

**MID-KAWEAH GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

MINUTES

April 2, 2024 – 3:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Geoffrey Vanden Heuvel, Aaron Oliver, Jordan Leal, Richard Garcia, Jessi Snyder, Robert Saenz, Greg Collins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Machado, Eric Correia

GSA MEMBER STAFF PRESENT: Aaron Fukuda, James Fisher, Diana Zegarra

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Peter Petrelis, Trisha Whitfield, Deborah Cottrell, Jayce Leal, Audrey Goddard, Kevin Layne, Derrik Williams

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Snyder at 3:10 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Snyder called for public comments. None were forthcoming.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Vice-Chair Snyder called for the approval for the March 5, 2024, meeting minutes. Committee Member Leal motioned to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Committee Member Saenz. The minutes were approved.

4. MKGSA GSP

a. **Sustainable Management Criteria – Subsidence**

Mr. Williams presented the updates on subsidence. Williams started the presentation by highlighting subsidence in the Kaweah Subbasin is historically among the highest in the state. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) states that GSAs must “avoid or minimize” subsidence, meaning avoiding subsidence where it was not historically observed and minimizing subsidence where it has been historically observed.

“How do we minimize subsidence where it has been historically observed?”, Williams asked. Subsidence is minimized from avoiding pumping from aquifers where pore pressures are reduced to a new historical low, as this places a stress on the interbedded clays. This new stress (reduction in pore pressure) dewateres and reorients the grains in the interbedded clay layers from a more random distribution to a more compact parallel structure, ultimately causing the grains to collapse and the ground to subside. Williams then presented the five categories of critical infrastructure affected by subsidence that will help define “significant and unreasonable impacts”.

Williams presented different water level scenarios and how that would affect subsidence. For instance, if water levels would be raised to the historical 2019 levels, the difference

would be negligibly lower than a scenario where water levels were raised to the historical 2011 water levels. Conversely, if water levels were dropped to the minimum threshold by 2040 as described in the GSP, there would be an unreasonable amount of subsidence, exceeding the subsidence minimum threshold of 7 ft the MKGSA is targeting for the next GSP revision. In other words, subsidence is more sensitive to future water declines than to a rise in water levels.

The proposed maximum allowable subsidence in the subbasin is 7 ft, which is a reduction from the previous MT of 9 ft. While critical infrastructure is not damaged to a “significant and unreasonable” degree in the MKGSA until 9 ft of subsidence, two neighboring subbasins set their MT near 7 ft of subsidence. Because the highest amount of subsidence is anticipated to occur at and near the borders of the Kaweah Subbasin, the solution is to coordinate with the neighboring subbasins and take the more restrictive MT, which is more protective of the beneficial uses and users in the region.

5. EMERGENCY ORDINANCE POLICY UPDATE

Agenda Item 4 generated more discussion than anticipated, not leaving enough time to discuss Emergency Ordinance (EO) Policy updates. Policy updates will be deferred to the next regularly scheduled Advisory Committee meeting.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS, UPDATES, OR OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Vice-Chair Snyder motioned for any updates or reports. None were forthcoming.

7. ADJOURN

Vice-Chair Correia adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 9, 2024.

Attest: _____
GSA Board Secretary

Advisory Committee Chair