TULELAKE SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER CORE TEAM

CORE TEAM MEMBERS
Gary Wright, Tulelake Irrigation District
Kraig Beasly, Tulelake Irrigation District
Henry Ebinger, City of Tulelake
Matt Parker, Siskiyou County
Tiffany Martinez, Modoc County

Kraig Beasly
Chairperson

Tiffany Martinez
Clerk of the Core Team

Tulelake Irrigation District
2717 Havlina Road, Tulelake, CA 96134
(530) 667-2249

AGENDA FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2022
1:00 PM
Alternate Meeting Location:
Siskiyou County CAO Office, 1312 Fairlane Rd,
Yreka, CA 96097

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) established a new structure for managing California's groundwater resources at a local level by local agencies. SGMA requires, by June 30, 2017, the formation of locally controlled groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) in the State's high- and medium-priority groundwater basins and subbasins (basins). A GSA is responsible for developing and implementing a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) to meet the sustainability goal of the basin to ensure that it is operated within its sustainable yield, without causing undesirable results.

1:00 PM Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment - *This is the time set aside for citizens to address the Core Team on matters on the consent agenda and matters not otherwise on the agenda. Comments should be limited to matters within the jurisdiction of the Core Team. If your comment concerns an item shown on the agenda please address the Core Team after that item is open for public comment. By law, the Core Team cannot take action on matters that are not on the agenda. The chair reserves the right to limit the duration of each speaker to three minutes. Speaker may not cede their time.*

Agenda items with times listed will be considered at that time all other items will be considered as listed on the agenda or as deemed necessary by the Chair.

Approval or Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Correspondence

Consideration / Action

1. CONSIDERATION/ACTION: Requesting approval of the Tulelake Subbasin Groundwater Core Team meeting minutes as follows:
   September 21, 2022
   (Tulelake Core Team)
2. CONSIDERATION/ACTION: Possible grant funding opportunities and project priorities

3. CONSIDERATION/ACTION: Review and approve response to GSP comments provided by OWRD
4. DISCUSSION: Update the Core Team on the well applications submitted by Tulelake Irrigation District (TID)

Core Team Members Comments

ADJOURNMENT

Parties with a disability as provided by the American Disabilities Act who require special accommodations or aides in order to participate in the public meeting should make the request to the Clerk at clerkoftheboard@co.modoc.ca.us at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. POSTED AT CITY HALL, TULELAKE IRRIGATION DISTRICT, ONLINE, AND AT TULELAKE POST OFFICE ON October 4, 2022.

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Tulelake, CA 96134
(530) 667-2249

MEETING MINUTES, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Matt Parker	Siskiyou County Core Team Member	Present	1:00 PM
Gary Wright	Tulelake Irrigation District Core Team Member	Present	1:00 PM
Kraig Beasly	Tulelake Irrigation District Core Team Member	Present	1:00 PM
Henry Ebinger	City of Tulelake Core Team Member	Present	1:00 PM
Tiffany Martinez	Modoc County Core Team Member	Present	1:00 PM
Advisory Members to the Tulelake Core Team			
David King	Agricultural Groundwater/Surface Water User	Absent	1:00 PM
Mike Byrne	Environmental Conservation Water User	Absent	1:00 PM
Ken Masten	Oregon Groundwater/Surface Water User	Present	1:00 PM
Matt Huffman	Residential Domestic Water User	Absent	1:00 PM

1:10 PM Call to Order

Public Present: Angela Bezzone - MBK Engineering, Kyle Knutson - MBK Engineering, Jose Perez, City of Tulelake, Rich Deitchman – Tulelake Irrigation District Counsel, Pat Vellines – Department of Water Resources, and Gene Lewis – Department of Water Resources.

Public Comment

Kraig Beasly provided a public comment regarding the need to have the GSA's review well applications submitted to the Modoc County Environmental Health Department by the Tulelake Irrigation District.

Correspondence

None

Approval or Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Ordered on a motion by Committee Member Martinez, seconded by Committee Member Ebinger to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

Consideration/Action

1. CONSIDERATION/ACTION: Requesting approval of the Tulelake Subbasin Groundwater Core Team meeting minutes as follows:
   May 19, 2021
   June 16, 2021
   July 21, 2021
   January 26, 2022
   March 6, 2022
   (Tulelake Core Team)

   Ordered on a motion by Committee Member Wright, seconded by Committee Member Ebinger to approve the Tulelake Subbasin Groundwater Core Team meeting minutes for the May 19, 2021, June 16, 2021, July 21, 2021, January 26, 2022 and March 6, 2022.

   Motion carried unanimously.

2. DISCUSSION: Fall 2022 Groundwater Levels (if data is available at time of this meeting)
   Angela Bezzone - MBK Engineering reported they are still waiting on the fall levels to be obtained.

   Bezzone reported that none of the representative monitoring wells have fallen below the minimum threshold. Bezzone reported they would provide a comprehensive update at the December meeting.

   A discussion was held on when the timing of when the readings would occur for groundwater levels in the sub basin.

