

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board of Directors Meeting

September 4, 2024

Meeting Minutes

PRESENT:

Directors

Bantilan, Cory – Chair
Yurosek, Derek – Vice Chair
Albano, Byron – Treasurer
Anselm, Arne – Secretary
Burnes, Rick
Jackson, Steve
Reely, Blaine – Alternate
Williams, Das
Williams, Deborah
Wooster, Jane
Zenger, Katelyn

Staff

Beck, Jim – Executive Director
Blakslee, Taylor – Assistant Executive Director
Van Lienden, Brian – Woodard & Curran
Dominguez, Alex – Legal Counsel

ABSENT:

None

1. Call to Order

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (CBGSA) Chair Cory Bantilan called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Mr. Blakslee called roll (shown above) and informed Chair Bantilan that there was a quorum of the Board.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was led by Chair Bantilan.

4. Meeting Protocols

Mr. Blakslee provided an overview of the meeting protocols.

5. Standing Advisory Committee Meeting Report

Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) Member Robbie Jaffe provided a report on the August 29, 2024 SAC meeting and is included below:

Submitted to the CBGSA Board of Directors on September 4th, 2024

By Brenton Kelly, SAC Chair

The Standing Advisory Committee met at the Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center in a hybrid format with five Committee Members present in-person and two on the conference line and two Committee Members absent. GSA Staff Grace Bianchi was in the room, joined by Jim Beck and Brian Van Lienden on the call. Two public stakeholders were in the room and up to 22 participants were on the video conference line. The meeting lasted 4.5 hours with constructive and informative discussion. One recommendation was made by a formal vote and the opinions on the other items are reflected by a straw poll/feedback method.

9.a) Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Data Management System (DMS) Update Options

Back on May 25, 2024 the SAC approved all the items currently planned for in the update of the DMS, for instance the automatic integration of publicly available data from GAMA, CASGEM and ILP data. Staff was commended by the Committee and the public for the ongoing improvements to the public facing DMS.

Committee Chair Kelly asked if the 'Site Map' toggle on the Opti Well page could be reinstated, as it was a very helpful shortcut and it seems to have fallen off the page in recent upgrades. Staff responded with the intent to reinstate the feature.

Stakeholder Jim Wegis asked how landowners can improve precision of the locations on the map, because they are not in the precise location. Mr. Van Lienden responded there is a Well Information Survey document to help improve or update well location information.

10. a) Update on GSP Component Schedule

The Committee members shared with staff their personal availability for the Public Workshop during the week of 9/30 to 10/4. The Advisory Committee repeated that generally, public attendance would be better if it was held later in the day.

10. b) Review of CMA Operational Boundary

The SAC passed a Motion to stick with the old CMA until significant and unreasonable discrepancies between actual well data and modeled projections are reconciled.

The SAC continued the discussion from the last meeting regarding the updated Model CMA projections. It remains difficult to understand how or why the model would increase the size of the CMA by adding unirrigated lands up in the National Forest to the south and also the eastern badlands, while removing currently heavily irrigated lands in the western edge of the CMA. Monitoring wells in these areas show data that do not support the model projections. For example in the current Groundwater Conditions Report on this agenda, several monitoring wells just west of the CMA fell over 40' and dropped below their MTs. While at the same time the brand new monitoring well in the southwest corner of the new CMA has actually

come up 20 feet.

Vice Chair Brad DeBranch thought the new Model update represented the very best we could do with all the new data we have, and that the existing policy was simple and clear on how to use the modeled projection to derive a Management Area boundary, and that we should simply use it as it is. Chair Kelly questioned how faithfully we should depend on the suspected location of a complex fault line that has not been physically confirmed, or accurately modeled to make a hard line policy decision? Especially when local observation and data would indicate otherwise.

