



PAJARO VALLEY WATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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AD HOC SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Teleconference Meeting

Wednesday, November 4, 2020, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Committee Members	
Present	Absent
Kirk Schmidt, Chair	Javier Zamora, Director
Bob Culbertson, Director, Vice Chair	Tom Broz, Director, <i>Alternate</i>
Amy Newell, Director	Mary Bannister, Director, <i>Alternate</i>
John Ricker	Gary Vincelet
Robert Rodoni	
Beau Kayser	
Sandy Coplin	
Robert Johnson	
Mayra Hernandez, <i>Alternate</i>	
Jonathan Pilch	
Sandra Hoppe	
Christi Suchil	
Tannis Thorlakson	
Staff & Other Attendees	
Brian Lockwood, General Manager (GM)	Cameron Tana, Montgomery & Associates
Casey Meusel, Associate Hydrologist (AH)	Marcus Mendiola, Water Conservation and Outreach Specialist (WCOS)
Ellen Cross, Strategy Driver Inc.	Heather Lukacs, Community Water Center
Amanda Peisch-Derby, Department of Water Resources	Paul Friedlander, Carollo Engineers
Ryan Smith, City of Watsonville	Michelaina Johnson, University of California at Santa Cruz Graduate Student
Kyle Monper, Driscoll's Inc.	Erin McCarthy, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County

● INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting facilitator Ms. Cross, along with Chair Schmidt and Vice Chair Culbertson, welcomed attendees. This was followed by roll call, a review of the meeting schedule, and review of the meeting objectives and guidelines. No comments were received on items not on the agenda.

● MANAGEMENT/GOVERNANCE

- Consider Corrections of GSU22 October 14th Minutes

No corrections to the meeting summary were requested.

- **Receive PV Water Board Meeting Report**

GM Lockwood provided a brief report on the October 21, 2020 [Board of Directors meeting](#).

- **Reiterate GSU22 Roles & Responsibilities for complying with SGMA requirements**

Ms. Cross summarized the GSU22 roles of the Committee, Board, and project team, and the key SGMA requirements that will be addressed in the GSU22 effort.

- **COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT (C&E) PLAN**

Mr. Mendiola presented an overview of [the C&E Plan](#), which outlines near and long-term outreach and engagement strategies, tactics, and tools. The presentation was followed by an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and provide comments on the C&E Plan. Attendees asked questions specific to understanding the outreach strategies and engagement opportunities for non-English speakers, disadvantaged communities, and tribal groups.

- **GSU22 DEVELOPMENT**

- **Introduce Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC)**

Mr. Tana introduced the concept of [SMC](#) and requested feedback on the proposed Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels SMC memo.

Questions & Comments during the presentation included:

- Will the GSU22 be a GSP one day? Response: The BMP was approved before SGMA was signed into law, and PV Water now has an approved alternative to a GSP that will be updated every 5 years.
- Why won't subsidence be evaluated? Response: DWR recommended that PV Water "determine a means by which the Subbasin may be assessed to confirm that no significant land subsidence has occurred." Nearly a year in advance of this recommendation, PV Water contracted with the USGS to evaluate subsidence in the Basin. The USGS will present preliminary results of its subsidence study at the December 2020 meeting.
- Will the Salt and Nutrient plan be updated with the GSU22? Response: Updating the SNMP is not a part of this update.
- What will the roles be for growers and private well owners during this SGMA process? Response: The interests of these parties are being represented by the members of the GSU22 Committee.
- A comment included that we don't want to put ourselves in a position where August groundwater levels in wells put us outside of levels that will recover in the following winter. It should not be a seasonal variation but a longer term variation. Response: This indicator refers to a longer term (chronic) variation not a short term variation in water levels. It was noted that "chronic" is in the language.
- A comment was made that the County approves well driller applications. In recent years, there has not been an observation of wells going dry through a presumed surge in drilling applications. Historically levels have been much lower but recently the levels have stabilized thanks to the work PV Water is already doing. Current conditions and conditions going forward are being evaluated not historic conditions.

- A comment was made that we should define “significant” with information from domestic well analysis. The response included that “significant number” was not defined but that we will need to define significant as we define the full set of criteria.
- A question was asked if there are any other sets of information that should be considered for Groundwater Level (GWL) minimum thresholds? It was further discussed that when considering impacts to domestic wells we need to review well logs and understand at what elevation the water is being extracted. Other information and questions that should be considered included were: At what groundwater level would wells be negatively impacted and affecting supply? Comments were made that we will look at screened intervals not just total depth. It was explained that when PV Water and USGS built the Integrated Hydrologic Model of the Pajaro Valley (PVHM), they evaluated thousands of well driller’s reports. Screen intervals are slots drilled through the well casing and that construction information went into the hydrologic model. PV Water continues to review new well driller applications and reports as they come in from the three counties. PV Water comments on applications before drilling application approval.
- A question was posed on whether the chronic lowering of groundwater levels is going to be reported one or several aquifers. The response included that the principal aquifer of the Pajaro Valley is the Aromas Red Sands. The Aromas overlies the Purisima formation, and underlies tertiary deposits (alluvial aquifer). We will look all but the focus will be on the Aromas Red Sands, which is in-line with the Annual Report PV Water submits to DWR each year, and is supported by the PVHM.
- How relevant are historical GWL data given future impacts due to climate change? Response: Historical GWLs are relevant if they fell below well screens in the past.
- In future conditions, how will we ensure groundwater elevations remain at acceptable levels? Climate change presents challenges. We use models to improve our understanding of future and assist with water resources planning.
- How are the lowering of GWLs and seawater intrusion going to interrelate? Response: Sea water intrusion is identified as a critical indicator. Lower groundwater levels cause seawater intrusion, especially near the coast. We want to focus on the chronic depletion of GWLs with the ability for wells to pump water, including in inland areas.

Additional comments and questions were requested to be sent to Mr. Mendiola at mendiola@pvwater.org.

- **NEXT STEPS**

The project team will send out a survey to determine the next meeting date and time. The meeting was concluded with a request to GSU22 Committee members to provide feedback on the Groundwater Level Depletion Technical Memorandum and to complete a feedback survey to help improve the GSU22 process.

- **Next Meeting:** To be determined following a survey of GSU22 Committee members.
- **Meeting Adjourned at 4:00 p.m.**