Retention			**$273,013.46**	March 2026
	Total	**$781,978.73**	**$1,948,155.84**	**$2,730,134.57**	

Notes:
(A): Reimbursement is less $264,857.21 retention.
(B): Reimbursement is less $8,156.25 retention.

V.A Overview of Work Completed with SGM Grant Funding

TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT

BOARD DISCUSSION

V.B 2nd Quarter WY 2025 Budget Status Review

Recommended Actions:

Board discussion.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

V.B - Budget Status Report as of March 31, 2025

Table 1. Borrego Springs Watermaster Budget Status Report for WY 2025 as of March 31, 2025

Revenues, Expenditures, and Reserves	Approved WY 2025 Budget (as Amended)	Actual WY 2025 Year-to-Date	Percent (%) of Budget	Variance to Date *(Budget minus Actual)*	Notes
Revenues	**$ 1,263,380**	**$ 1,054,700.36**	**83%**	**$ 208,679.64**	**See below note re: DWR Prop 68 Revenue**
Pumping Assessments Invoiced	**$ 350,000**	**$ 163,511.16**	**47%**	**$ 186,488.84**	*Next installment invoices to be sent May 2025*
payments received		*$ 163,405.17*	*47%*		
Bad Debt (non-payment on Assessments)	**$ (2,500)**	**$ -**	**0%**	**$ (2,500.00)**	*Have not recorded bad debt*
Overproduction Penalty Assessments	**$ -**	**$ -**		**$ -**	
Revenues Collected for Pass thru Expenses	**$ 7,316**	**$ 2,691.75**	**37%**	**$ 4,624.25**	*Meter read reimbursement invoices to be sent May 2025*
payments received		*$ -*	*0%*		
DWR Prop 68 Grant Reimbursements Accrued	**$ 908,564**	**$ 888,497.45**	**98%**	**$ 20,066.55**	
Total Expenditures	**$ 1,476,038**	**$ 1,100,840.44**	**75%**	**$ 375,197.16**	
Administrative Services	**$ 421,598**	**$ 236,361.98**	**56%**	**$ 185,235.62**	
Watermaster Staff Admin Services	***$ 290,796***	***$ 164,114.50***	**56%**	**$ 126,681.10**	
Board Meetings	*$ 106,600*	*$ 52,718.20*	*49%*	*$ 53,881.40*	
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings	*$ 52,444*	*$35,645.00*	*68%*	*$ 16,799.00*	
Court Hearings	*$ 3,510*	*$ 678.75*	*19%*	*$ 2,831.25*	
Stakeholder Outreach/Workshops	*$ 12,543*	*$11,976.25*	*95%*	*$ 566.75*	*Task is complete*
Administration and Management	*$ 78,699*	*$ 32,345.80*	*38%*	*$ 48,450.25*	
Prop 68 Project Admin and Grant Reporting	*$ 37,000*	*$ 30,750.50*	*83%*	*$ 6,249.50*	
Other Administrative or Vendor Services	***$ 130,802***	***$ 72,242.22***	**55%**	**$ 58,559.78**	
Financial Audit	*$ 8,560*	*$ 8,098.00*	*95%*	*$ 462.00*	*Task is complete*
Insurance	*$ 45,401*	*$ 21,477.24*	*47%3*	*$ 23,923.76*	*Note: This is a pre-paid expense - this reflects balance sheet amount*
Misc. Expenses	*$ 2,500*	*$ 79.00*	*%107*	*$ 2,421.00*	
Meter Accuracy Testing Vendors	*$ 13,500*	*$ 14,430.00*	*%46*	*$ (930.00)*	*Task is complete*
Interest on Vendor Terms During Prop 68 Grant Period	*$ 60,841*	*$ 28,157.98*	*%*	*$ 32,683.02*	
Pass Through Expenses	***$ -***	***$ 5.26***		**$ (5.26)**	
Reimbursement to BWD for GSP	*$ -*	*$ 5.26*		*$ (5.26)*	
Legal Services	**$ 105,000**	**$ 37,788.75**	**36%**	**$ 67,211.25**	