Committee member John Caufield said that 'there is wholesale disagreement between the observed well data and the Model projection, and that without a more understandable and believable explanation for this discrepancy, he could not recommend using the new model projections for the CMA, in the SE edge specifically and the whole CMA generally. Caufield added that there may be a rationale for the discrepancy but the modeling team should be asked to provide the rationale. Committee Member Dave Lewis suggested there were multiple levels of uncertainty and regional inaccuracies in the Model projection and he is not confident enough to change the CMA boundary based on this modeled projection.

Stakeholder Jim Wegis presented an informative, researched explanation for how the wells in the vicinity of the Santa Barbara Canyon Fault respond very differently from the wells to the north. He understands that Ventucopa may or may not become a Management Area in the future but they can not be considered to be simply connected to the CMA to the north. He doesn't believe the proposed southern CMA boundary is technically justified. Jim was encouraged to submit his written statement for the record.

MOTION

Committee Member Caufield made a motion not to recommend the updated boundary to the CMA until an explanation is provided on the discrepancy between the model and the well data. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Haslett. A roll call vote was made, and the motion passed.

AYES: Caufield, Gaillard, Jaffe, Kelly, Lewis, Haslett

NOES: DeBranch

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Adams, Furstenfeld

10. c. i.) Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Frequency and Extent of Changes to Groundwater Allocations

A poll was taken that indicated full support for a triggered response to any significant change in either groundwater elevations or groundwater pumping. The frequency was a split between annually and every five years. Committee Member Haslett was concerned that water allocations outside the CMA would be used to try to artificially balance the CMA water budget. Committee Member Caufield expressed concern for the potential of overdraft in the Northwest Region and was in favor of both a regular

evaluation interval, and a trigger set for either a significant drop in GW elevations or significant increase in pumping. Vice Chair DeBranch suggests that we must find any areas outside the CMA that represent the remainder of the overdraft that is not being managed within the CMA and manage it all in order to achieve sustainability. He felt it should be evaluated annually by whichever metric staff recommends. The rest of the Committee was evenly split between Annual and a 5 year interval as long as it also included the management action triggers for significant changes in groundwater conditions.

10. c. ii.) Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Implementation of 2025-2030* Groundwater Allocations

When considering whether or not a Variance Process was needed, the Committee voted six to one in favor of a Variance Process. Committee member DeBranch did not feel it was needed this time. When considering which of the two options were preferred, the Committee voted along the same 6:1 line in favor of Option 2: giving more time to try to get it right. Committee member DeBranch chose option #1 , for timing issues with the row crop farmers.

10. c. iii.) Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Baseline Options

In a poll the majority of the SAC recommend using the new modeled pumping estimate for the 2021 rain year The SAC held a thorough discussion on the significance of this issue and the impact it would have on the Basin. Committee Member Lewis asked “What was the fall-out of a higher or lower baseline?” We were told that while the Sustainable Yield end goal was the same, the higher the Baseline the more pumping would occur with a greater loss of groundwater in storage, the smaller the Baseline would result in less loss of storage before reaching the sustainability goal. Mr. Van Lienden explained that with the new Model, the change in storage in terms of acre-feet is less for each foot of drawdown in a given well. The SAC expressed the need to maintain some predictability in the Allocation process during the remainder of the GSP implementation period. The fact remains that every time the Model is updated and recalibrated many of the Model output numbers will change. Allocations will change, estimated pumping volume will change and the Sustainably Yield will change. Only the % of the cutbacks on the Glide Slope will stay the same. For this reason it was generally felt that at least the year that is chosen for the baseline should not change over time. Vice Chair DeBranch stated that he had never liked a single year choice or a combination of only recent years, preferring a multiyear average of wet and dry years. He commented that the sustainable yield, baseline, and glidepath need to align, and he wanted to see how the numbers would look once the CMA w/ Farming Units was finalized.

In the straw poll of their preferred baseline date: Haslett, Gaillard, Jaffe, Caufield and Kelly agreed on Option #4, 34,000 AF, the new model prediction for 2021, a critically dry year with more pumping. This base number is similar to other options including the reported data from pumping reports.

