

AB 1234 Report

Director name: Dirk Marks

Meeting attended: ACWA Groundwater Committee - SGMA Implementation Subcommittee

Date of Meeting: February 9, 2024

Location: Zoom Meeting

SCV Water Board Meeting to be presented at: February 20, 2024

On February 9, 2024, I participated in the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation Subcommittee of the ACWA Groundwater Committee. The committee's discussions centered on recent Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) determinations, general Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) implementation as well as a Governor's recently released California Salmon Strategy for a Hotter Drier Future.

The committee chair noted that DWR staff is anticipated to attend the next subcommittee meeting and he will be preparing a list of topic for discussion and that list will be shared with the meeting participants. Proposed Meeting Topic included:

- Will DWR play a more collaborative role now all of the initial plans have been reviewed? Will DWR be providing more guidance on incomplete plans, and annual reports? (Some participants indicate that DWR's next focus will be on providing comments on annual reports)
- For those non-compliant basins, to what extent will DWR be coordinating with SWRCB staff? (Their absence at recent technical meeting was noted)
- Updated plans will likely have to deal more specifically with projected impacts of climate change, particularly the reduction of snow pack.
- How will DWR deal with subsidence? Some indications are that DWR will require GSA to be very proactive in this area as Subsidence is typically a lagging indicator of sustainability. DWR's goal may be to have all subsidence stopped by the end of the compliance period. (Not merely avoiding further lowering of groundwater levels that would cause additional subsidence).

- Should DWR be proactive in assessing tectonic or oil and gas related subsidence that are not the responsibility of a GSA?
- The recently released Salmon Strategy document calls for GSA to implement actions related to depleted interconnected surface water caused by groundwater over pumping by 2025. It was noted that DWR is still developing a guidance document on this topic for the next round of updated GSPs. Additionally, one DWR approved GSP is being challenged by an NGO for not sufficiently addressing this topic, specifically as it addresses species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

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Director name: Dirk Marks

Meeting attended: Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County

Date of Meeting: February 15, 2024

Location: United Water Conservation District, Oxnard CA

SCV Water Board Meeting to be presented at: March 5, 2024

On February 15th, I participated in the Association of Water Agencies of Ventura monthly meeting. The primary topic was development of deep-sea reverse osmosis desalination for water supplies in California. The topic was introduced by Las Vergennes Municipal Water District's General Manager David Pedersen and technical information was provided by Mark Golaly, PE from Ocean Well.

Currently there are 23 public water agencies that have entered a memorandum of understanding to explore the viability of deep-sea reverse osmosis (RO). The concept would place RO modules at a depth of about 400 meters. (This depth occurs about 3 to 7 miles from the coast.) Each module would be capable of producing 1 MGD. Project proponents note several advantages over land-based RO plants:

- A much smaller land-based footprint.
- 40% more energy efficient as it utilizes the hydrostatic pressure of sea water to drive the RO membranes and then pumps only the desalinated water to land.
- Lower Environmental impacts associated with plant intake. At 400 m deep 95% of the sun light has been filtered out resulting in less biologic activities to impact.
- Minimal if any impacts from brine discharges. RO filters are operated such that discharges are only about 5 to 10% greater than surrounding ocean water and thus readily diluted.

The developer projects full size modules will be available by the end of the decade. A near-term milestone, FY 2024-25, will see the operation of a test module at one of Las Vergennes' surface reservoirs. This demonstration effort received a \$237,000 grant from the US Bureau of Reclamation. More information can be found at Ocean Wells' web site: www.oceanwellwater.com.