Excerpt from Table 1 provided in Agenda package, compares Approved WY 2025 Budget (as amended) to actual as of March 31, 2025

V.C - Budget Status Report as of March 31, 2025

- **83% of planned revenues have been accrued to date.**

- **75% of planned expenditures have been spent to date**.
  - 56% of administrative services budget has been expended
  - 36% of legal services budget has been expended
  - 86% of technical services budget has been expended
  - 30% of meter read services budget has been expended

- **Payment liability to vendors with payment terms totals $721,729**
  - No payments have been made to Land IQ since November 2024 due to schedule challenges for the Restoration of Fallowed Lands project. Payments and accrual of interest will resume in April 2025.
  - Liability is expected to decrease when checks issued to West Yost and Land IQ in April 2025 clear.

- **Cash reserves are $818,437**
  - Represents about 8.2 months of operating expenditures

V.B 2nd Quarter WY 2025 Budget Status Review

TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT

BOARD DISCUSSION

V.C Use of the BVHM to Evaluate Sustainability of Future Pumping

Recommended Actions:

Board discussion. Provide input and direction to Staff on the preferred option for the recommended tasks described in this memo.

Fiscal Impact:

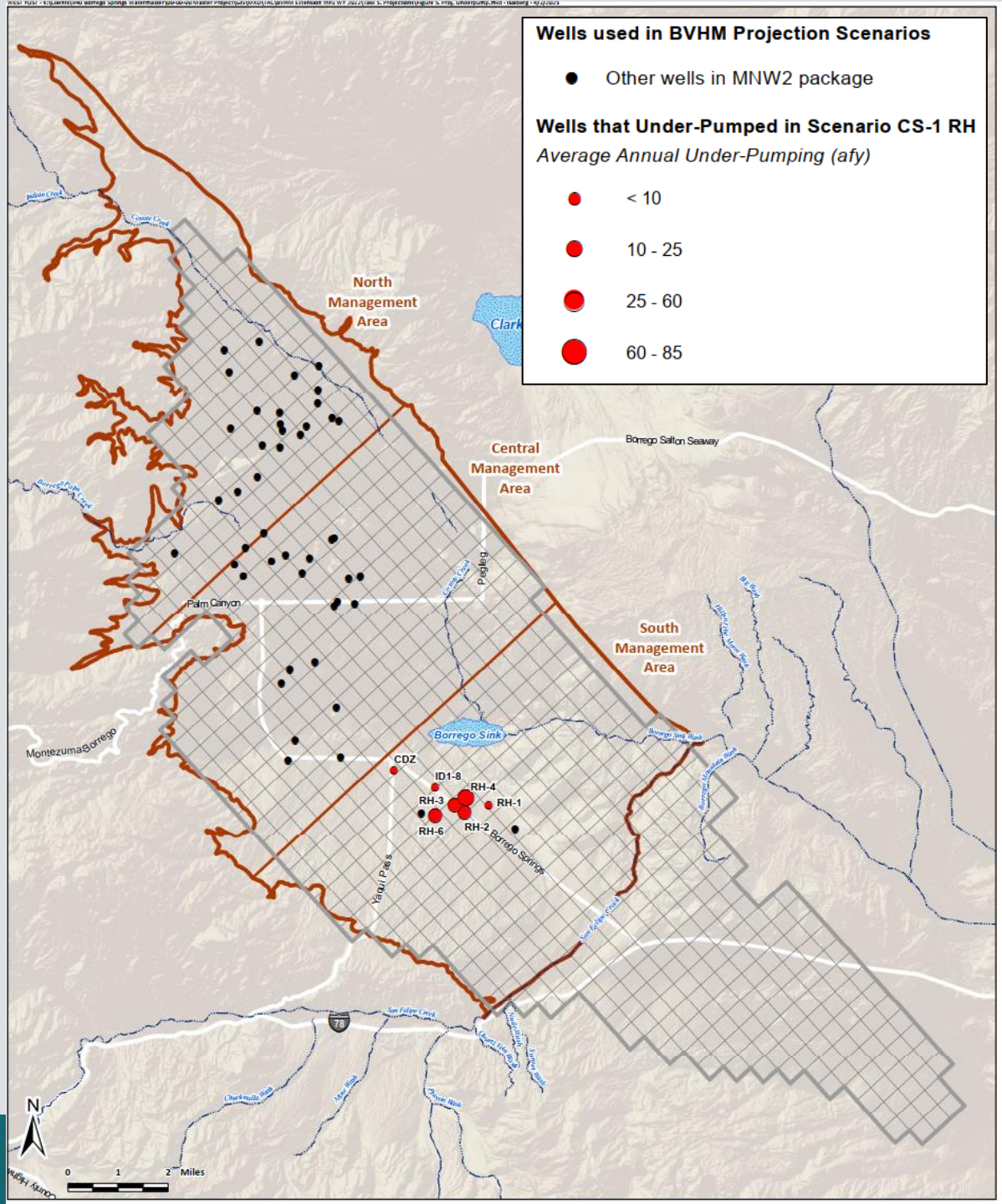
TBD. The estimated costs to perform the recommended tasks range from about $240,000 to $260,000 (2025 dollars). Options are presented to incur costs in WY 2025 and 2026 or could be spread over multiple years and be executed in conjunction with other planned Watermaster tasks to potentially achieve efficiencies.