Committee members DeBranch and Lewis chose (#3), 56,600 the original number (2021 Old Model) until better data is available.

10. e) Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Amended GSP

The SAC accepted the Public Draft of the Amended GSP for the 30-day review period. No further recommendations were made.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenton Kelly
SAC Chair

CONSENT AGENDA

6-8. Consent Agenda

Chair Bantilan asked if any Directors wanted to move any of the consent items out to discuss in more detail.

Chair Bantilan requested CBGSA staff provide an overview of item 8, Payment of Bills. Mr. Blakslee responded that there are some delays in funding from the Department of Water Resources. The earliest expected payment is at the beginning of November.

MOTION

Director Das Williams made a motion to approve the consent agenda item nos. 6-8. The motion was seconded by Director Deborah Williams a roll call vote was made and passed.

- AYES: Albano, Bantilan, Burnes, Jackson, Reely, Williams, Williams, Wooster, Yurosek, Zenger
- NOES: None
- ABSTAIN: None
- ABSENT: Anslem

ACTION ITEMS

9. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation

a. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Data Management System Update Options

Mr. Van Lienden provided a brief overview of the potential Data Management System (DMS) updates.

Director Wooster asked for the addition of a form for community members to provide comments and questions that will prompt technical staff to review well data and/or work with the community to update the well OPTI data. Mr. Van Lienden responded that it would be possible to develop a form to allow people to submit questions or comments.

Director Albano asked about the costs of DMS maintenance and updates. Mr. Van Lienden responded that there will be cost savings due to more efficient well reporting.

SAC Member Robbie Jaffe provided the SAC report on this item, which is included in the Board packet.

Chair Bantilan opened the floor for public comment.

Stakeholder Jim Wegis commented that GPS locations do not correspond with the map. Mr.

Van Lienden responded that data was collected from a variety of sources and coordinates were collected from well data.

Chair Bantilan closed the floor for public comment.

MOTION

Director Das Williams made a motion to approve the DMS updates. The motion was seconded by Director Albano. A roll call vote was made and passed.

AYES:	Albano, Bantilan, Burnes, Jackson, Reely, Williams (Das), Williams (Debby), Wooster, Yurosek, Zenger
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Anslem

10. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Amendment Components

a. Update on GSP Component Schedule

Mr. Blakslee provided an update on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) component schedule and noted that minor changes to the schedule. He added that the project is still on schedule, but any potential changes or delays to the schedule may result in requiring additional special meetings.

There were no public comments on this item.

b. Review and Take Appropriate Action on CMA Operational Boundary

Mr. Beck briefly reviewed the updated Central Management Area (CMA) boundary approved by the Board in July 2024 and provided an overview of the updated CMA Operational Boundary with existing farming units.

Mr. Van Lienden provided an overview of the technical issue of the fault line that was included in the model. Mr. Beck added that CBGSA is looking for direction from the Board on whether to include the yellow area (Jim Wegis’s property) in the CMA.

Director Reely asked if groundwater level (GWL) data does not support the modeling data, then what data is used as an accurate depiction. Mr. Van Lienden responded that the GWL measurement differences between the Technical Support Services (TSS) wells and the north wells indicate a different hydrologic regime in that area surrounding the fault.

Director Jackson asked for more information on the two-foot boundary.

Mr. Van Lienden responded that the model uses the current land use to project GWL changes over a projected 50-year period. The updated model included newer data and additional information, such as the Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) data, more accurate pumping well locations and quantities, which caused a shift in the CMA boundary.

Chair Bantilan asked if the yellow area (Jim Wegis’s property) is removed, should the areas south of the theoretical fault line be removed as well. Mr. Van Lienden responded that further investigation should determine how far east the fault line goes, but there is a

significant change in GWL between the MW-H and the TSS well that indicates that a fault may be in the vicinity.

Director Wooster commented that Jim Wegis's irrigation well is 106 feet depth to water and there is well data nearby that has a groundwater elevation 74 feet higher now than in 1955. She noted that this is the area that is being considered for inclusion in the CMA.