3. DISCUSSION: Response to GSP comments provided by OWRD.
   Kyle Knutson - MBK Engineering provided a background on the GSP process. Knutson reported the comment period for the submitted GSP to DWR began on February 14, 2022 and ended on April 30, 2022. Knutson reported on August 14, 2022, they received a comment letter from the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD). Knutson recommended the GSAs respond to the letter and wanted to know what the GSA's recommendations were. Knutson reported the majority of the comments were regarding the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and not the GSP. Knutson reported there are several comments related to minimum threshold and the annual average decrease in groundwater aquifer levels. Knutson reported a draft of the comment letter would be completed for review by the first week in October.

A discussion was and a recommendation was made to hold a special meeting in October where the draft comment letter could be reviewed and approved by the Core Team.

4. DISCUSSION: Domestic Wells Update
   Committee Member Beasly reported there has been reports of a few wells with issues on Hill Road in the sub basin. Committee Member Beasly reported that the issues were resolved when the pumps in the wells were lowered.

   A discussion was held on the possibility of the City of Tulelake expanding the lines to reach the town of Newell for improved water supply to this area.

5. DISCUSSION: Report from DWR.
   Pat Vellines from the Department of Water Resources provided an update on the SGMA Implementation funding grant opportunity which opens October 1, 2022 and will close on November 30, 2022. Vellines recommended the projects listed for the grant application should be ranked by priority. Vellines reported that the annual report and five year update could be included as projects under this grant.

   A discussion was held and several comments were asked of Ms. Vellines.

Core Team Members Comments

Committee Member Ebinger provided a report on the grants being pursued by the City of Tulelake to upgrade the infrastructure and reduce water usage by eliminating leaks. A discussion was held and several questions were asked of Committee Member Ebinger.

Committee Member Parker reported their committees for the other basins in Siskiyou County will begin to meet and discuss the grant opportunities.

Committee Member Martinez had no report.

The Core Team scheduled a special meeting to be held on October 5, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. with the following agenda items:

1. Possible grant funding opportunities and project priorities.
2. Appointment of a new Agricultural Groundwater/Surface Water User Advisory Member.
3. Review and approve comment letter to the Oregon Department of Water Resources (ODWR).
4. Discussion and recommendation from the Core Team on the well applications submitted by the Tulelake Irrigation District (TID).

ADJOURNMENT

Ordered on a motion by Committee Member Ebinger, seconded by Committee Member Wright to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

TULELAKE SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER CORE TEAM

October XX, 2022

California Department of Water Resources

PO Box 942836

Sacramento, CA 94236-001

RE: Response to Oregon Water Resource Department's Public Comments

The purpose of this letter is to respond to the Oregon Water Resource Department's (OWRD) comments submitted on August 12, 2022, in regard to the Tulelake Subbasin (Subbasin) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The Tulelake Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) submitted the GSP on January 31, 2022, to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Prior to the submittal, as identified in the GSP, the GSAs held many public meetings and provided many opportunities for public comment. After submittal, the GSP was posted by DWR on DWR's website for public comment on February 14, 2022. The close of DWR's public comment period was April 30, 2022. The GSAs understand that a response to comments is not required for comments submitted after the close of DWR's public comment period for the Tulelake Subbasin GSP; however, the GSAs believe a response is warranted in this case to facilitate DWR's review of the GSP. Below are responses to each of the seven specific comments identified by OWRD.

Response to Specific Comments Provided in First Bullet

As background, the GSAs developed the GSP between 2016 and 2021. During development of the GSP, in recognition of the connection of the Tulelake Subbasin to the overall Klamath Basin, the GSAs created an advisory committee, which included an "Oregon Groundwater/Surface Water User" as identified in Appendix C of the GSP. As stated in the OWRD letter, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) regulations do not require GSPs to address undesirable results that occurred before and have not been corrected by January 1, 2015. In addition, due to the lack of data and consideration of public review periods, all GSAs had to limit the period that was evaluated in their GSP in order to submit a Final GSP by January 31, 2022. Data from Water Year 2018 was the most recent information available at the time of model and GSP development. Therefore, in the case of the Tulelake Subbasin GSP, the period of 2000 through 2018 was used as the historical dataset. This entire period was used for development of the GSP, including the water budgets, hydrographs, sustainable yield, and minimum thresholds. The sustainable yield was estimated based on this period as identified in Section 4.1.3 of the GSP. Therefore, the GSAs did not "ignore the period of rapid groundwater development around the Bureau of Reclamation Klamath Project Area and in the Tule Lake Basin between 2001 and 2015" as stated in the OWRD letter, as these years were included in, and made up the majority of, the analysis. In addition, the GSAs are aware of the groundwater level declines along the northern edge of the Tulelake Subbasin as shown in the hydrographs and groundwater contour maps provided in the GSP.

