



**MID-KAWEAH GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
MEETING MINUTES**

July 11, 2023 @ 3:00 PM

Tulare Irrigation District
6826 Ave 240
Tulare, CA 93274

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Nelsen, Dennis Mederos, David Bixler, Emmanuel Soto, Blake Wilbur

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Martin

GSA MEMBER STAFF PRESENT: Aaron Fukuda, Kathi Artis, Valerie Kincaid, James Fisher, Diana Zegarra, Rhett Anderson, and Georgina King.

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Johnny Gailey, Mark Larsen, Tien Tran, Rachel Glauser, Matt Kinchuch, Richard Garcia, Ryan Landcaster and Brad Bickers

- 1) CALL TO ORDER - Chair Nelsen called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
- 2) PUBLIC COMMENT – Chair Nelsen called for public comments. Mr. Fukuda introduced Emily Sarantopulos, an intern who will be working between TID and Provost & Prichard.
- 3) GENERAL BUSINESS
 - a) **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting on June 11th, 2023.** By a motion of Director Bixler and seconded by Director Wilbur and carried by all directors present, the June 11, 2023 meeting minutes were approved.
 - b) **Financial Reports**
 - i) *Financial Statements* – Kathi Artis presented the financial statements. By a motion of Director Wilbur, seconded by Director Mederos and unanimously carried by all Directors present, the Financial Statements were approved.
 - ii) *Call-For-Funds* – Mr. Fukuda gave the review of the current and future expenses. By a motion of Director Bixler, seconded by Director Wilbur, and carried by all directors present, the Call-For-Funds in the total of \$540,000 to be collected in equal amounts from each of the members was approved.
 - c) **Legal Counsel Report** –Ms. Kincaid updated the Board on the State Water Resources Control Board process being carried out with GSA. Ms. Kincaid also reported on the recent water rights

legislation, noting that many of them are not moving forward.

- d) **MKGSA Advisory Committee Update** – Mr. Fukuda gave the update. The committee continued discussion on the Emergency Ordinance Polices, Mitigation Program & Plan. Update on GSP Revisions – Strategy and Schedule.
- e) **MKGSA Groundwater Sustainability Plan Update**
- i) *Department of Water Resources Inadequate Determination of the Revised 2020 Groundwater Sustainability Plan Submitted for the San Joaquin Valley – Kaweah Subbasin Update* – Mr. Fukuda gave the update. The SWRCB Board meeting was July 21, 2023. Kaweah Subbasin GSA’s coordinated a letter to the SWRCB in regards to using probation as the last resort. The letter outlined many of the ongoing actions each GSA is doing in the Kaweah Subbasin.
- f) **MKGSA GSP Implementation Workplan**
- i) *Emergency Ordinance to Establish an Extraction Limitation for the Mid-Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency Service Area – Update* – Ms. Zegarra gave the update. Approximately 40-50% of invoices have been paid. Many of the unpaid invoices needed corrections or modifications. New invoices have gone out this week and payment is due July 31, 2023. MKGSA staff will be recommending a non-payment policy soon.
1. *Discussion and Consideration to Include Visalia Country Club* – Mr. Fukuda gave the presentation. Currently, the Visalia Country Club falls under the jurisdiction of the City of Visalia. Current City irrigation policies are difficult for the Country Club to manage. City of Visalia and MKGSA discussed moving Country Club to the MKGSA jurisdiction and the Country Club to be subject to the Emergency Ordinance. MKGSA has delivered their ET values and they will be over the limit of 2.5 AF/acre. By a motion of Director Bixler, seconded by Director Emmanuel Soto, and carried by all directors present the transition of the Visalia Country Club was approved to the jurisdiction of the MKGSA.
 2. *Accounting Policy* – Mr. Fisher did the presentation. Principles of the policy – If the land parcel is bought, sold, rented or a parcel split and there are credits attached to the parcel, those credits or debits are tied to the land. By a motion of Director Wilbur, seconded by Director Bixler, and carried by all directors present the presented Water Credit Accounting policy was adopted and applied retroactively to the start of the 2023 water year.
 3. *Discussion and Consideration of Pseudo APN Policy* – Mr. Fisher gave the review. Section 2.1 of the “Emergency Ordinance to Establish an Extraction Limitation for the Mid-Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency Service Area” currently defines an APN parcel as the smallest unit of land for assigning a groundwater allocation within the MKGSA. Large parcels are often managed or rented by multiple entities, leading to challenges in billing and allocation tracking. An amendment to the Emergency Ordinance is recommended. The proposed solution involves granting landowners the ability to separate APNs if there are multiple renters or managers associated with a single parcel. Each separated APN would be billed in a consistent manner and retain