SAC Member Robbie Jaffe provided the SAC report for this agenda item.

Chair Bantilan opened the floor for public comment.

Stakeholder Wegis commented on he is confused with the proposed boundary change to the southeastern zone of the CMA, the yellow area near the Ventucopa Area. He said all groundwater elevations, well depths, and depths to water in the proposed area to be added to the CMA are in the same realm as those in the Ventucopa Management area as currently defined by the GSA. He said they have no correlation at all with the wells and the southwest portion of the central management in Group. There is no current monitoring wells information posted on the DMS site South of well 91 on Foothill Rd. Well 91 is 3.43 miles northwest of the proposed southern boundary of the CMA. In this 3.43 miles lies the Santa Barbara Canyon Fault. The GSA has drilled 1 monitoring well in the area, the MWH well and it's depth to water is 610 feet. This well was completed in the spring of 2024. It's location is approximately 3/4 of a mile north of the proposed southern boundary of the CMA. When I say the southern boundary, that's a yellow dotted line, not does not include the farming units. In the spring of 2022, the GSA drilled well 905 on our property. It is located on the proposed southern boundary line of the CMA. The most current information on the DMS site for well 905 is from April 2024, the groundwater elevation was 2568.5 feet and the water was 111.7 feet. On the same date, Well 91 on Foothill Road, the GWE groundwater elevation was 1813 feet and depth to water was 667.34 feet. The difference between these two locations was dramatic. The groundwater elevation of Will 905 was 755.5 feet higher then that of, well 91. That's 5.97 times less in well 91 than it is in, well 905. Well 40 is 1/4 mile northwest of well 905. It's still being used today and has data from July 1952 to August 2012. In 1952, the groundwater elevation was 2578.4 feet. In 2012, it was 2573.5 feet, 60 years and it had gone down 4.9 feet or less than one inch per year. The closest current monitoring well to the South of well 905 is well 101. In April of 2024, the groundwater elevation was 2658.49 feet and the depth to water was 87.29 feet. This was 90 feet higher in groundwater elevation and 24 feet shallower in depth to water than well 905, than in well 101. Well 101 is 0.92 miles southeast of Well 905. My irrigation well 0.75 miles from miles South East of well 905 and a 0.25 mile to the northwest of well 101. The August 21, 2024 test of Well 1 showed a depth to water was 106 feet, which is 5.7 feet shallower than will 905. 170 yards east of well, 905 is an old monitoring well, number 277 that has records from 1955 through 1968. In 1955, the groundwater elevation was 2585 feet and depth to water was 125.1 feet. This was 69 years ago and their current groundwater elevation is 17 feet lower today than it was in 1955. This is an annual decrease of three inches per year. That 69 years of GSA records and they much say this area is sustainable as currently being used. These are the reasons why I feel the new CMA southern boundary is not justified.

Stakeholder Ray Shady asked if the red dotted line is from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and if the model used the line as shown in the presentation. Mr. Van Lienden responded that the fault line was included in the model, as shown in the presentation.

Stakeholder Shady commented he still feels the model is incomplete and was disappointed that a previous resistivity study didn't have information on the fault line.

Stakeholder Brenton Kelly thanked Jim Wegis for being on the ground and providing technical justification.

Mr. Beck commented that there is a variance process to be considered, which allows landowners to present concerns or questions with the CMA boundary.

Director Wooster commented on the shift of the CMA boundary to the east. Wells on the western side, that were not in the CMA last year but are included now, have gone up 25 to 30 feet in elevation since 2017.

Director Das Williams commented that this agenda item is to determine whether or not to keep the land in the CMA boundary and what are the options for other people near that area. Mr. Blakslee responded that CBGSA staff is presenting an option to exclude an area from the CMA based on the model uncertainty north of the Santa Barbara Canyon Fault line and said the allocation variance process will provide people with an opportunity to address this with staff and the Board.

