

INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Indian Wells Valley Water District
500 West Ridgecrest Blvd.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
Thursday, August 3, 2017, 2:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting was called to order by Don Zdeba at 2:00 p.m.

Teleconferencing in was James Worth, McMurtrey, Hartsock & Worth, IWVWD Legal Counsel.

Don Zdeba, Indian Wells Valley Water District, was volunteered to facilitate the first Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority (IWVGA) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting.

Don Zdeba commented that he felt it is best to wait until all seats on the TAC were appointed before electing a Chair and Vice-chair.

Roll Call:

Eddy Teasdale, Large Agriculture – Meadowbrook
Wade Major, Large Agriculture – Mojave Pistachio
Michael Powell – Residential Customers – Rand Community Water District
Don Decker – Domestic Well Owners
Earl Wilson – Eastern Kern County Resource Conservation District
Adam Bingham – Wholesaler and Industrial User – Searles Valley Minerals
Renee Morquecho – Indian Wells Valley Water District
Stephan Bork – Department of the Navy (not present at time of roll call)

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sophia Merk welcomed the TAC and thanked the members for transparency and their time.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES:

a. Brown Act

James Worth discussed a General Summary of the Brown Act.

General Requirements include:

- Meetings must be open.
- Meeting agendas must sufficiently describe the business to be conducted at the meeting,
- Meetings must be properly noticed and posted in a public place.
- The public must have a meaningful opportunity to comment on matters on the agenda.
- Limited statutory exceptions for legislative body to meet in “Closed Sessions”.

The General Summary of the Brown Act has been provided to the IWVGA Interested Parties.

Teleconferencing is allowed within the Brown Act for the TAC Meetings. Recording of the meeting is also allowed, permitted it does not disrupt the meeting in any way. Agendas must be posted publicly 72 hours prior to the meeting and indicate the location of the meeting.

Member comment:

None.

b. Form 700 Reporting

An online version of Form 700 can be obtained at: <http://www.fppc.ca.gov/Form700.html> which includes very specific instructions that will make it easy to fill out.

All members must file a Form 700 by September 5, 2017 and forms are to be given to Lauren Duffy at the Indian Wells Valley Water District Office. Members are considered to be assuming office as of August 3, 2017.

Members must disclose certain investments exceeding \$2,000 in value and investments which are conducted with a company that is located within the Groundwater Authority Boundaries or does business within said boundaries. This includes Real Property within the boundaries as well as any property within a two-mile radius of the basin boundaries. Generally speaking, vacation or residential homes that are not rented out do not need to be disclosed.

Don Zdeba clarified that Lauren Duffy was recording this meeting and will be providing meeting minutes, however, Ms. Duffy will only be compiling minutes for the first TAC meeting.

Form 700 is generally filed once a year and covers the following calendar year.

Member comment:

None.

c. Ethics Training

Members were informed that Ethics Training must be completed.

Online Ethics Training can be found at:

www.fppc.co.gov/learn/public-officials-and-employees-rules-/ethics-training.html

Then click “Local Officials Ethics Training Course” under “For Local Officials”.

Ethics Training is to be completed every two years by persons required to take ethics training. The IWVGA Board determined that as a condition of being a member on the TAC, Ethics Training must be attended by all members.

There is an Ethics Training scheduled for August 11th from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., which will be made available through a video conference at Supervisor Gleason’s office at 400 North China Lake Blvd., Ridgecrest, CA. The actual location of the training is in Bakersfield.

Ethics Training is required to be completed within one year of assuming office.

Member comment:

Earl Wilson asked if he has already completed Ethics Training, but through a different public agency, would providing a certificate of completion suffice? James Worth stated that he believes it would be okay, however he will confirm and let the members know.

DISCUSSION OF PROJECT LIST FOR POTENTIAL PROP. 1 GRANT FUNDING:

Don Zdeba commented that he was not able to attend the prior IWVGA meeting on July 20th, however he did watch the recording of the meeting. Mr. Zdeba felt it was important to get things going right away, especially Grant funding with the short amount of time to apply.

The Indian Wells Valley Cooperative Groundwater Management Group's (IWVCGMG) TAC previously had developed a list of potential studies and projects that could be applied for Grant funding. The list was distributed at the meeting.

Don Zdeba updated the members on the progress on the following projects:

- The Recharge Study.
- The Brackish Groundwater Feasibility Study, which is funded by IWVWD, Coso Geothermal, the Navy, and Searles Valley Minerals.
- The Wastewater Treatment Plant, which the City of Ridgecrest is pursuing.

Eddy Teasdale agreed to find out if multiple projects could be bundled together on one grant application, or if separate applications needed to be submitted.

Don Decker provided a summary of the IWVCGMG TAC projects list that do not meet the requirements to support a Basin sustainability plan, as well as a list of Sustainability Project Priorities and Recommendations for Potential Grant Funding. (Lists attached to minutes.)