Use of the BVHM to Evaluate Sustainability of Future Pumping

- BVHM is being used to evaluate long-term sustainability of future pumping in the Basin:
  - Trends in groundwater levels are stable or increasing by 2040 and thereafter
  - Groundwater levels are always at sufficient elevations to not cause Undesirable Results
- At the March 2025 TAC and Board meetings, we reported on a discrepancy in the BVHM where wells in the South MA were "under-pumping" during the model projections (*i.e.,* pumping less than their assigned rates)
- Since the March 2025 Board meeting, we:
  - Investigated the pumping discrepancy and identified the cause
  - Opined how the BVHM projection results can/cannot be used
  - Prepared a scope, cost estimate, and schedule options to: (i) resolve the under-pumping discrepancy and (ii) complete the planned work to evaluate long-term sustainability
  - Prepared a TM to document the work performed and Staff recommendations for Board consideration

BVHM Discrepancy

- In the projection period, 7 model wells in South MA were unable to pump their assigned rates ("under-pumped")
  - All wells are screened in model layer 3
- **Basin-wide**: Under-pumping is 3% of total pumping (-222 afy)
- **South MA**: Under-pumping is 42% of total pumping
  - Conclusion: This discrepancy should not be discounted because of the importance of future pumping from this portion of the Basin

