

## BWC Meeting Notes

### Agenda and Goals

- The acting facilitator opened the meeting, and reviewed meeting goals:
  - Knowledge Sharing; update all members on their understanding of recent activities/events.
  - Draft an approach for developing a GSP (baseline, financing, facilitation, structure, timing and participants).
  - Define approach and ownership for next steps.
- Prior to the meeting, 10 items were distributed to members via email.

### General Updates

- Action Items from previous meetings were reviewed.
- Members discussed procedures for keeping the BWC's public website and internal Dropbox updated on a monthly basis, particularly in light of recent member turnover and new member invitations.
- Members also discussed recent community and professional events:
  - Two members provided an update on the Borrego Springs Stewardship Council's activities. The Stewardship Council is designed to be a "clearinghouse" group to help prevent "silo-style" work in Borrego, and to help control growth related to tourism so that unique resources are not destroyed by too much success. The Stewardship Council does not have its own authority, but instead provides an orientation and mission statement to other existing organizations. The members also clarified that the Stewardship Council is separate from the Sponsor Group.
    - Members discussed whether the BWC should engage with the Sponsor Group and Stewardship Council as potential advocates for water-friendly land use policies, if not as formal members of the BWC.
    - **ACTION ITEM: Member** will add an agenda item for the July 9th meeting to discuss how to engage sponsor group and stewardship council. **Members** should review public documents on both groups, and be prepared to discuss.
  - Members discussed a letter sent from the BWD to the SWRCB regarding implementation of drought conservation measures, and included in the BWD's most recent meeting package. This letter was distributed to members before the meeting via email.
    - A member requested clarification on the context of the letter. Members explained that the letter was drafted in consultation with BWD legal representation, and is part of an ongoing process for the District to meet its fiduciary and legal requirements regarding water rates.

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- Members noted concerns over whether the letter effectively requests increased state involvement in local water management planning, and whether it responds to a public perception of unfairness in water reductions. Other members reiterated that the letter was produced in consultation with BWD legal counsel, noting that alternative letters were vetoed during this process. The intent of this letter was also to make sure that the Valley as a whole would get credit for cuts already made.
- Members discussed the credibility of the BWC as a group within the broader EO and GSA/GSP processes.
  - A member suggested that the BWC consider how to help manage confusion and frustration in the community regarding perceptions of fairness or unfairness in water management. For example, the BWC could provide information on reductions that have already happened, and support the BWD in preventing fines for users that don't meet conservation measures.
  - **ACTION ITEM: Baseline Working Group** to begin summarizing conservation measurements that have already taken place. This will be added to Action Item #4.

## Baseline/Benchmark Approach

- The acting facilitator introduced the topic, noting the need for the BWC to develop a methodology and standards for establishing a water usage baseline, and suggesting the group put together a team to verify figures. A member highlighted the need to assess baselines in order to begin the GSP process, which will then involve calculating reductions based on individual and collective well data.
- Members discussed needed information: number, location, and ownership of wells.
  - There are issues with the existing historical data, especially regarding well permits.
  - Currently, there are about 120-130 active wells, and much of the data needed is already available via the BWD.
- There is an opportunity for the BWC to take an active role and support stakeholders by gathering this kind of information together as a cooperative effort, rather than having the data calculated by an outside regulator.
- **ACTION ITEM: Members** will form the **Baseline Working Group**. They will discuss offline and come up with structure for a methodology to get consensus on baseline data. This will be added to Action Item #4.

## GSP Development Costs and Proportion Sharing

- A member opened the discussion by reviewing the suggested GSP process and schedule documents distributed to members via email prior to the meeting. These documents do not include final costs, but do specify what needs to be costed.

- Members discussed specific aspects of the GSP process and schedule documents:
  - The major milestones in the suggested schedule are the applications to San Diego County and the basin boundary adjustment process. But, only the reduction plan needs to be funded.
  - The GSA application process could begin at any time, and the BWD is currently coordinating with San Diego County. The BWD can't accumulate any costs related to a GSP until they are an official GSA. Another incentive to apply sooner is better access to consultants.
- Members considered next steps for beginning to implement the schedule, and how to define the BWC's role in the process:
  - The BWC could engage with the BWD and San Diego County via the Baseline Working Group and/or the Representative Committee.
  - A member noted that the basin boundary adjustment process has already started. The County is on board, and the BWD is seeking support from the State Park and BLM.
  - A member updated the group on the BWD's two upcoming 218 processes, and noted an opportunity for the BWD to support the BWC's recommendation for a blended proportional model for funding GSP development and implementation.