Director Yurosek commented that he does not support adjusting the CMA and would like to have a management plan for the entire basin.

Chair Bantilan commented that it makes sense to use the CMA boundary as provided by the model. He added the fault location is not correct, but the model is the best available data. He commented that he is in favor of not including the area, following the technical.

Director Das Williams commented that it would be easier to adjudicate the area north of the yellow boundary rather than go through the variance process.

Director Albano commented that it is important to think about the hydrologic regime in this area. He said the science has been clear on the CMA boundary, but in this case the data is telling a difference story. CBGSA staff has provided the arguments and reasons to exclude the highlighted areas and the Board should follow their recommendations.

Mr. Beck responded that there is a different hydrologic regime and somewhere between the two wells, the CMA boundary should be drawn. He said the goal is to manage the area creating the most significant overdraft and noted the CBGSA should manage a contiguous hydrologic regime and not potential two different hydrologic regimes.

Director Zenger recommended keeping the boundary line as-is and allow a variance process, allowing an equal opportunity for those landowners, to present their testimony.

MOTION

Director Wooster made a motion to adopt the new CMA operational boundary excluding the yellow parcels as presented and recommended by Woodard & Curran. The motion was seconded by Director Das Williams and the motion passed with a 64.45%.

AYES: Albano, Bantilan, Burnes, Reely, Williams, Williams, Wooster
 NOES: Jackson, Yurosek, Zenger
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT: Anslem

c. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Groundwater Allocation Program

i. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Frequency and Extent of Changes to Groundwater Allocations

Mr. Beck reviewed the previous Board action to consider groundwater allocations and the application of those outside the CMA plus farming units at a future date. He provided an overview of frequency and extent changes to groundwater allocations and reviewed the potential quantitative and qualitative options.

Director Albano asked about the previous Board discussion on Ventucopa area and how previous Board direction on management areas relates to this item. Mr. Beck responded that this item considers the structure that triggers allocations in the current Ventucopa area and other potential management areas.

Mr. Beck responded that CBGSA staff are looking for a policy to include in the GSP to determine when additional management areas should be considered.

Director Yurosek commented all areas in the basin should be evaluated in the same manner.

Director Albano commented there is one area with the two-foot overdraft area that corresponds to chronic declines in GWL that is not seen in other areas of the valley.

SAC Member Jaffe provided the SAC report on this item.

There were no public comments on this item.

Director Jackson commented the need for allocations outside the CMA should be considered and referenced in the Annual Report and look at the entire basin and said he is in favor of a model update every few years.

Director Wooster commented that the Board should consider including on a future agenda whether the CBGSA should require all irrigated pumpers to report GWL. She commented there are irrigated pumpers who are not currently reporting their groundwater levels, and until the board gets that information, the CBGSA does not have a real clear idea of what is happening in the basin. She commented on a model versus actual reported information, and how the CBGSA should work towards

creating a 3D database of what is actually happening in the basin, rather than just relying on the model.

Mr. Van Lienden responded that staff can work towards getting more comprehensive database of pumping, groundwater levels, and what’s happening in the basin.

Director Wooster asked if CBGSA staff can work towards creating 3D database of what is happening in the basin.

Mr. Beck responded that real world data to calibrate and adjust models. He noted the modeling becomes a function of cost and time to improve the model calibration

Director Wooster commented that actual data should be used to compare to the model data, including a separate database of the actual information, not to calibrate the model with it, but to compare the model to the real world data.

MOTION

Director Jackson made a motion to approve qualitative assessment of groundwater allocations should be considered outside the CMA to be performed during each annual report. The motion was seconded by Director Debbie Williams and the motion passed with a 82.22%.

- AYES: Albano, Bantilan, Burnes, Jackson, Reely, Williams, Williams, Wooster, Zenger
- NOES: Yurosek
- ABSTAIN: None
- ABSENT: Anslem

ii. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Implementation of 2025-2030* Groundwater Allocations

Mr. Blakslee provided an overview of the two options for a groundwater allocation implementation schedule. He reported that staff recommend following the expanded schedule which includes a farming unit application and variance process that aligns with Board meeting.