Wade Major commented that a grant which will be applied for on September 1st is specifically for funding desalination projects. There is \$93M allocated for five kinds of projects where desalination is used, including brackish water. Mr. Major clarified that the Brackish Groundwater Feasibility Study which is currently in progress is a feasibility study only and it is not yet known what the conclusion will be at the end of the study.

Don Decker commented that he doesn't feel energy nor effort should be put toward the feasibility study. Don Zdeba clarified that the Brackish Groundwater Feasibility Study is being done outside the realm of the IWVGA. No money from the Groundwater Authority (GA) is being funded.

Don Decker commented that much more emphasis should be put on the stream gauge aspect of the projects.

Public comment:

Raymond Kelso commented that this meeting was focused on grant funding, when he felt the focus of the TAC was to not chase money. Mr. Kelso said that the issues here are time and

having water for our grandchildren. Mr. Kelso urged the committee to not become distracted by funding options for studies.

Elaine Mead commented that the New Requirements for a Groundwater Sustainability Plan list created by the IWVCGMG TAC should be reviewed by this TAC. (List was distributed via email to the IWVGA Interested Parties.)

Mike Neel commented that the committee's effort and money should be put towards researching importation.

Judie Decker commented that there have been several conversations in the past between IWVWD and Department of Water and Power (DWP) with regards to importation. If importation were to happen, everyone will need to contribute money. Ms. Decker added that taking away the agriculture will not solve the critically overdraft issue.

After much deliberation regarding Grant funding and the projects lists, the committee members unanimously agreed to compile a priorities list to present to the IWVGA Board and to consist of:

- Importation of water.
- Updating groundwater model.
- Data gap (new monitoring wells and geophysical exploration of the SW and NW will be added in with data gap.)
- Establishing a database.

There was discussion of the TAC providing the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) with the priorities list and the PAC possibly organizing an outreach program for the public to better understand these items.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE(S) AND COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS:

The committee agreed to tentatively schedule the next TAC meeting for September 7, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. – pending the approval of the IWVGA Board. The TAC agreed to have meetings around two weeks prior to the IWVGA Regular Board Meeting, so that the TAC members may have time to gather information prior to the Board Meeting.

Earl Wilson asked that the list of projects be condensed into one summary spreadsheet to show the projects, costs, and descriptions. Eddy Teasdale agreed to create a summary spreadsheet, such as an action register.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSION:

Imported water and how to pursue.

James Worth reminded the committee that the IWVGA Board should review and approve future TAC agendas.

Public comment:

Stan Rajtora asked if it would be beneficial for the TAC to closely work with the Kern County Water Agency (KCWA) in regards to importing water. Don Zdeba, answered yes, KCWA will be more involved going forward.

Don Zdeba reviewed tasks as follows:

- Confirm if one application can contain multiple projects for grant funding. (Assigned to Eddy Teasdale)
- Distribute list of New Requirements for a GSP created by the IWVCGMG TAC. (Assigned to Don Zdeba)
- Simplifying project list into a summary spreadsheet. (Assigned to Eddy Teasdale)

COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS OR COMMENTS:

Michael Powell commented that public knowledge of what is needed and what's to come will help a lot.

Stephan Bork reported that the Seabees are drilling wells. Mr. Bork added that they are working with a contractor to clean up the GIS database.

Adam Bingham reported that if the Seabees need help from Searles Valley Minerals to run electric logs that at least a day notice be provided.

Wade Major had nothing to report.

Renee Morquecho asked James Worth to research the possible Brown Act violation if the IWVCGMG TAC continued to meet.

Eddy Teasdale reported that there will be a presentation, supported by Ed and Anita Imsand of Meadowbrook, at the August 3rd PAC meeting, regarding Prop 1. funding mechanisms.

Don Decker commented that the DWP release of water to prevent overflowing the reservoirs in Owens Valley has given this basin "recharge water". The water has been flowing for a month and a half and has ponded along the west side of Highway 14 which could potentially benefit this basin. It has been reported well levels in the area where aqueduct discharge is being retained are showing a slight rise.

Elaine Meade suggested that the Navy familiarize themselves with SGMA law with regards to well drilling as the monitor wells they are drilling must be SGMA compliant.

ADJOURN:

With no further comments or discussion to come before the Committee, motion was made by Renee Morquecho and seconded by Michael Powell to adjourn the meeting at 4:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren Duffy
Executive Secretary
Indian Wells Valley Water District

IWV Groundwater Basin (California 6-54) Sustainability Project Priorities and Recommendations for Potential Grant Funding

From Don Decker, prepared for the GSA TAC meeting on 8/3/2017

1. *Water Importation- preliminary study, design and conceptual implementation*

- a) Utilize Basin hydrology model to quantify water supply shortfall. A preliminary value is 20,000 + ac-ft/yr with further refinement expected from recharge/discharge studies.
- b) Identify imported water availability specifically considering location, quality and cost
- c) Identify legal issues,.e.g., intercounty transfers with potential resolution.
- d) Complete a conceptual system design with professional support with emphasis on repairing the most seriously overdrawn Basin areas and on future projected requirements.
- e) Identify infrastructure requirements including storage and recharge areas, new extraction requirements and distribution.
- f) Identify financing options for a \$100M+ scale project.
- g) Identify and carefully evaluate operational costs with attention to likely future trends.
- h) Initiate an effective public outreach effort to provide an understanding of the urgency of securing imported water as the critical element of the Basin future supply.