## Facilitation Services for GSP Development

- A member opened the discussion by reviewing current options for additional facilitation support. DWR is making funds available for facilitation. The BWC would not be a high priority candidate because the group has already received DWR funds, but the BWD is eligible to receive funds specifically for GSP development. The BWD has submitted a request for facilitation support, with DWR review pending.
- Members discussed details of facilitation for a GSP process:
  - If BWD receives DWR support, that support would be for a public process that would include the BWC as a stakeholder group. The Representative Committee could participate in this process, and report back to the BWC as a private group.
  - A new facilitator would likely have experience with developing Groundwater Management Plans, but the GSP process is a new one for everyone.

## GSP Governance Structures

- A member opened the discussion by reviewing the slide deck distributed prior to the meeting, summarizing the GSP process and necessary decision making. The goal is to review options and expectations, and to validate the approach currently advocated for by the BWC. Key points include:

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- What has not worked well in the past, including land-use decisions that have put the Valley at odds with the County, and a “one size fits all” mentality from DWR.
- What the BWC believes are good standards for stakeholder engagement, including previous options for stakeholder engagement that were considered and rejected. Defining what constitutes a stakeholder is important for negotiation with the BWD and the County, rather than a “checkbox mentality” of assuming that whoever shows up at a meeting is a stakeholder.
- Recommended next steps are: Engage in principled negotiations with the BWD and the County to develop a planning process where stakeholders can contribute constructively. To this end, the Representative Committee has been formed to meet and negotiate with the BWD and County.
- Members discussed details and next steps:
  - An MOU between the BWC, BWD, and County must be solid enough to move through the development and implementation process, and to help create a process validated and evolutionary enough that it doesn't become a target.
  - This form of participation is an opportunity for the BWC to think about the kinds of practical concerns that may fall through the cracks for engineering or technical consultants.

## Representative Committee Update

- Members of the Representative Committee opened the discussion.
- The Committee's next meeting is on June 18th at the San Diego County offices. The BWD has been invited to participate. The Committee sent a letter to the BWD and the County regarding assurances needed for participation in the GSP process; these concerns will be reiterated in the meeting, and the Committee will be able to give input and talk about specific issues.
- The Committee will try to be as focused as possible to work within the schedules prepared for today's meeting. Any other comments or feedback can be emailed to **Member** for distribution to the Representative Committee.
- Members discussed key points for the Committee's meeting with the BWD and County:
  - A member asked whether the State limits what the County can do and who they can work with. The County needs to operate within a certain structure, but within that box they have a lot of freedom, and there are good and bad examples to learn from in the GWMP process.
  - Feedback from the County and the BWD so far has been very positive.

## Action Items Recap and Next Steps

- The list of Action Items was reviewed and updated.

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- The next meeting dates are: July 9th at BSHS, August 6th (TBA)

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## Attendance

Borrego Water District

Beth Hart, Board President  
Lyle Brecht, Board Member  
Jerry Rolwing, General Manager

Agriculture

Dennis Jensen, Oasis Ranch  
Jim Seley, Seley Ranch  
Mike Seley, Seley Ranch  
Duane Young, Cocopah Nurseries

Recreation

Bill Berkley, Rams Hill Golf Course  
Mike Hickok, De Anza Country Club  
Jim Moxham, Borrego Springs Resort (alternate)  
Dan Wright, Roadrunner Club

Community & Tourism

Martha Deichler, Borrego Springs School District  
Linda Haddock, Chamber of Commerce  
Jim Wilson, Christmas Circle Park Foundation

Ecosystems

Kathy Dice, Anza Borrego Desert State Park  
Ralph Singer, Anza-Borrego Foundation

University of California, Irvine

Emily Brooks, Doctoral Student