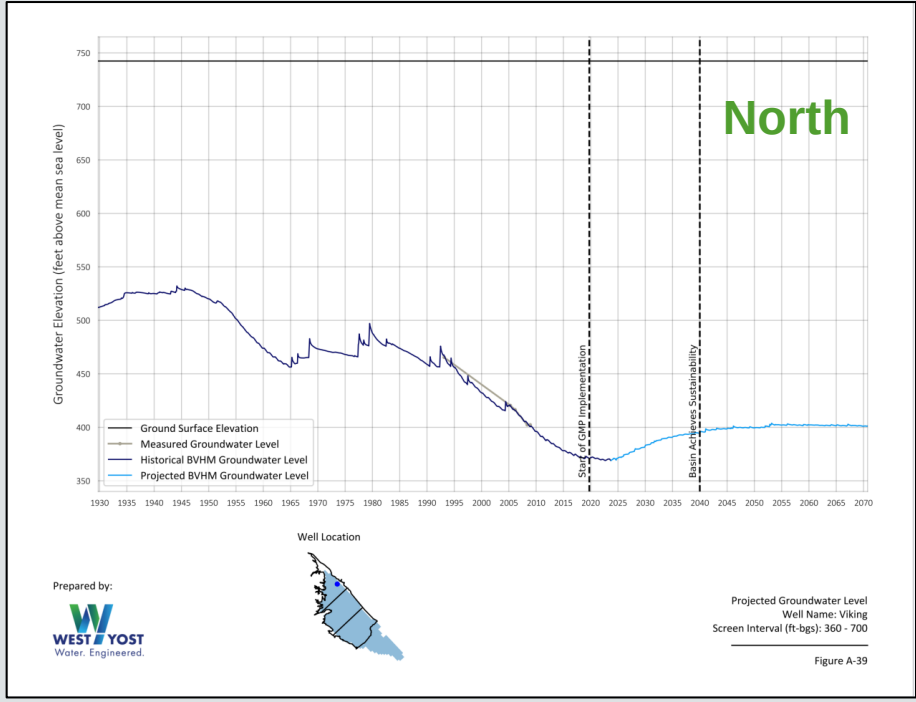


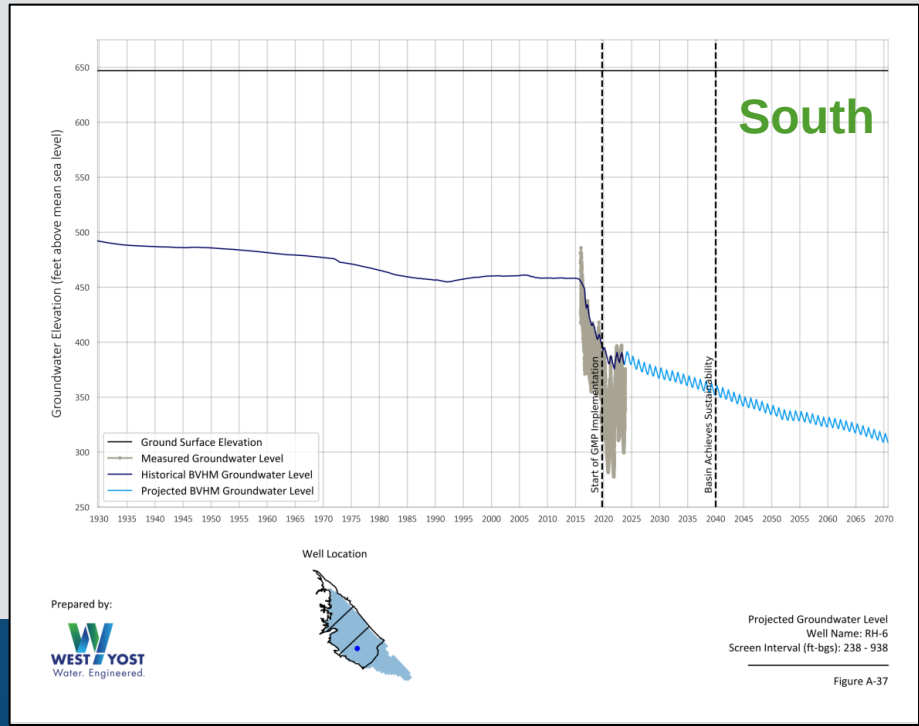
Attempts to Resolve BVHM Discrepancy

- Initially, we believed the discrepancy was related to inaccurate aquifer properties in Layer 3 of the South MA
- We manually adjusted aquifer properties in Layer 3 near the wells that under-pumped and re-ran BVHM from WY 1945-2070
- **Observations (from our manual adjustments to the Layer 3 aquifer properties):**
  - Reduced the under-pumping discrepancy
  - Significantly changed the simulated groundwater levels (i.e., “de-calibrated” the BVHM)
- **Conclusions:**
  - The geology in South MA is complicated and likely not well represented in BVHM → hinders the ability to calibrate the BVHM in this area
  - The under-pumping discrepancy can’t be fixed with manual adjustments to aquifer properties

