MEETING MINUTES
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BORREGO SPRINGS WATERMASTER
Meeting Conducted via GoToMeeting
Thursday, May 1, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

I. Opening Procedures

Andy Malone (Lead Technical Consultant, Borrego Springs Watermaster) called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m., at which time he confirmed the meeting was being recorded.

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

Technical Advisory Committee Members	Leonardo Urrego-Vallowe (Wagner & Bonsignore) – *representing AAWARE*
	Bob Abrams (Aquilogic) – *representing T2 Borrego*
	Trey Driscoll, PG, CHG (Principal Hydrogeologist, INTERA) – *representing Borrego Water District*
	Jim Bennett (County of San Diego and Watermaster Board Member) – *representing County of San Diego*
	John Peterson, PG, CHG (retired) – *representing Roadrunner Golf and Country Club*[1]
	Dr. Russell Detwiler (University of California, Irvine) – *representing the Borrego Springs Community*
Watermaster Staff	Andy Malone, PG (Principal Geologist, West Yost)
	Samantha Adams (Executive Director, West Yost)
	Lauren Salberg, PG (Staff Geologist, West Yost)
Others Present	Dan McCamish (EWG member)
	Diane Johnson (Borrego Water District member)
	George Peraza (DWR)

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

There were no public comments.

III. Use of the 2022 BVHM to Evaluate Future Sustainability

Mr. Malone presented a summary of the memo included in the TAC agenda package on the use of the 2022 Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM) to evaluate future sustainability in the Borrego

[1] Mr. Peterson left the meeting at 11:04 am.

Springs Subbasin (Basin), including a summary of the work performed, recommendations, and feedback received from the Board. TAC discussion and questions included:

- Mr. Driscoll stated that the primary objective is to use the BVHM as a tool to determine the Sustainable Yield, and that this has been accomplished. Because there is minimal recharge in the SMA (aside from recharge from return flows), he does not believe that the model pumping discrepancy would impact the regional analysis of the Sustainable Yield.
- Mr. Driscoll stated that it has long been understood that the geology of the South Management Area (SMA) is complex and the aquifer in the SMA is different (and potential compartmentalized) compared to the Central and North Management Areas (CMA and NMA). It is important to communicate these geologic differences and avoid simplifying the Basin as "one aquifer" or "homogenous."
- Mr. Driscoll recommended that the TAC and Technical Consultant consider what the BVHM is being used for: to dictate future pumping or as a tool to inform management actions.
- TAC members offered ideas of new information and other types of data to consider and review as part of the task to update the hydrogeologic conceptual model (HCM), including groundwater-level contour maps, groundwater levels, and sonic boring logs of the Rams Hill wastewater treatment facility monitoring wells (WWTF).
- Five TAC members (Mr. Bennett, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Driscoll, Mr. Abrams, and Mr. Urrego-Vallowe) agreed that a future scope of work should include an update to the HCM of the SMA.
    - Four of the five TAC members recommended this work be performed as part of the scope of work to redetermine the 2030 Sustainable Yield (*i.e.* update the HCM and recalibrate).
        - Mr. Urrego-Vallowe recommended performing this task over time because i) it would spread the costs to Pumpers over time, ii) give the Watermaster time to explore grant funding, and iii) avoid multiple model recalibrations.
    - Mr. Abrams recommended the updates to the HCM be performed immediately (over the next two years).
    - Mr. Driscoll also noted that updating the HCM may inform what type of model is needed to simulate a more complex hydrogeology in the SMA.
- Four TAC members (Mr. Abrams, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Peterson, and Mr. Urrego-Vallowe) recommended developing alternative projections of future pumping and simulating these using the BVHM (*e.g.,* shifting pumping from the SMA and CMA to the NMA).
    - Mr. Abrams believes this task should be performed because multiple stakeholders would benefit from the results of simulating alternative pumping plans. Mr. Abrams recommended this task be performed prior to updating the HCM.
    - Mr. Bennett observed that because groundwater levels in the CMA and SMA are declining under current pumping rates, it is reasonable to expect that future groundwater levels will continue to decline if future pumping remains constant and/or increases (as simulated in the model projections). These trends indicate that the Basin may not be managed sustainably. He recommended relying on groundwater-level data and trends at wells in the near-term to guide Watermaster

management actions. Mr. Peterson and Mr. Urrego-Vallowe agreed with Mr. Bennett's observations and recommendations.

IV. Scope of Work and Budget to Review and Use the GDE Study Report

Mr. Malone presented a summary of the memo included in the TAC agenda package on the review and use the Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) Study Report. TAC discussion included:

- Will UCI have an opportunity to revise the GDE Study Report based on TAC feedback? If so, would the TAC consider these revisions before preparing a recommendation report in Task 1.3? Mr. Malone said that the GDE Study Report will be "final" in May (for DWR reporting), hence, he was uncertain how UCI may respond to or use TAC feedback.
- An observation that because of the different time periods used in the GDE Study Report and BVHM calibration, the TAC may be unable to compare groundwater evapotranspiration (ET) estimates for the entire model calibration period (which dates back to WY 1945).
- Mr. Bennett and Mr. Urrego-Vallowe recommended that Task 2 be characterized as a placeholder for future work based on the results and recommendations from the evaluation of the GDE Study Report in Task 1. They suggested the TAC recommend a Task 2 scope of work as part of Task 1.3 – *Prepare TAC/TC Recommendation Report*.
- Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Bennett recommended to expand the scope of Task 1 to include a review of groundwater levels and lithology data from wells in the SMA near the Borrego Sink (such as those from the recently drilled for Rams Hill wastewater treatment facility monitoring wells [WWTF]). To assist the TAC in their review of the GDE Study Report, the Technical Consultant should compile time-series charts of measured groundwater levels at wells in the SMA/Borrego Sink and wells logs for the TAC to consider and compare against the groundwater levels and geology reported in the GDE Study Report. The TAC could use this information to better understand the hydrogeology of the study area, consider if there are data gaps, and make recommendations to fill data gaps with existing or new monitoring wells as part of Task 1.3 - *Prepare TAC/TC Recommendation Report*.
- A discussion on the geology of the SMA/Borrego Sink. Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Bennett commented the shallow sediments contains thin interbedded sands and clays (as observed in the WWTF well logs), which are not adequately captured through broader scales as evidenced in AEM data.
- Mr. Malone agreed to distribute historical groundwater-level data and the well completion reports for Rams Hill wastewater treatment facility monitoring wells to the TAC.

V. Public Comments

Mr. Malone asked for public comments and any final comments from TAC members. Comments by Diane Johnson:

- Question on how other Sustainable Management Criteria will be addressed through the scopes of work presented at the TAC meeting.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Malone adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.