

State of California, County of Siskiyou

Flood Control and Water Conservation District Minutes

February 7, 2023

The Honorable Directors of the Flood Control and Water Conservation District of Siskiyou County, California, met in regular session this 7th day of February 2023; there being present Directors Nancy Ogren, Brandon Criss, Ray A. Haupt, Ed Valenzuela and Michael N. Kobseff, County Administrator Angela Davis, District Counsel Edward J. Kiernan, and County Clerk and ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Directors Laura Bynum by Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winningham.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Valenzuela.

Public Comment

Participation in public comment by various members of the public was provided via teleconference phone. Caller John Bennett questioned the composition of the Tulelake Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and associated lead agency and shared concerns regarding the potential for a subbasin to impact the amount of groundwater in another subbasin.

Flood Control and Water Conservation District - Discussion and possible direction re development of a Strategic Document related to near- and long-term goals and strategies for SGMA in three Siskiyou County groundwater basins with assistance from Stantec Consulting.

Natural Resource Policy Specialist Matt Parker appeared before the District Board and distributed an updated powerpoint presentation entitled: Strategic Planning for Managing Groundwater. Mr. Parker introduced Stantec Consulting representatives Emily Finnegan and Marisa Perez-Reyes to present the powerpoint.

Ms. Finnegan appeared before the District Board to present the powerpoint concerning the work Stantec Consulting has been doing to develop the Strategic Planning Document, including a summary of Stakeholder Assessment findings, the strategy document vision statement, various goals and strategies and the next steps. Ms. Finnegan advised that the Strategy Document would assist the Flood District as the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) in implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for local groundwater basins.

Ms. Perez-Reyes appeared before the District Board and continued the powerpoint, including an overview of the process to provide an interview questionnaire to various persons/groups (i.e. Flood District Board, three Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee Chairs, GSA staff and various agricultural/environmental and residential beneficial users) to gather input. Ms. Perez-Reyes advised that, although local Tribes were contacted, they declined to participate in the interview/questionnaire process.

Ms. Perez-Reyes summarized the Stakeholder Assessment findings (i.e. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) that were developed following the interview/questionnaire process.

Discussion followed between members of the District Board and Ms. Perez-Reyes regarding the findings and the need for additional information related to the definition of technical expertise/qualifications, the potential for litigation in the future, possible funding sources beyond the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the unknowns related to climate change.

Ms. Finnegan continued the powerpoint, providing an overview of two versions of a vision statement, one version that included the term 'equitable' consideration versus consideration.

Further discussion followed regarding the need to use the term 'fair' rather than equitable in the vision statement.

Ms. Finnegan and Mr. Perez-Reyes continued the powerpoint, summarizing three identified goals, including Decision-Making, Funds and Resources and Communications and Engagement and associated strategies.

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Flood Control and Water Conservation District – (continued)

In response to Ms. Finnegan and Ms. Perez-Reyes members of the District Board were in support of the various identified goals and associated strategies.

Discussion followed, including District Counsel Edward J. Kiernan regarding the anticipated process for GSA members (Flood District) to communicate with the groundwater basin advisory boards, the potential impacts associated with staffing levels on the success of future groundwater projects, the need to develop relationships with tribal entities, the need to remove the term 'key' with regard to basin stakeholders in establishing communications and partnerships, the need to include/note that there will be a potential for start-up costs at the beginning of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency (SGMA) process, and the clarification needed with regard to transparency and accessibility of data/information to the general public and groundwater users.

Ms. Perez-Reyes concluded the powerpoint presentation, summarizing the next steps in development of the Strategy Document, including the associated timeframes to finalize the document.

Public participation in this item by various members of the public was provided via teleconference phone.

Caller Sari Sommarstrom suggested the need for coordination between the GSA and other entities during implementation of groundwater projects.

Caller Nick Joslin shared concerns regarding the lack of environmental representation in the stakeholder assessment interview questionnaire process.

Caller Angelina Cook spoke in support of the County utilizing the SGMA process to address drought Countywide versus only in certain groundwater basins and questioned the timeframes associated with the DWR grant funding proposal.

Mr. Parker briefly summarized the grant funding proposal process and timelines.

Audience member Theo Johnson questioned the timeframes associated with the Strategy Document being made available for groundwater basin advisory committees to review.

Brief discussion followed regarding the interview questionnaire process that included the chair of each groundwater basin advisory committee and the medium priority groundwater basins in Siskiyou County that are impacted by SGMA.

Adjournment - There being no further business to come before the Board of Directors, the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:
Laura Bynum, County Clerk

Ed Valenzuela, Chair

By: _____
Deputy