

**SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SIERRA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
81059 HIGHWAY 70 BECKWOURTH, CA 96129
Monday, February 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.**

This meeting will also be available via Zoom Teleconferencing:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87847235864?pwd=YWFYaTErR1BUTjA3cHFiOHUvRTcydz09>

Meeting ID:
878 4723 5864
Passcode:
647657
By Phone:
+1 (669) 900-9128

Board of Directors
Einen Grandi, Chairman
Paul Roen, Vice-Chairman
Dwight Ceresola, Director
Dave Goicoechea, Director
Matt Kilmurray, Director
Greg Ramelli, Director
Jim Roberti, Director

MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Grandi called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

Directors present: Grandi, Goicoechea, Roberti, Kilmurray, Ramelli, Ceresola

Directors absent: Roen

Also present: Judie Talbot, Ben Volk, Gus Tolley, Betsy Elzufon

Via Zoom: Debbie Spangler, Laura Foglia, Joel Barnard, Steve Reich, Tracy Schohr, Jay Huebert, Tracey Ferguson, Jim Thomas, Carl Butz

2) PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY – limited to 5 minutes per speaker

At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District Board of Directors at this time.

The Board clerk read the following comment, sent via email on 2-6-25:

*To: Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District
Subject: Recharge Project*

To open, I am totally in favor of recharge. The total Staverville water shed could not replace the water that is being pumped in Sierra Valley even it was totally injected. Has thought been given to the following?

Putting a plan together to use the unused water rights of Smith Neck creek to build a year around recharge?

The Plazola pond has a rather large right, if a deal was made and the levee was rebuilt that could be a year round charging area. What happened to the mill pond water right, could it be moved to another spot and kept as a year around recharge? There are various water rights that people just do not use which could be used to recharge. As of present this water is just wasted and a flood problem for Loyalton. The recharge has to be high on the valley edge or use the injection system.

We thank the effort and move toward recharge, but to make any effect the project needs to be major, well planned and done so all win.

*Thanks,
Tom Dotta*

3) REPORTS

A. Meter Technician Report – Jay Huebert

Huebert took readings on February 1. He reported that the wells are still on the way to a good recovery, even though January was a dry month. DMS 12 (Green Gulch) has been too wet for YourH2OPro to fix yet, but Huebert will talk to them again in March, depending on the weather.

B. DWR Update – Debbie Spangler

DWR has been working on final determinations for GSPs that were incomplete and resubmitted. Spangler hopes to see those in the next month or so. A group from DWR will be coming to the Sierra Valley in late March or early April to collect spring measurements. Spangler has reached out to D&S about the continuous subsidence monitoring station, but has not heard back yet.

C. LWA Team Project Update – Laura Foglia

Laura Foglia, GSP Project Manager, shared that she agrees with the public comment read earlier that the recharge project needs to be bigger. She has been talking with DWR about next year's diversion permit and the need for more flexible conditions. It will be important to collect data this year for future discussions because she thinks this is the first example of an ephemeral stream being used for a recharge project.

Betsy Elzufon, LWA Associate, updated the Board on the Staverville recharge project: they have obtained the temporary recharge permit; the diversion structure and monitoring equipment have been installed; and they're currently diverting a maximum diversion of 1 CFS (0.5 CFS with the temporary permit and 0.5 CFS through the Easley's winter water right). Flow data is being collected daily and a telemetered stream gage is collecting daily water depths. Elzufon also shared that the deep borings have been scheduled for the Little Last Chance Creek recharge project in mid-February.

D. Stetson & DRI Team Project Update – Steve Reich/Jim Thomas

Jim Thomas, Project Manager for DRI, reported that DRI is continuing to collect soil moisture data from all eight sites. Over the next four weeks they will be collecting soil samples at those locations for soil size characterization and to measure soil moisture and soil saturation.

Steve Reich, Principal of Stetson Engineers, shared that they have been working on farm assessments and will deliver them at the end of this month. Joel Barnard will be conducting three or four new farm assessments this month. They plan to have soil moisture sensors in place by the end of March for the Plumas Watershed grant demo projects. They're also continuing to work on irrigation efficiency improvements with several irrigators.

4) DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

A. Plumas/Sierra County Well Permit Application Review (if any)

There were no new well applications.

B. GSP Annual Report for Water Year 2024 – Gus Tolley

Gus Tolley, hydrogeologist with Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, reviewed the draft GSP Annual Report for Water Year 2024 (covering October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024). An annual report is due to DWR by April 1 of each year. The report summarizes hydrologic conditions and storage changes over the preceding water year and describes progress toward Plan implementation. For this past water year there was near average precipitation and just above average pumping. The total groundwater extraction came to 8,766 acre-feet (7,813 for agriculture, 379 for domestic, and 574 for municipal/industrial).