Director Reely asked about the disadvantages of option 2 and who it impacts. Mr. Blakslee responded that the allocations would not be provided until 2025, which will have the largest impact on the landowners.

Director Albano asked about the second variance if needed. Mr. Blakslee responded that a notice would be sent to landowners and there is an application window. The second variance is for clarification needed based on the first variance with landowners.

SAC Member Jaffe provided a SAC report on this item, which is included in the packet.

Stakeholder David Lewis commented that the human impact of changes has not been discussed when reviewing these options.

Stakeholder Ann Myhre commented she would like to see this process move forward earlier in the year, when perennial crops are more forgiving.

Director Albano asked if the GSP draft is not passed, then how will items be reviewed.

Mr. Blakslee responded that allocations could be a maximum of five years without changing the model. The expanded schedule only includes an initial variance process, but an annual variance process should be discussed if there is Board interest.

Director Albano commented there should be some kind of policy or open-door process for landowners to be able to request variances, even if it's not a formal annual variance process. Mr. Blakslee responded that additional variance processes would take more staff time, but it provides more flexibility for landowners.

Chair Bantian asked if picking variance requests is problematic.

Legal Counsel Dominguez responded that the variance process must be open to everyone. A landowner is not prohibited from approaching the board if data is conflicting and can make the request to the Board. The variance is guiding staff for the next five years and there may be cases that arise. If anomalies arise, then CBGSA will bring it to the Board's attention. He also added that landowners can bring concerns to the board or staff whenever, and there does not need to be a policy for that.

Director Jackson asked if the previous variance was extended and asked why a landowner would need two variance processes.

Director Zenger asked at which board meeting the variance requests would be reviewed. Mr. Blakslee responded that in the timeline option two variance requests would be considered by the Board in January 2025. The Board would provide direction on which variance requests will be included or not, and then the Board would assess whether a second variance process is needed.

Mr. Blakslee reported that during the first variance process, one landowner identified an issue with the model which impacted the total allocations. He noted a second variance process was included to review updates of the changes to the allocations.

Chair Bantilan asked if a variance ad hoc would be appointed during the November board meeting. CBGSA Staff collectively agreed that variance ad hoc should be appointed in November.

MOTION

Director Albano made a motion to approve all components of option 2. The motion was seconded by Director Das Williams and the motion passed with 82.22%.

AYES:	Albano, Bantilan, Burnes, Reely, Williams, Williams, Yurosek, Wooster, Zenger
NOES:	Jackson
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Anslem

iii. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Baseline Options

Mr. Beck reviewed the groundwater allocation baseline options and the initial amounts used for allocations in 2023 and 2024.

Mr. Van Lienden provided an overview of the baseline options and added the estimates will be adjusted once farming units are approved.

SAC Member Jaffe provided the SAC report on this item, which is included in the Board packet.

Stakeholder Matt Vickery commented in favor of keeping the baseline where it is currently at (option 3). He said new landowners will be subject to the cutbacks and there may be more immediate harm on new landowners. He commented that if one of the lower options is moved forward, then the glidepath will be accelerated and landowners will have to reduce by an amount greater than what was originally intended by the Board.

Director Debbie Williams asked why the 2021 updated pumping estimate would not be used since the estimated amount is most closely related to the reported pumping.

Director Albano commented that the numerator and denominator should use consistent data from the new model or old model.

Director Yurosek commented that the purpose of glidepath is to determine baseline and sustainable yield for the basin. Moving the baseline is not as critical as ensuring the sustainable yield is correct. There is significant impacts on the landowner and growers. He is in favor of leaving the estimate where it is out.

Director Jackson commented that the difference between the new and old pumping estimate baseline causes a five to six thousand acre-feet difference in Grimmway. He is in favor of keeping baseline at old baseline (option 3).

