

MEETING MINUTES
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BORREGO SPRINGS WATERMASTER
Meeting Conducted via GoToMeeting
Monday, September 22, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

I. Opening Procedures

Andy Malone (Lead Technical Consultant, Borrego Springs Watermaster) called the meeting to order at 10:01 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>
	John Peterson, PG, CHG (retired) – <i>representing Roadrunner Golf and Country Club</i>
Watermaster Staff	Dr. Russell Detwiler (University of California, Irvine) – <i>representing the Borrego Springs Community</i>
	Andy Malone, PG (Principal Geologist, West Yost)
	Samantha Adams (Executive Director, West Yost)
Others Present	Lauren Salberg, PG (Staff Geologist, West Yost)
Others Present	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. Mr. Peterson noted he would discuss last week's storm event in Borrego Springs at the end of the TAC meeting.

III.A Discuss DWR Corrective Actions regarding Sustainable Management Criteria – *Groundwater Quality*

West Yost staff presented on the proposed response to DWR comments and recommended corrective actions (RCAs) pertaining to groundwater-quality degradation in the GMP (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

- A discussion on how pumping would be evaluated for potential causes of degraded groundwater quality.
 - Mr. Driscoll questioned whether pumping allowed under the Judgment could be considered a cause of groundwater quality degradation. He noted that in other Basins, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has considered pumping allowed under a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) that could mobilize contaminants as a potential cause of degradation.
 - West Yost staff clarified that the proposal is to evaluate impacts on groundwater quality due to *changes* in future pumping (spatially and volumetrically) under the Rampdown to the Sustainable Yield.
 - Clarification that the Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) are set to address current/future groundwater quality conditions (*i.e.* they do not address legacy groundwater quality issues).
- Mr. Driscoll provided background on the original development of SMC in the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP). He noted that because there are many other groundwater-quality regulations, such as Regional Board and drinking water regulations, the GMP was designed to align with these existing regulations and not develop new regulatory standards.
- Mr. Driscoll recommended that Legal Counsel provide input on the proposed SMC for groundwater quality.
- The Watermaster Board has not directed Legal Counsel to review/weigh-in on this topic.
- Recommendation to perform a technical evaluation to determine if fluoride should continue to be a constituent of concern (COC).
- Mr. Driscoll explained that in the GMP, the technical intent was to set Title 22 standards as the Minimum Thresholds (MT) and Measurable Objectives (MO) and agreed that the language could be made clearer.
- Mr. Peterson noted he did not have any comments and agreed with the proposed approach.
- When asked the reason why updating groundwater-quality SMC may be necessary by 2030, Mr. Malone stated that Watermaster may have more data and understanding on groundwater quality conditions, trends, and beneficial uses, and therefore, may have different thoughts for appropriate SMC at that time.
- The DWR has not released a best management practice (BMP) document for groundwater quality and have not provided consensus on how to address groundwater quality under SGMA.
- Mr. Malone described an approach to update the definition of Undesirable Results, updates to the GMP, and preparing a section in the GMP Assessment Report on groundwater quality, and asked for TAC feedback on the proposed approach by October 9, 2025.

III.B Discuss DWR Corrective Actions regarding Sustainable Management Criteria – *Land Subsidence*

West Yost staff presented on the proposed response to DWR comments and recommended corrective actions (RCAs) pertaining to land subsidence in the GMP (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

- Mr. Peterson commented that infrastructure for the Borrego Water District (BWD) and wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is the most critical infrastructure in the Basin that could be impacted by subsidence.
- Mr. Driscoll recommended highlighting that the projected land subsidence is minimal and localized, and that subsidence-related impacts to BWD infrastructure is not anticipated.
- Mr. Bennett recommended to perform a cost-efficient planning level analysis of subsidence because historical and projected subsidence is minimal.
- When asked if the TAC had any concerns related to subsidence and flooding, Mr. Driscoll observed that the area of projected maximum subsidence is within the 100-year floodplain.
- A discussion on setting MTs for land subsidence:
 - Mr. Driscoll recommended setting MTs based on historical rates of subsidence, where an exceedance of the historical rate would trigger additional investigation.
 - Mr. Malone recommended that if MTs are set, they should be based on the rates and magnitudes of subsidence that would be expected to cause damage.
 - Clarification that DWR did not explicitly direct MTs be set for land subsidence but strongly encouraged them.
 - ED Adams described that because historical and projected land subsidence is minimal, monitoring is an appropriate approach that allows the Watermaster to save time and money by focusing on more pressing DWR RCAs.

IV. TAC Assignment to Evaluate/Rank Proposals for Peer Reviewer of GDE Study Report

West Yost staff reviewed the request to the TAC to (i) evaluate/rank proposals for candidates to review the UCI Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) Study Report, and (ii) perform their own review of the UCI GDE Study Report (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

- Discussion about the TAC's approach for reviewing the GDE Study Report, specifically in reference to the Board's direction to answer yes/no to the question of "is this Best Available Science" and confusion related to Board direction.
 - ED Adams stated that the role of the TAC and Environmental Working Group (EWG) is to articulate where there are strengths or weaknesses in the GDE Study Report and identify specific areas for the Peer Reviewer to consider in their review.
 - Mr. Bennett stated that he plans to use the questions initially posed to the TAC and Peer Reviewer, stating that the questions were consistent with SGMA and are a good way to consider how the report can be used to make management decisions. He feels the single question of "is this best available science" to be too nebulous.
 - Mr. Driscoll provided insight on how he plans to review the GDE Study Report, indicating he plans to focus on the groundwater and hydrogeology.

V. Review of Pumping Projections

West Yost staff provided a status update on developing projection scenarios and using the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM) to evaluate the sustainability of future Basin conditions. TAC discussion and questions included:

- Clarification that in Scenario 1C, a total of 1,820 acre-feet per year (afy) of pumping will be shifted to the North Management Area (compared to Scenario 1A). Or, stated another way,

an additional 900 afy of pumping will be shifted to the NMA in Scenario 1C compared to Scenario 1B.

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

- Mr. Peterson provided a summary of the storm event that occurred in Borrego Springs last week (week of September 15th). He provided a first-hand account of the observed rainfall, runoff, and recharge and also summarized observations from other community members.
- Mr. Malone committed to distributing videos of the storm event provided by Mr. Peterson to the rest of the TAC.

VII. Future TAC Meetings

The next TAC meeting will be scheduled for November 2025. The proposed agenda items include:

- Results of Scenario 1C Pumping Projections
- Review of updates to SMCs (based on comments)

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Malone adjourned the meeting at about 11:55 p.m.