Data and observations from Water Years 2019 through 2021 were used to inform the GSAs during the GSP development, including the projects and management actions section of the GSP. In addition, water years 2019 through 2021 were covered in the Annual Report submitted to DWR on April 1, 2022. Therefore, the GSAs are aware of, have reviewed, and have incorporated "the significant groundwater issues which occurred within the Klamath Project Area in 2020, 2021, and 2022" into our ongoing GSP implementation efforts.

Response to Specific Comments Provided in Second Bullet

As stated above, the period of 2000 through 2018 was used for development of the GSP, including the water budgets, hydrographs, sustainable yield, and minimum thresholds. As noted in the GSP and in the OWRD letter, over the 20-year historical period, the estimated groundwater storage of the Subbasin declined by about 4,000 acre-feet per year. The GSP states that 4,000 acre-feet per year is approximately 1.7% of the average total inflows and outflows of the system. (GSP, p. 4-3.) The GSAs understand that there have been declines in groundwater levels and estimated groundwater storage; however, the magnitude is small relative to other inputs and outputs of the model used during development of the GSP. Additionally, the GSP states "there is no clear evidence of recent overdraft since SGMA implementation in 2015", which refers to the period of 2015 through 2018. (GSP, p. 4-3.) The GSAs understand that GSP implementation includes annual reports and 5-year updates, which will require building upon the historical period of analysis and modeled future conditions. In addition, the SGMA regulations require a projected water budget with climate change incorporated. DWR assisted the GSAs by providing the climate change dataset that was used during the development of the GSP. The GSAs understand that the climate change dataset and the GSP overall is a planning document to ensure sustainable management. Therefore, the GSAs are prepared to take the necessary actions to sustainably manage the Tulelake Subbasin.

Response to Specific Comments Provided in Third Bullet

The GSAs understand and are aware of the cumulative reduction estimated in the historical water budget. As stated above, the SGMA regulations do not require GSPs to address undesirable results, including groundwater level and storage declines, that occurred before and have not been corrected by January 1, 2015. As stated on page 4-3 of the GSP "there is no clear evidence of recent overdraft since SGMA implementation in 2015, which is supported by the hydrographs provided in the GSP. These hydrographs generally show a steep decline during the early 2000's and then level off.

Response to Specific Comments Provided in Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Bullet

The SGMA Regulations require the development of one projected water budget. The GSAs understand that the GSP is a planning document and multiple projections are likely more useful than a single projection. Therefore, the GSAs elected to include a projected water budget with and without climate change. Section 5 of Appendix K of the GSP identifies the process utilized to develop the projected water budgets, including climate change conditions, surface water availability conditions, groundwater pumping, land use and cropping patterns, boundary conditions, etc. Section 5.1.2 of Appendix K of the GSP includes information on surface water supply projections, which were obtained from a model developed by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. As stated in Section 5.1.1 of Appendix K of the GSP, climate change conditions were based upon information provided by DWR for use by GSAs. The 2070 central tendency climate change alternative was selected based on knowledge of Reclamation modeling efforts for the Klamath Project, and was consistent with the 2070 central tendency climate change factors developed and provided by DWR. In regard to boundary conditions, an explanation of the assumptions used is included in Section 5.2 of Appendix K of the GSP. As stated above, the GSAs understand that this is a planning document and will incorporate new information throughout the GSP implementation horizon, including 5-year updates and annual reports.

Response to Specific Comments Provided in Seventh Bullet

The GSAs utilized the existing groundwater level monitoring well network to develop the representative groundwater level monitoring network described in Section 3.3.1 of the GSP. During development, the GSAs followed DWR's guidance document[1]. The guidance document explains that dedicated monitoring wells are ideal; however, if those are not available or present then pumping wells can be used. This is

[1] https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Sustainable-Groundwater-Management/Best-Management-Practices-and-Guidance-Documents/Files/BMP-2-Monitoring-Networks-and-Identification-of-Data-Gaps_ay_19.pdf

the case in the Tulelake Subbasin where a majority of the wells are irrigation or domestic wells (i.e., pumping wells). Therefore, this approach is consistent with agency guidance and appropriate for the GSP. However, the GSAs understand the challenges with using pumping wells in a monitoring network as described in the OWRD letter. Some of these challenges will be mitigated through the development and review of groundwater level hydrographs and groundwater contour maps, which should show changes that may occur prior to threshold triggers. As identified in the projects and management actions section of the GSP, the GSAs submitted an application to DWR for the installation of multi-completion wells, which would be dedicated monitoring wells incorporated into the groundwater level monitoring network and help the GSAs to better understand and sustainably manage the Tulelake Subbasin.

In conclusion, as stated above and within the Tulelake Subbasin GSP, the GSAs are aware of the issues within the Klamath Basin, which is why the GSP provides background on the interconnection of the Tulelake Subbasin and overall Klamath Basin. The GSAs take this interconnection and the broader issues very seriously. For example, Tulelake Irrigation District (District) is an active participant in Klamath Project Drought Response Agency programs, which have assisted with domestic well issues in the past. The District is aware of the recent domestic well issues and took a leading role in finding assistance for those impacted. In addition, the GSAs identified a management action that memorializes this type of assistance going forward.