Preliminary Interpretations of BVHM Projection Results

- BVHM can be used to infer **trends** in projected groundwater levels
- North Management Area:
  - Groundwater levels are likely to increase and stabilize by WY 2040
- South and Central Management Areas:
  - Groundwater levels may decline continuously through WY 2070





Limitations to Interpretation of BVHM Projection Results

- Due to under-pumping discrepancy, BVHM should not be used to infer the **magnitude** of projected changes in groundwater levels (especially in South Management Area)

- This limits the ability of the Watermaster to:
  - Evaluate sustainability of future pumping (i.e., can't compare projected groundwater-levels to Minimum Thresholds)
  - Use BVHM projections to support updates to Sustainable Management Criteria

Recommendation to Resolve BVHM Discrepancy

Objective: Improve BVHM so it can confidently be used to evaluate the long-term sustainability of future pumping in the Basin

- **Task 1**. **Update the Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model** in the BVHM using new information
- **Task 2**. **Recalibrate the BVHM** → Under-pumping discrepancy should be eliminated
- **Task 3**. **Evaluate future Basin conditions under variable future climate conditions** (2023-2070) using the recalibrated BVHM
- **Task 4**. **Characterize the sustainability of future pumping in the Basin** by interpreting the Task 3 results:
  - Trends in groundwater levels and storage are mostly stable or increasing by WY 2040
  - Groundwater levels do not cause Undesirable Results (compare to Minimum Thresholds)

Potential Outcomes

- **Future pumping is deemed sustainable and no additional BVHM simulations are needed.** In this case, the BVHM projections would show:
  - Stable or increasing groundwater levels after WY 2040
  - Absence of Undesirable Results prior to/after WY 2040
- **Future pumping is deemed <u>not</u> sustainable.** In this case, the BVHM projections would show:
  - Continuous decline in groundwater levels after WY 2040
  - Occurrence of Undesirable Results prior to/after WY 2040
  - If future pumping is not sustainable, Watermaster must develop policies or management actions to achieve sustainability. The BVHM would be used to simulate the effects of the policies or management actions.

Estimated Cost of Recommended Actions

- Cost to perform recommended scope of work ranges from $240,000 to $260,000
  - Optional $20,000 site investigation
- SGM grant funding has expired, but there may be other grant funding options available in the future
- Potential to use funding available in WY 2025 Budget

Schedule Options

1. Perform Tasks 1-4 immediately in WY 2025 – 2026
2. Perform Tasks 1-4 incrementally as part of the redetermination of the 2030 Sustainable Yield

Each option has advantages/disadvantages for the Board to consider

Perform All Tasks in WY 2025-26

Advantages:

- Quicker improvements and solutions
- More confident use of BVHM to assess sustainability and test policies
- More confident report to the DWR on the likelihood of achieving sustainability by 2040
- Lower longer-term costs

Disadvantages:

- Higher immediate costs
- Unlikely to acquire additional grant funding due to immediate schedule
- Additional BVHM recalibration may be needed (based on results of scope to redetermine 2030 Sustainable Yield)

Perform Tasks Incrementally with Redetermination of 2030 Sustainable Yield

Advantages:

- Lower immediate costs
- More likely to acquire grant funding
- May be more efficient and avoids multiple BVHM recalibrations

Disadvantages:

- Immediate usefulness of BVHM is limited
- Due to greater uncertainty in future groundwater conditions, more conservative and protective management strategies may be needed
- Higher long-term costs (inflation)

Next Steps

- **Today** - Board provides input on path forward to address BVHM discrepancy. Recommendation will be used to develop an integrated scope, schedule, and budget to:
  - Address DWR recommended corrective actions
  - Finish the 5-year GMP Assessment Report
  - Begin the scope to redetermine the 2030 Sustainable Yield
- **May 1, 2025** – TAC Meeting
  - Board feedback will be presented to the TAC
  - TAC will be asked to recommend a scope and budget for WYs 2026 – 2027
- **May 21, 2025 Board Meeting** – draft WY 2026 Budget presented to the Board

V.C Use of the BVHM to Evaluate Sustainability of Future Pumping

TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT

BOARD DISCUSSION

V.D WY 2026 Budget Scoping

Recommended Actions:

Discuss and provide input to staff on the draft Water Year 2026 budget scope of work

Fiscal Impact:

TBD. Fiscal impact will be presented in May 2025 with the first draft budget.