Director Zenger commented that she agrees with Mr. Vickery’s comment. It will be difficult to measure progress if the model is updated. She is in favor of option 3.

Director Wooster commented if the old model pumping estimate. If the baseline is dropped, it is going to hurt landowners with permanent crops. She is in favor of option 3.

Director Das Williams expressed concern with using option 3, when CBGSA staff had reported the data is bad. There is no evidence that supports option 3.

Director Albano commented in agreement with Das William's comment. He asked what baseline would be used if a baseline is needed for areas not in the CMA.

Director Yurosek commented to get to sustainable yield by the end point and the purpose of the GSP is to get to the sustainable yield over time.

Director Burnes commented that the guiding principle is the glidepath.

Director Wooster commented that the sustainable yield is the most important number to be evaluated.

Chair Bantilan asked given that the basin is using less, it seems few people will take a reduction in use.

Director Das Williams asked what the cumulative reduction has been in the past two years. Mr. Blakslee responded ten percent. Director Das Williams responded that the glidepath has not started.

Director Burnes commented that the baseline doesn't matter but is the glidepath still accurate.

Director Das Williams responded that the more the numbers are spread out over the years, there is more time to reduce.

Director Yurosek commented that the glidepath was agreed on and the end point is not. The baseline should not be adjusted after three years otherwise there are greater cutbacks in a few years.

Director Wooster commented that the sustainable yield should be discussed. Landowners are not using as much water, but they are cutting back on the acreage irrigated. Need to determine if model toward sustainability is accurate and determine sustainable yield.

Mr. Blakslee commented that there was updated sustainable yield for the basin, middle range (16,500 AF) and for the CMA + farming units was 11,500 AF. The previous sustainable yield for basin (20,000 AF) and previous yield for CMA + farming unit was 5,000. There was board consensus using the updated model average of 11,500 AF.

Director Albano commented that / expressed concern that there will be no reduction in water use if the old model estimate is used. It will be 8-10 years until the allocation will be less than what has been pumping.

Director Jackson commented the glidepath will be steeper if the baseline is changed. He is in favor of keeping the current baseline option, option 3.

Chair Bantilan commented that by starting with a higher baseline value will be harder farmers later during the allocation period, but using 30,000 AF will impact farmers more initially.

Mr. Beck showed a graph of the various baseline options, highlighting differences in allocations reductions between each option.

Director Yurosek commented he would be interested in hearing from a landowner who had to reduce groundwater. Stakeholder Matt Vickery commented that the cuts are noticeable and real for Grimmway.

Director Burnes commented that the glidepath is important and permanent growers will need more time to plan. He said the CMA is already impacting growers and there are already behavior changes in the basin, including cutting down on acreage.

Director Anslem commented it does not make sense to have a baseline significantly higher than reported pumping. He asked about the impacts of the glidepath on the available storage and rate of pumping. Mr. Beck responded that the all baseline options end at the sustainable yield, but the difference is the potential for additional water to be extracted during this period.

Director Debbie Williams commented the basin is pumping less than the baseline so there shouldn't be an impact on landowners with changes to the baseline.

Director Das Williams commented if people are making cuts, but as an CMA there are not large reductions, then another possibility is that there is underreporting. He added the impacts on storage could be the end of some wells.

Director Wooster commented that there is a large difference in year one starting point.

Director Albano commented that farming and irrigation strategies in the basin have changed and become more efficient. The CMA has been pumping unconstrained and if cuts must be made then it should reflect the real world.

Director Burnes expressed concern in doing math and glidepath calculations on the fly. Staff should have provided formalized analysis.

Director Albano asked how difficult it would be to provide allocation options.

Mr. Blakslee recommended get farming units applications, update sustainable yield, and look at allocations and baseline options. The GSP does not have specific details about the baseline options.

Mr. Van Lienden added that allocation tables could be provided.

Director Reely asked if a new baseline is adopted then allocations for 23/24 would be different than the options.

