

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**BORREGO SPRINGS WATERMASTER**  
**Meeting Conducted via GoToMeeting**  
**Wednesday, November 12, 2025, 9:00 a.m.**

**I. Opening Procedures**

Andy Malone (Lead Technical Consultant, Borrego Springs Watermaster) called the meeting to order at 9:02 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) Members were present at the start of the meeting. The following individuals were present at the meeting:

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| <b>Technical Advisory Committee Members</b> | Bob Wagner, PE (Principal Water Resources Engineer, Wagner & Bonsignore) – representing <i>AAWARE</i>    |
|   | Tom Watson, PG (Principal Geologist, Aquilogic) – representing <i>T2 Borrego</i>                         |
|   | Trey Driscoll, PG, CHG (Principal Hydrogeologist, INTERA) – representing <i>Borrego Water District</i>   |
|   | Jim Bennett (County of San Diego and Watermaster Board Member) – representing <i>County of San Diego</i> |
|   | John Peterson, PG, CHG (retired) – representing <i>Roadrunner Golf and Country Club</i>                  |
| <b>Watermaster Staff</b>                    | Dr. Russell Detwiler (University of California, Irvine) – representing <i>Borrego Springs Community</i>  |
|   | Andy Malone, PG (Watermaster Technical Consultant, West Yost)  |
|   | Samantha Adams (Watermaster Executive Director, West Yost)   |
| <b>Others Present</b>                       | Lauren Salberg, PG (Staff Geologist, West Yost)  |
|   | Shannon Smith (Watermaster Board member)   |
|   | Leonardo Urrego-Vallowe (Wagner & Bonsignore)  |
|   | Kipp Vilker (INTERA)   |
|   | Trevor Jones (INTERA)  |

*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. Updated Sustainable Management Criteria based on Board, TAC, and Public Feedback**

Andy Malone presented updated Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) for groundwater levels, storage, and groundwater quality (see Agenda Package). TAC discussion and questions included:

*SMC for Groundwater Levels:*

- Pressure transducers in BWD and Rams Hill wells provide detailed information on the drawdown, by well, which is useful information for understanding pumping drawdown and establishing groundwater-elevation use thresholds (GWE-UT).
- Recommendation by Mr. Watson to illustrate the well groupings on the maps in the memo to identify which GWE-UTs were used to set the Minimum Thresholds (MTs) at wells (Figures 2a and 2b).
- Concern about DWR's response to the range in "operational flexibility" of wells (*i.e.* the difference between the Measurable Objective and the MTs). Primarily, the concern is that proposed MTs, particularly in the South Management Area (SMA), are substantially lower than current and projected groundwater elevations and are not clearly related to the change in storage.
  - Mr. Malone responded that the proposed MTs are based on well construction and represent the deepest groundwater levels that are still protective of the shallowest wells (DWR's main concern with the current SMC). The proposed MOs are based on model projections of groundwater elevations that are, in some cases, much higher than the MTs. The differences between MTs and MOs are technically defensible.
  - Mr. Driscoll responded that he is ok with submitting this approach to DWR but is concerned that the DWR may not agree based on DWR comments on GSPs in other groundwater basins.
- Discussion on why some TAC members feel it's not appropriate to compare the updated SMC to the SMC in the current Groundwater Management Plan (GMP).
- Mr. Watson stated that the proposed SMCs are based on professional judgment and estimated pumper projected extraction volumes and not the Judgment which is rooted in the allocation of pumper water rights by quantity and point of extraction.
- Discussion on which projection scenario results from the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM) should be compared to the updated SMC.
- Clarification on the symbology of Figure 2b: red open circles identify wells in the Groundwater Monitoring Network.
- Clarification on DWR's Recommended Corrective Action (RCA) regarding SMC for groundwater levels and discussion on the proposed method, which is intended to be protective of beneficial uses and users. The issue being that DWR RCA requested a rationale for the current SMCs.
- Recommendation to develop more conservative MTs to either use or have as a backup in the event DWR disagrees with the proposed approach.
- Mr. Driscoll provided recommendations for alternative methods to update the SMC and offered to discuss the topic offline.

*Discussion on the SMC for Groundwater Storage:*

- Recommendation to add additional information to Figure 4: (i) the physical change in storage estimates prepared for Annual Reports through WY 2025 and (ii) the original SMC defined in the GMP.
- Discussion on Figure 4 – *Proposed Sustainable Management Criteria for Reduction in Groundwater Storage*. The blue line representing the "Judgment-Allowed Storage Mining" is based on the

pumping allowed under the Sustainable Yield and the Rampdown schedule; it is representative of the policy established by the Judgment.

- Discussion on the physical changes in storage (such as recharge and pumping) vs. the accounting analysis of the change in storage.
- Recommendation to include the calculations used to establish the SMC for storage in the documentation.
- Recommendation to confirm if the phrase “Judgment-Allowed Storage Mining” is consistent with terminology in the Judgment.
- The change in storage estimate based on measured groundwater levels is calculated for the entire Basin. Historically, we have not calculated change in storage by Management Area.
- Recommendation to convey that the Basin is on a path towards sustainability and is nowhere near reaching the MT for reductions in groundwater storage based on actual Pumper behavior in reducing pumping and using Carryover.

*Discussion on the SMC for Groundwater Quality:*

- Recommendation that Title 22 results from BWD wells be used to periodically screen for any additional constituents to consider adding as a constituent of concern (COC) in the GMP.
- Clarification on Project & Management Action (PMA) No. 5.
- Recommendation to update language on slide #19 to “No further Watermaster action **with regard to mitigation**”

#### **IV. Scenario 1C BVHM Simulation Results: Northward Shift of Future Pumping**

Lauren Salberg summarized the methods and results of BVHM Scenario 1C included in the Agenda Package. TAC discussion and questions included:

- Mr. Peterson observed that the gradual decline in groundwater levels observed at MW-5A may reflect regional patterns.
- PESTPP-IES was used to perform model calibration.
- Mr. Driscoll indicated he and his team would request additional information on the residuals for groundwater levels from the model calibration.
- Based on measured groundwater levels, the model appears to over-estimate the decline in groundwater levels at well ID1-12 and that this well may be able to pump more than what's simulated in Scenario 1C.

#### **V. Public Comments**

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

- Mr. Smith agrees that a model scenario should be performed that simulates water rights as defined in the Judgment. He recommended (i) the TAC should review the Judgment model runs and (ii) the results from this simulation should be used to support the 5-year GMP Assessment Report to be submitted to DWR.
- A request for an update on the selection of a peer reviewer for the UCI Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) Study Report.

## **VI. Future TAC Meetings**

The next TAC meetings will be scheduled for:

- December 2025 (tentative, based on Board direction at November 2025 Board meeting) – discuss assumptions to use in a BVHM projection scenario that simulates water rights as allocated in the Judgment
- February 2026 - joint meeting with the EWG to discuss the UCI GDE Study Report

## **VII. Adjournment**

Mr. Malone adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.