Draft WY 2026 Budget Scoping

- Section IV.E.(3) of the Judgment describes the process and schedule for publishing the annual budget and collecting assessments to fund it
- Key Milestones are:
  - Set Overproduction Penalty Assessment Rate for WY 2026
  - Adopt Budget by July 1, 2025 for WY 2026
  - Inform pumpers of Carryover available for purchase by October 15, 2025
  - Finalize Water Rights Accounting by October 31, 2025
  - Issue 1st Installment of Pumping Assessment invoices by November 30, 2025
  - 1st Installment of Pumping Assessment due December 31, 2025

Draft WY 2026 Budget Scoping

- Estimated WY 2026 Budget included as part of 4-Year projection in the WY 2025 Budget (as amended January 2025) – TABLE 1 in Agenda Package
- Estimated WY 2026 Budget assumed:
  - **Revenues**: $356,525 ($350,000 Pumping Assessment)
  - **Expenditures**: $703,738
    - Administrative Services
    - Legal Services
    - Technical Services
    - EWG
    - Services to Parties with Meter Reads

Draft WY 2026 Budget Scoping

- Technical Services Assumed:
  - **General Technical Consultant services (routine)**:
    - Coordinate and implement meter reading and verification program
    - Implement the groundwater monitoring program
    - Database management and data reporting, including reporting of data to the DWR Monitoring Network Module (MNM)
    - Prepare the WY 2025 Water Rights Accounting Report and Annual Report to the Court/DWR
    - As-needed technical services
  - **TAC-supported technical work**
    - Begin scope of work for 2030 Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield - $30,000
    - Complete the Five-Year Assessment of the Judgment/GMP - $30,000
    - Address ad-hoc requests from the Board

Draft WY 2026 Budget Scoping

Anticipated Deviations from Estimated WY 2026 Budget Shown in Table 1

- Board Meetings (need to assume 12 meetings)
- Stakeholder Outreach Meetings (need to assume 2 meetings)
- Technical Work to Support Sustainable Yield Updates.
  - The WY 2026 budget was assumed to be $30,000, prior to known the TAC recommendation
  - Additional work required to address the under-pumping challenge with the BVHM and complete the projections
  - Depending on the Watermaster's preferred approach to address the issue, additional unanticipated costs may need to be expended in WY 2025 and/or WY 2026.
- 5-Year Assessment of Judgment/GMP
  - Cost in WY 2026 was assumed to be $30,000. The WY 2026 expenditure may need to be increased depending on how the BVHM issue and the DWR comments are resolved.

Draft WY 2026 Budget Scoping

Surplus Funding Available from WY 2025 to Offset Potential Increased Costs in WY 2026