Mr. Blakslee responded the allocations are for 2025.

Director Reely commented that the commented the model estimate is impressively close reported pumping for 2022 and 2023, which are far from the 50,600 AF option.

MOTION

Director Zenger made a motion to use baseline option 3, the old model pumping estimate for 2021. The motion was seconded by Director Jackson and the motion did not pass with 31%

- AYES: Burnes, Jackson, Zenger, Yurosek
- NOES: Albano, Anselm, Bantilan, Reely, Williams, Williams
- ABSTAIN: Wooster
- ABSENT: None

Director Burnes commented that the board should think about growers in the CMA.

Director Albano commented in favor of option 9.

Director Zenger commented that if staff provides allocation options in November then it impacts the allocation timeline.

Mr. Blakslee commented that asking staff to provide more information at the next board meeting will not impact the implementation schedule previously approved.

Director Wooster commented that if using the new model number, then allocations will change. Mr. Van Lienden responded that the updated ET factors and the percentage by parcel will be multiplied by allocations in total. Director Albano asked what baseline would be used if additional areas were added to allocations.

Chair Bantilan commented that he would like to see 2022 data with allocations and reported pumping.

MOTION

Director Albano made a motion to have three options presented at the November Board meeting with the pumping allocations and 2022 reported pumping. The motion was seconded by Director Debbie Williams.

Amended MOTION

Director Albano amended his motion to have options 3, 4, 9, and 10 presented in a table at the November Board meeting with the pumping allocations and 2022 reported pumping. The motion was seconded by Director Burnes and the motion passed with 69%.

AYES: Albano, Anselm, Bantilan, Burnes, Reely, Williams, Williams
 NOES: Jackson, Wooster, Yurosek, Zenger
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT: None

d. Review Public Comments on Amended GSP

Ms. Bianchi briefly reviewed the public comment response matrix that was included in the Board packet, which matrix includes a staff response for each comment.

There were no public comments on this item.

e. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Amended GSP

Mr. Beck briefly reviewed the status of the GSP draft chapters.

MOTION

Director Das Williams made a motion to start the 30-day public review period. The motion was seconded by Director Debbie Williams and the motion passed with a 93% vote.

AYES: Albano, Anselm, Bantilan, Burnes, Reely, Williams, Williams, Wooster, Yurosek, Zenger
 NOES: None
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT: None

REPORT ITEMS

11. Administrative Updates

a. Report of the Executive Director

Nothing to report.

b. Report of the General Counsel

Nothing to report.

12. Technical Updates

a. Update on Groundwater Sustainability Plan Activities

Mr. Van Lienden briefly mentioned accomplishments for June and July 2024, which is provided in the Board packet.

b. Update on Grant-Funded Projects

Mr. Van Lienden briefly provided an update on grant-funded projects, which is provided in the Board packet.

c. Update on Quarterly Groundwater Conditions Report

Mr. Van Lienden briefly reviewed the July Groundwater Conditions Report, which is provided in the Board packet.

13. Report of Ad Hoc Committees

Nothing to report.

14. Directors' Forum

Nothing to report.

15. Public comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Stakeholder Ann Myhre commented that there are not members excluded from the closed session and she was wondering if there are members excluded. Legal Counsel Dominguez responded that there are no members excluded from closed session.

16. Correspondence

Mr. Blakslee responded two correspondences were sent to stakeholders, one on September 4 and the second on September 5.

CLOSED SESSION

17. Closed Session

At 6:30 PM, the Board adjourned to closed session. At 6:54 PM, the Board returned from closed session at which time Legal Counsel reported to the public that there was no reportable action.

18. Adjourn

Chair Bantilan adjourned the meeting at 6:54 PM.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
CUYAMA BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Chair: *Cory Bantilan*
Cory Bantilan (Nov 7, 2024 11:24 PST)

ATTEST:

Secretary: _____

2024-09-04 - CBGSA Board Minutes

Final Audit Report

2024-11-07

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