



*Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition • 1170 N. Lincoln Street, Suite 110
Dixon, CA 95620 • (707) 678-1655*

MINUTES
AD HOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, May 25, 2022
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kurt Balasek
Spencer Bei
Bruce Brazelton
Paul Lum
Cork Mclsaac
Rick Martinez (Virtual)
Eric Schene (Virtual)
David Viguie

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

COALITION STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Huff (Virtual)
Martha McKeen

OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Houdesheldt

Opening Presentation: Sacramento Valley Coalition Update – Cork Mclsaac and Bruce Houdesheldt

Mr. Houdesheldt, the Director of the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition - SVWQC, gave an overview of the program and updates on what has been going on with the Sac Valley and the Regional Water Quality Control Board-RWQCB. Some highlighted subjects were surface water monitoring reduction approved by the Regional Board, groundwater quality protection formulas, values and targets, and Regional Board staffing updates.

Mr. Mclsaac is the grower representative for the Sac Valley Coalition and attends meetings on behalf of the landowners enrolled in the Irrigated Land Regulatory Program - ILRP. He shared that there are a lot of good things going on like Goose Lake being exempt from the program



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after many years of the Coalition showing the Regional Board that Pasture with no nitrogen or pesticides applied presents low risk to water quality.

Mr. McIsaac and Mr. Houdesheldt both provided a high-level overview of valley-wide issues related to water quality and their efforts in negotiating these issues with the RWQCB.

1. Related Programs Update-SGMA-Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency

Ms. Huff presented information to the Committee Members and requested their input and recommendation on sharing data pertaining with the Solano GSA-Groundwater Sustainability Agency. She also shared an example spreadsheet of how the data could look when collected. Data on water sources to the field-level reporting through ILRP Data Management Tool would provide estimates of groundwater (GW) and surface water (SW) use by percentage. The GSA could use this data to better allocate costs in the future, without requiring meters.

Unfortunately, Ms. Huff shared that the grant application which would have funded staff time and the revisions to the DMT for this data collection was not approved.

Mr. Balasek and Mr. McIsaac asked if the information proposed was what the GSA needed to move forward with the progression of the GSP. Ms. Huff assured the Committee members that the percentage of water source was the data that the GSA was looking for and would be a good start for them to find a fair and equitable division of costs rather than the “one fits all” approach that was approved by the GSA this month.

Mr. Lum asked about the purpose of the collection of this data. Ms. Huff explained that she had confirmed with the GSA team that this information would be helpful for the GSA moving forward, even if just for ground-truthing of modeling estimates. This data collection would likely be one the easiest and probably the most cost-effective way to find out the percentage of GW vs. SW the growers use each year without having to go to meters. Mr. Lum also added that ET – evapotranspiration on crops should be taken into consideration. Ms. Huff confirmed that the GSA technical team is also using ET.

Mr. Bei interjected that the GSA is following the Proposition 218 process. This will take five years and during that time, the GSA will be looking at different ways to reduce costs for the landowners that use minimal groundwater.

Mr. Martinez shared that he knows that there was a local grower that was selling their water to an adjacent landowner. This could be considered a different water source.



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Mr. Viguie suggested that collecting data that showed if the water source was transferred/purchased from another landowner/property might be a good addition to the data set.

Some discussion ensued among the Committee members regarding the sensitivity of the data, but most agreed that water use data would likely not be proprietary in the near future.

The cost of the revisions to the DMT could run from \$2000 to approximately \$15,000, said Ms. Huff. The Committee members agreed that the data collection and sharing it with GSA was a good idea as long as a funding source could be found. Ms. Huff will contact the GSA and SCWA for possible funding sources so we can get the revisions completed in the DMT before the next reporting year, depending on when the GSA would like to start.

2. Finances of the Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition:

Ms. McKeen reviewed the program year-end projected final budget for 21/22.

Fiscal year budget 21/22 will finish approximately \$4K below projected with an ending fund balance of \$184,656. The Committee members all agreed that the projected ending balance was very close to the budget and expressed their appreciation for the Dixon/Solano RCD WQC staff's good work.

Fiscal year 22/23 will be a non-assessment year for monitoring and is expected to have a net position of (-\$46,046) for the year. FY 22/23 is projected to still finish in the black by \$88,608 due to the beginning funds for the year of \$184,656. The \$88,608 is in addition to a \$50,000 set aside for reserves so that the ending fund balance is actually \$138,609. The FY 22/23 preliminary budget assumes the price of \$3.75/acre fee for irrigated land.

The Committee Members collectively agreed that both the 21/22 projected budget and the 22/23 preliminary budget be approved.

Ms. McKeen asked the Committee members to provide feedback on whether the current per/irrigated acre fee of \$3.75 should remain the same, increase, or decrease. Based on the preliminary FY 22/23 budget review, the Committee recommended that the \$3.75 per/irrigated acre fee should remain the same for FY 22/23.



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3. Policy Update-Credit for Irrigated Pasture-No Nitrogen Applied:

Ms. McKeen explained to the Committee that the State had a reduced State Fee rate for Irrigated Pasture with no nitrogen being applied. Dixon/Solano and the SVWQC currently pay fees to the State by dividing out the Pasture-No N applied acreage at a fee of \$1.09 and \$1.35 for all other crops (Preliminary cost for FY 22/23) and we can now return a credit on the invoice for little to no extra cost to administer. The Committee members agreed that giving credit back to members where the Coalition paid a lower cost was an appropriate action to take. The Committee members recommend that the credit back to the members be put on the FY 2023 membership invoices.

4. Policy Update-Consistency for the Sacramento Valley Coalition for Enrolled Acres

Ms. McKeen began the discussion about the inconsistency between sub-watersheds within the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition. This is in regards to situations such as fallow, rotating crops, non-irrigated winter wheat, sub-irrigated (Delta), and transition between replanting orchards. Ms. Huff went on to say that the goal is to make every effort to provide consistency and fairness across the Sacramento Valley and Central Valley.

Ms. Huff expressed that this may require Dixon/Solano to work with our members to report acreages differently depending on the regional effort outcome. It will also involve continued pressure on the Regional Board to follow up on the unenrolled properties.

There is a SVWQC meeting scheduled to discuss this issue with the objective to make policies surrounding crop rotation, fallowing, etc. consistent and fair for all members.

The Committee members all agreed that this was a good plan. No recommendation from the Committee was required for this agenda item.

All agenda items were discussed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.