	Amended WY 25 Budget	Grant Funded Planned	Grant Funded Actual	WM Planned	WM Projected Actual
	$ 1,022,874	$ 683,041	$ 677,848	$ 339,833	$ 340,366
Watermaster Staff Admin Services	***$ 290,796***	***$ 84,107***	***$ 86,313***	***$ 206,689***	***$ 203,269***
Board Meetings	$ 106,600	$ -	$ -	$ 106,600	$ 106,600
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings	$ 52,444	$ 32,564	$ 35,645	$ 19,880	$ 16,799
Court Hearings	$ 3,510	$ -	$ -	$ 3,510	$ 1,429
Stakeholder Outreach/Workshops	$ 12,543	$ 12,543	$ 11,976	$ -	$ -
Administration and Management	$ 78,699	$ 2,000	$ 2,097	$ 76,699	$ 78,441
Prop 68 Project Admin and Grant Reporting	$ 37,000	$ 37,000	$ 36,595	$ -	$ -
General Technical Consultant Services	***$ 445,524***	***$ 347,024***	***$ 383,033***	***$ 98,500***	***$ 59,767***
Coordinate/Implement meter reading program	$ 30,440	$ 18,437	$ 16,705	$ 12,003	$ 12,003
Groundwater Monitoring Program	$ 124,060	$ 64,190	$ 83,291	$ 59,870	$ 21,000
Data Management and Data Reporting	$ 20,265	$ 10,936	$ 10,216	$ 9,329	$ 9,329
Annual Report to the Court and DWR	$ 51,188	$ 51,188	$ 51,553	$ -	$ -
Address Inactive Wells via Abandonment/Conversion	$ 203,273	$ 202,273	$ 221,269	$ 1,000	$ 1,137
As-needed technical support	$ 16,298	$ -	$ -	$ 16,298	$ 16,298
Consulting Services with TAC Support/Input	***$ 256,418***	***$ 231,098***	***$ 191,143***	***$ 25,320***	***$ 68,492***
Technical Work to Support Sustainable Yield Updates	$ 90,590	$ 90,590	$ 84,851	$ -	
Develop Scope and Budget for WY 2026-2029 for Sustainable Yield Updates	$ 15,272	$ -	$ -	$ 15,272	$ 15,444
5-Year Assessment of Judgment/GMP	$ 140,508	$ 140,508	$ 106,292	$ -	$ 43,000
Address Ad Hoc Requests from the Board	$ 10,048	$ -	$ -	$ 10,048	$ 10,048
Environmental Working Group	***$ 27,193***	***$ 20,812***	***$ 17,360***	***$ 6,381***	***$ 6,381***
Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands	$ 20,812	$ 20,812	$ 17,360	$ -	$ -
Ad Hoc Requests and EWG Meetings	$ 6,381	$ -	$ -	$ 6,381	$ 6,381
Maual Read Meter Services	***$ 2,943***	***$ -***	***$ -***	***$ 2,943***	***$ 2,457***
AVAILABLE WY 2025 BUDGET TO SUPPORT BVHM and 5-YR ASSESMENT IN APRIL to SEPT 2025 -------->					$ 69,847

Draft WY 2026 Budget Scoping

- Staff is seeking Board discussion and input on the scope of work to include for WY 2026, including:
  - Overproduction penalty assessment rate
  - The proposed approach to develop an integrated scope that addresses BVHM updates, DWR comments, the 5-Year Assessment, and start the 2030 Sustainable Yield since all of these items are interconnected
  - The proposed approach to utilize $69,847 of West Yost's technical budget to begin work on BVHM updates, DWR comments, and/or the 5-Year Assessment in WY 2025 to lessen impacts of increased costs in WY 2026
  - Any scope of work items not described in this memo

Input Requested

- Overproduction Penalty Assessment rate
- Regarding the need to address BVHM updates, DWR comments, 5-Year Assessment, and 2030 Sustainable Yield:
  - Approach to develop an integrated scope, since these items are interconnected?
  - Use $69,847 of West Yost's technical budget to begin work in WY 2025 and lessen costs in WY 2026?
- What else to consider for potential inclusion in budget?

Next Steps & Schedule

Today

- Receive input from the Board

May 2025

- Present Draft WY 2026 Budget and receive additional input and feedback

June 2025

- Approve WY 2026 Budget

V.D WY 2026 Budget Scoping

TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT

BOARD DISCUSSION

VI.A – Legal Counsel Report

VI.B – Technical Consultant Report

Spring 2025 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report

Monitoring event occurred March 16 – 20, 2025

Groundwater-Levels

- Measured depth to water at 59 of 60 wells in the network
  - West Yost staff measured GWLs at 51 of 52 wells (unable to sample at Airport 2)
  - BWD staff measured GWLs at all 8 wells
- Downloaded transducer data from all 13 wells with transducers
  - Installed new transducers in 6 wells
  - Transducer battery in RH-5 died; new transducer installed and transducer sent in for data recovery
- Canvassed 1 new well in “Old Borrego” and measured depth to water