Tolley then provided GSP Projects and Management Actions (PMA) updates:

Well inventory: The state well completion database has been reviewed and they are currently evaluating well status, locations, and geologic conditions.

Irrigation efficiency: Assessments have been conducted at seven farms/ranches and four more are scheduled for this month.

Groundwater recharge: The initial recharge pilot project was conducted on Smithneck Creek in spring 2024. The winter 2024/25 pilot projects are at Staverville Creek and Little Last Chance Creek.

Monitoring Network and Data Gaps: Stream gages and well data loggers have been added near Smithneck Creek, Staverville Creek, and Little Last Chance Creek. Test pits were used to evaluate soil permeability. Elevation surveying for subsidence measurements continues to be collected annually.

GSP Updates: National Hydrologic Model values and recent data are being used to update and calibrate the upper watershed rainfall-runoff (PRMS) model. Additional model improvements and calibration are planned for this summer.

C. Sierra Valley Groundwater Cross Sectional Analysis – Tracy Schohr

Tracy Schohr, UCCE Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor, shared that her team conducted water quality testing in April 2021 for the SVGMD and the Irrigated Lands Coalition. This year's testing would also take place in April and use the same locations as before. Director Roberti asked if water quality monitoring is required for SGMA? Tolley responded yes, noting that the GSA gets to set the time interval for how often to test.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the quote for the Sierra Valley Groundwater Cross Sectional Analysis, Director Ramelli 2nd, Directors Ceresola, Roberti, Grandi, Goicoechea, Ramelli, and Kilmurray voted yes.

D. DWR Water Quality Testing Opportunity – Debbie Spangler

Spangler reported that DWR is developing a monthly groundwater quality pilot study. It is independent of SGMA, but she suggested the District might be able to use the data within the planning process. Testing would be conducted monthly for at least the next two years. The selected well will need to be accessible to collect samples and the well owner will need to sign a land access agreement. The purpose of the study is to examine seasonal fluctuations in groundwater quality and properly interpret the data on a seasonal basis. Spangler is hoping to coordinate with a location that is also being monitored in the UCCE water quality analysis.

E. Irrigator's Workshop Date

Reich said the next irrigator's workshop will be on the evening of March 31. He will have an agenda for the Board to review at the March 17 meeting.

F. Isaacs & Assoc. Quote #39969 for McHenry Sand Separator

The Board clerk shared that a meeting was held with District Counsel on how to proceed with irrigation efficiency projects, and his recommendation was to collect three quotes for all equipment and installation projects. Because of this guidance, the Board decided not to take action on this sand separator quote and directed staff to collect two additional quotes for next month's meeting.

Ferguson suggested putting together a Request for Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) package and creating a short list of qualified vendors as an alternative option to collecting three quotes for each project. The Board asked her to discuss this with Counsel and move forward with the SOQ process.

G. In-Situ Quote #Q-138980 for LLCC Telemetry Station

This quote is for a telemetry station for the LLCC recharge project in order to collect stream flow data on the east branch.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the In-Situ quote, Director Kilmurray 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

H. Informal Competitive Bids for Little Last Chance Creek Aquifer Recharge Project:

- 1. Pac Machine Company**
- 2. Rain for Rent**
- 3. Soil-Tech, Inc.**

Elzufon shared that these quotes are for installing rental pipe for the LLCC recharge project located on Dotta Ranch. About 250 feet of pipe will need to go underground because of the property's road and fields.

Director Roberti asked how a recharge location has been selected when test drilling hasn't been conducted yet to make sure the water will go into the lower aquifer? Elzufon replied that test pits provide a good indication, as well as information from the landowner.

Chairman Grandi was concerned that the installation wouldn't be complete until March 7 and the diversion permit ends March 15, leaving only week of recharge opportunity, and only if permit conditions were met. Elzufon said flows are usually high enough at that point in the year so she's hopeful it would work.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the purchase of the pipe, Director Roberti 2nd, roll call vote after further discussion: Director Goicoechea voted yes. Directors Ceresola, Roberti, Grandi, Ramelli, and Kilmurray voted no.

Director Roberti commented that this would be a rash decision and he does not want to rush to get this done. There are too many variables and there's still time to work on this the rest of the year. He would like to get the core drilling results and get the pipe installed during the summer. Director Ramelli agreed that it doesn't make sense for the short time frame.

5) CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the Consent Calendar shall be considered routine and will be enacted by one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Board member requests that specific items be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate action. Any item removed from the consent calendar will be considered after the regular business items.

A. Approval of The Minutes as Read/Distributed for 1/20/25

B. Approve payment of bills and finance reports

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the consent calendar, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

6) ADJOURNMENT

Director Grandi adjourned the meeting at 8:38 PM

Jenny Gant, Board Clerk