the APN number followed by a letter (e.g., a, b, c, etc.) to clearly distinguish them from the native APN. By a motion of Director Bixler, seconded by Director Wilbur, and carried by all directors present

4. *Discussion and Consideration of Irrigation Efficiency Policy* – Mr. Fisher gave the review. As outlined in the Emergency Ordinance, it is assumed that 75% of surface water applied counts against Evapotranspiration (ET), with 25% to recharge the aquifer. While this approximation aligns closely with the calculated irrigation efficiency in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, 78% applied is consumed and 22% recharges the aquifer, if fails to account for the significant variability that exists in different scenarios and locations throughout the year. A new policy is proposed, Firstly, dedicated recharge basins will be credited with 100% of surface water applied during the wintertime and 90% during summertime. For agricultural fields, 75% assumed in the summertime and 90% during the wintertime. By a motion of Director Mederos, seconded by Director Emmanuel Soto, and carried by all directors present the presented Irrigation Efficiency Policy was approved and applied retroactively to the start of the 2023 water year.

ii) *Consider Cost Sharing Agreement* – Mr. Fukuda gave the review. Upon submission of the 2020 Groundwater Sustainability Plans, the Kaweah Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies have all agreed to two priorities: 1) the establishment of a new Data Management System, which is required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and 2) a revised and updated Kaweah Subbasin Modflow Model. The original DMS developed by GEI Consulting is no longer supported by GEI as we are no longer a client or paying for that service. Therefore, the development of a new DMS is critical. The Kaweah Subbasin GSAs investigated a few DMS platforms and concluded that the DMS developed by Montgomery & Associates was the system that best fit our needs. The staff recommends authorizing the Chair of MKGSA to sign and execute the Cost Share Agreement with East Kaweah GSA and the Greater Kaweah GSA upon coordination and concurrence by MKGSA Legal Counsel. By a motion of Director Wilbur, seconded by Director Emmanuel Soto, and carried by all directors present the Chair of the MKGSA was authorized to sign and execute the Cost Share Agreement for the Data Management System and Kaweah Subbasin Model Update and Recalibration upon concurrence of legal counsel.

g) **Kaweah Subbasin Coordination**

i) *Kaweah Subbasin Management Committee* – No Update

ii) *Prop 68 Implementation Grant* – No Update

iii) *SGM Implementation Grant Round 1* – Submitted request to rescope dollars to GSP Revisions

iv) *SGM Implementation Grant Round 2* – No Update

v) *Department of Conservation Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Grant* – Outreach event on July 20th

vi) *Water Marketing Strategy Grant* – No Update

vii) *Kaweah Water Foundation (CVSALTS)* – No Update

viii) *Kaweah Interbasin Coordination* – No Update

4) **INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT** – Mr. Fukuda has been invited to the California Adaption Forum – Panel discussion with River Partners and Stanford

University. Requested to speak on groundwater recharge, highlighting partnerships with Tulare and Visalia.

- 5) CALIFORNIA GROUNDWATER COALITION – No Update
- 6) LEGISLATION – Consider Position on Assembly Bill 1205 – Assembly bill 1205 is being sponsored by Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan and is meant to eliminate the sale, trade, or transfer of surface water or groundwater rights by an investment fund is considered a waste or unreasonable use of water. Based upon Board discussion staff was directed to monitor the legislation and report any updates at a future board meeting
- 7) BOARD/STAFF UPDATES, FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS OR OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST
No Report
- 8) CLOSED SESSION
 - a) Gov't Code §54956.9 – Anticipated Litigation: One Case
Upon returning to open session, Ms. Kincaid reported that there were not actions taken in closed session.
- 9) ADJOURNMENT - Chair Nelson adjourned the meeting. The next scheduled meeting is August 08, 2023.