VI.B – Technical Consultant Report

Spring 2025 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report

Groundwater-Quality

- Collected samples at 27 of 29 wells in the network
  - Includes one new monitoring well: ID4-2
  - Unable to collect samples at RH-4 (pump not operational) and Terry well (owner passed away)
- BWD collected samples from its 9 production wells in April 2025

VI.B – Technical Consultant Report

Spring 2025 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report

Next Steps

- Waiting for lab results from Clinical Laboratory and BWD sampling event
- Waiting for transducer data collected by DWR from MW-6S and MW-6D
- Process, upload, and QC all data
- Present results from **Semi-Annual Monitoring Report at June Board meeting**
- Pursue Entry Agreement with owner of new well in Old Borrego

VI.B – Technical Consultant Report

May 1, 2025 TAC Meeting

- Discuss next steps to address BVHM discrepancy
- Recommend first tasks to redetermine the 2030 Sustainable Yield, in accordance with the planning scope/budget

VI.C – Executive Director Report

Approach to Addressing DWR Comments on Judgment/GMP

- At the March Board meeting, the Board directed staff to develop a proposed approach to address DWR RCAs and identify funding to perform this work
- An integrated approach is underway and will be presented in May. Approach will include:
  - Addressing BVHM discrepancy
  - Completing the 5-Year Assessment Report
  - Initiating work on the 2030 Sustainable Yield
- Approximately $69,000 of WY 2025 budget can be used to advance this work starting in May with no impact to Watermaster budget

VI.C – Executive Director Report

WY 2025 Pumping Assessments

- Invoices for second installment of WY 2025 pumping assessment will be mailed in May
- Payment due June 30, 2025

Annual Meter Verification Status

- Verification testing complete→ All 56 wells were tested and passed
  - 1st year we've achieved 100% compliance!

VI.C – Executive Director Report

BPA Party Updates

- As reported in March 2025, only 1 Party remains out of compliance with the Judgment and is not in contact with the Watermaster. The Party has not:
  - Metered its wells (that we know of)
  - Paid any assessments owed, totaling $358.13
- Alternate Director Dax is helping assist with communications with the Party
  - ED Adams provided him with outstanding balances and metering requirements

Insurance Renewal

- Process to apply for our annual insurance renewal is underway
- A quote will be provided for review and approval at the May meeting

VI.D – Chairperson's Report

VII. Establishing Agenda for May 21, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Recommended Actions:

Develop and approve agenda for May 21, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Process:

1. Review the initial May agenda topics planned by Staff
2. Review the June and July 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 April Board meeting
4. Call on Directors to request additional items for consideration of inclusion on the May 2025 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 May Regular Meeting

1. Consideration of approval for insurance renewal
2. Report out from May TAC meeting
3. Addressing DWR Comments on Judgment/GMP
4. Draft WY 2026 Budget
5. WY 2025 Mid-Year Pumping Report

Future Agenda Items

June

1. Consideration of approval of WY 2026 Budget
2. TAC agenda for June/July
3. Spring 2025 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report
4. Workshop: Addressing DWR Comments on the Judgment/GMP

July

1. WY 2025 3rd Quarterly Budget Status Review
2. Consideration of approval of TAC agenda for July/August
3. Workshop: Addressing DWR Comments on the Judgment/GMP

Set Agenda for May Regular Meeting

1. Consideration of approval for insurance renewal
2. Report out from May TAC meeting
3. Addressing DWR Comments on Judgment/GMP
4. Draft WY 2026 Budget
5. WY 2025 Mid-Year Pumping Report

VII. Establishing Agenda for May 21, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT

BOARD DISCUSSION

VIII. Board Member Comments

IX. Next Meetings of the Borrego Springs Watermaster

- Regular Board Meeting – May 21, 2025
- Regular Board Meeting – June 18, 2025
- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting – May 1, 2025

X. Adjournment

- Thank you for your participation!