2. *Groundwater management model*

- a) Professionally validate an existing groundwater model using available KCWA groundwater level data.
- b) Design groundwater extraction scenarios with additional model runs designed to meet sustainability requirements.
- c) Update this model as new basin hydrologic parameters and understanding are available.
- d) Exercise this model with conceptual recharge water and adjusted pumping schedules to meet sustainability requirements.

3) *Basin recharge/discharge study*

- a) Participate in the USGS recharge study.
- b) Take advantage of the USGS recharge study to update the groundwater model
- c) Evaluate the consistency of the groundwater model function with the USGS results.
- d) Use the USGS study to guide new field work to better define both recharge and discharge.
- e) Design a modern experimental project combining remote sensing with calibration coming from directly measured vadose zone water migration at the China Lake Playa.

4) *New monitoring wells and geophysical exploration of the SW and NW*

- a) This multiyear effort would be designed to specifically explore the area in the basin sw of the Kunkel and Chase groundwater barrier/fault.
- b) The area to be explored potentially could be an ideal storage aquifer for imported water.
- c) The NW area to be explored is the high organic clay zone underlying N Brown Rd.. This poor water zone is a threat to potable water lying above and further to the south in the Inyokern. area.
- d) Additional exploratory multiple piezometer wells following the BoR designs and shallow seismic tomography would be particularly valuable.

5) *Water chemistry and stable isotope study*

- a) Further exploration of water chemistry and isotopic age dating of the water samples obtained in the new wells described in 4) above as recommended in the AB 303 Final Report..
- b) These studies would likely provide new insight into recharge from the Sierra front itself and from the El Paso/ Southern Sierra area.

Cooperative Groundwater Management Group TAC projects that do not meet the requirements to support a Basin sustainability plan From Don Decker 8/3/2017

1) *Brackish water study*

- a) It is fully realized that the TAC has expended considerable effort in an attempt to start such a program.
- b) It must be further recognized that this effort actually started 25 years ago during the BoR study days. Such an effort was at that time a legitimate project to extend the life of our declining aquifer and was described in the BoR Final Report.
- c) However, our task now is to design a basin management scheme that will lead directly to long term sustainability. This is a totally different goal than 25 years ago.
- d) Basin brackish water is not new water (it has already been accounted for) and thus does not represent a component of a long term basin sustainability plan. The idea that an immediate supplemental brackish water supply might be useful even now is based on the assumption that such a project could be brought to fruition fairly quickly.
- e) Even if this aspect were true, the availability of significant brackish water has not been explored carefully either politically nor technically.
- f) I submit a brackish water study to support sustainability goals has no technical nor political basis.

2) *Stormwater capture study*

- a) Stormwater capture could be a valuable source of “new” water in a basin that has a high and more predictable annual precipitation- but not here.
- b) Even the 1984 IWV flood, which was regarded as a 100 year event, only produced on the order of 1500 ac-ft of water. There simply is not enough water available to cover the infrastructure costs to capture and treat the limited occasional water available.
- c) The other serious issue with utilization of such water is not the capture aspect, it is the cleanup and potential treatment required to have usable water for direct use or recharge. The suspended fines prohibit simply directing this water into a recharge pond. Study the careful attention to turbidity that the KCWA goes through before they use Kern River water for recharge.

Additional notes written for the public when reading this set of recommendations

- 1) Although I am the technical representative from the Domestic Well Owners my recommendations are being made with the understanding that they are of full value to all residents of the Basin.
- 2) The essential elements of a real and functional sustainability plan must necessarily be based on careful and accurate science. Emotional declaration and denial are not useful.
- 3) There is no question that we face a most serious supply shortfall and that our full attention and ability as a community must be brought to bear on the issues we face.
- 4) There is no question that solutions are available. The cost will be significantly higher than present day water but this is an inevitable consequence of a water shortfall that extends over the American SW and beyond.
- 5) The great majority of the water we have been pumping from our Basin was placed there during the last Ice Age 20,000+ years ago.
- 6) Our groundwater supply shortfall was not a sudden discovery. The limited groundwater availability was known at the time of the early farming attempts in the IWV in 1910. This shortfall has been simply ignored by many. The County sponsored Todd Report is an excellent summary of our groundwater supply issues and offers specific solutions.