

## **BWC Meeting Notes**

### **Agenda and Goals**

- The acting facilitator opened the meeting, and reviewed agenda items:
  - Knowledge Sharing; update all members on their understanding of recent activities/ events and external information.
  - Continue development of GSP; including clarifying the role of the BWC.
  - Clarify the approach for benchmarking water usage, aggregate savings to date and determine plan for communicating results.
  - Define approach and ownership for next steps.
- Prior to the meeting, 6 reference items were distributed via email: SGMS Fees/Prop 218, GSP Costs, GSP Proposal, Draft COD Basins, BWD Draft GSA Resolution, BWC July Meeting Notes.
- Members were also asked to review the draft USGS report located on the Dropbox.

### **Recap and Review**

- In light of the summer recess, the acting facilitator recapped key discussions from the last meeting:
  - The Representative Committee received guidance from the County that the BWC should act as a stakeholder group working with the GSAs.
  - A next step for the BWC is deciding how to work with other stakeholder groups to avoid duplicating efforts or creating conflicts.
  - Wilhelmina Sumer's report has been revised to include a disclaimer. BWC Meeting notes from the July meeting (where the report was discussed) will also be revised to include this disclaimer.
  - The District updated Members on Work related to the 25% reduction mandate.
  - A member shared a save-the-date for a "Governing Sustainability" workshop put on by UCI on November 20. Details to follow.

### **General Updates**

- Action Items from previous meetings were reviewed.
- A member updated the group on the prioritization of the BVGB overdraft according to state agencies. The BVGB is considered "medium" priority according to CASGEM, and has been added to the draft list for the "critically overdrafted" basins sub-group according to the SWR-CB categories for SGMA. This categorization is because the BVGB has been in steady decline over the past 50 years, and was expected by the District. It does not change the District

or BWC plans or timeline, but may indicate a higher probability of receiving funding for the GSP process.

## **GSP Development**

- Reference documents on Prop 218 and updated GSP schedule/costs, distributed via email prior to the meeting.
- A Member reviewed current information on GSP development timeline and costs. The costs included are based on the standard of creating a plan that is defensible. Costs included are to develop the plan only, not to implement it. Key points discussed include:
  - A Member asked how the plan becomes "good enough" to meet the standard of being defensible. All recommendations will be supported by data. This vetting will occur during the facilitation process. The value of doing benchmark work in the meantime is to have data that can later be vetted or agreed/disagreed with by consulting engineers.
  - A Member noted that it is probably time to lock in the desired engineering consulting firm(s), preferably one that has experience with BVGB.
  - Until the group receives professional facilitation/guidelines, it is unknown how these will fit in to place.
  - Members expressed concerns over how to distribute costs among the community, and how access to water may change during and after the GSP process.
  - Members discussed possibilities for working with the GSAs without being a GSA. One option would be a working group structure that would work on specific tasks outside of the public GSA meetings. The BWC could participate in this way to develop recommendations that would then be vetted publicly.
- A Member reviewed a draft proposal for engineering consulting to support the GSP process. Key points discussed include:
  - Members reviewed steps needed for public meetings/engagement in Borrego and with the County.
  - A Member noted the need for a letter to Supervisor Horn.
- Members opened the discussion for next steps:
  - Members discussed best practices for working with existing GSA entities going forward. The BWD will apply to be a GSA, and the County will determine whether an MOU between the BWD and County is needed. Within that process, once the structure is in place, there should be a discussion about governance.
  - A Member noted that the BWC is asking for a governance structure, but also potentially a commitment regarding the BWC's place within that structure. It is unclear whether the County could give such a commitment at this time, given that there is no formal mechanism for it.
  - Members discussed whether commitments regarding stakeholder participation would be affected by stakeholder(s) water rights or water access.

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- A Member noted that there is a misperception that GSAs have total control over the GSP process. Instead, GSAs participate in a process that must be done cooperatively. Water rights would be an issue for adjudication, not the GSP process.
- Members revisited the discussion of outreach to and collaboration with other stakeholder groups, such as the Sponsor Group, Stewardship Council, and Village Association.
  - Members reviewed the charters and goals for other stakeholder groups. A Member noted that the Stewardship Council is primarily interested in land use issues and geotourism.
  - A Member noted that no other group is primarily concerned with water. There does need to be coordination regarding land use issues, which will be a big issue for the GSP. As GSAs, the county and the BWD provide the container in which planning occurs. BWC's role with regard to water issues is very clear in the community.
  - Given that these stakeholder groups will be represented at the November 20th workshop at UCI, Members determined that periodic briefings with the Sponsor Group and County would be a logical first step. This would also help get the Sponsor Group up to speed in anticipation of future collaboration.
  - A Member suggested reaching out to a point of contact with the Sponsor Group, and inviting them to give a briefing at the next BWC Meeting.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Member will reach out to a spokesperson for the Sponsor Group, and invite them to attend the Oct. 8th meeting to give a 45-minute briefing and Q&A regarding Sponsor Group activities.

## Benchmarks

- Members of the Baseline Working Group introduced the topic, and reviewed progress on efforts to capture water savings to date and establishing a more accurate baseline for current state water usage. Work continues on this project offline.
- A member suggested the goal of putting out a press release showing conservation measures to date in order to help manage public perception of water conservation efforts. Members discussed concerns with publishing exact numbers, but percentages could be used. Members discussed available data and how to compile. What people want to see is that everyone is contributing, and a percentage is an easy way to do that. A Member suggested a simple pie chart in the Borrego Sun.

## Action Items Recap and Next Steps

- The list of action items was reviewed and updated.
- The next BWC Meetings are: October 8, November 5, December TBA.

**Attendance**

Borrego Water District

Jerry Rolwing, General Manager  
Joe Tatusko, Board Member (alternate)

Agriculture

Ryan Hall, Borrego Farms (alternate)  
Jim Stafford, Oasis Ranch (alternate)  
Jim Seley, Seley Ranch  
Mike Seley, Seley Ranch

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  
Mike Himmerich, Borrego Air Ranch  
Jim Wilson, Christmas Circle Park Foundation

Ecosystems

Ralph Singer, Anza-Borrego Foundation

University of California, Irvine

Emily Brooks, Doctoral Student