



Regional Water Management Group

LOCATION: Online (ZOOM)

MINUTES

Monday, November 28, 2022, 1:30 pm

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:34 pm, by Tom Wheeler, chairperson.

Those present included:

Al Solis – SEMCU

Brandon Tomlinson – Chowchilla WD

Clyde Wheeler – Indian Lakes

Eddie Mendez – Madera County

Gretchen Heisdorf – Root Creek WD

Jack Rice – MAWA

Jacob Roberson – RWMG Coordinator

Jeannie Habben – Madera County

Jenny Nunez-Rodriguez – Madera County

Jim Brohm – Indian Lakes

Keith Helmuth – City of Madera

Kristi Robinson – CMZ/Triangle T WD

Melanie Aldridge – Madera WD

Sam Cunningham – Madera County

Tom Wheeler – Madera County

2. Review & Approval - Agenda & Minutes

- A motion to approve the November agenda was made by Gretchen H; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to approve the October minutes was made by Gretchen H; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval – Resolution No. 2022-11

- A motion to approve meeting resolution no. 2022-11 was made by Gretchen H; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

- Items of interest were mentioned by Jacob R (for more information, reach out to Jacob):
 - Carl J was unable to attend today's meeting, but Carl sent a letter to Jacob to read to Tom:

Tom, sorry that I can't call in today. I'm in Indian Wells at the ACWA/JPIA Board Meetings at the same time. Tom, we came together in 2007 as the County Water Committee came to an end. We began the process of starting the Regional Water Management Group. We dealt with the state getting on the County as our group did not include parts of Merced, Mariposa, and parts of Fresno. Then, with Provost & Pritchard to get the plan wrote and approved by the state. Jodie Monaghan from the Center for Collaborative Policy helping us get grants wrote and updates to our plan. I want to thank you for your work from the County to help keep the RWMG together by your attendance as a member and as chairman. I and all of us wish you well as you leave the County, and you begin the next stage of your life.

Thank you as your fellow board member and friend,
Carl Janzen

- DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Office has expanded its Technical Assistance efforts to include a newly formed Data Support Section. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Office is now made up of seven sections, including two GSP Review Sections, a Technical Assistance Section, a Data Support Section, a Modelling Support Section, and two Outreach and Engagement Sections.
- DWR has released the latest version of California's Groundwater Condition's, Semi-Annual Update: October 2022 which is available online. For the most up-to-date groundwater information, visit California's Groundwater Live website.
- The State Water Resources Control Board staff have developed a SGMA Groundwater Quality Visualization Tool to help GSAs and other interested parties identify groundwater quality issues in their basins. The tool is available online.
- The US Bureau of Reclamation Small Surface Water and Groundwater Storage Projects Grant is currently accepting applications through December 9th.
- A new wildfire resilience planning tool is now available online. The tool was developed by the California Natural Resources Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, along with support from Google.org.

5. Discussion & Action - Financial Report/Warrant Approvals

- November 2022 Financial Report
 - Jacob R reported that we began the month with \$27,734.40 and SEMCU sent in a check for their last quarterly membership due payment for \$625. We spent \$2,250 for the group's coordinator, which leaves us with \$26,109.40 at the end of the month.
 - A motion to approve the financial report was made by Gretchen H; Kristi R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- Madera RWMG 2023 Budget
 - Jacob R reported that the group would begin the year with a \$23,000 balance, and assumptions were made in the expense line items that make the need for a \$350 per member increase. This makes the yearly member due \$2,850. There is a proposed income from grant funds for \$110,000, which makes the income \$161,350 for 2023. For the coordinator position, there will be a 5% COLA increase when the contract is renewed (increase would begin in May 2023). The coordinator position payment will remain at \$2,250 per month through April 2023, and then increasing to \$2,362 per month starting in May 2023. There is an additional \$50 per year for Madera ID's accounting fee, making the total \$450 for 2023. Miscellaneous costs remain at \$1,000 for the year. Grant funds spent is

estimated at \$110,000 to match the \$110,000 estimated for the grant funds income previously mentioned. For the website, if approved later in this meeting, the cost is \$100 per month or \$1,200 per year. For the upfront cost for the website design of \$1,500, that is already accounted for in 2022 for the budget at the end of the year. Total expenses for 2023 comes out to \$140,994, which leaves us with a balance at the end of 2023 of \$20,356.

- A motion to approve the 2023 budget was made by Gretchen H; Melanie A second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion – Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding

- San Joaquin Valley
 - Self-Help Enterprises – Projects 12 and 13
 - Nothing new to report.
 - Chowchilla Nitrate Control Program / Chowchilla Management Zone – Projects 12 and 13
 - Kristi R reported that they are continuing to test domestic wells for nitrates. Through the grant, they are also testing for an additional 12 constituents and door-to door canvassing within Chowchilla. So far in Madera County, they have had 12 wells over the limit. CMZ is providing water to 17 homes.
 - Tom W asked if nitrates are showing up for the wells that have been tested, and Kristi mentioned that about 1/3rd of the wells tested have been over the 10 mg/L threshold for nitrates. 30 wells have been tested so far. In the CMZ boundaries, there are 691 domestic wells to be tested. A little over 4% of the domestic wells have been tested so far. Kristi added that not all homeowners are fully opened to having their domestic wells tested. The findings do have to be reported back to the state. Homeowners are not realizing that the state is on their side. If the tests come back over the threshold for nitrates, the home will be provided water. The state is not coming after them for having high nitrates in their water. The state is coming after those who are creating the problem.

7. Discussion – Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Funding

- Mountain Counties and San Joaquin Valley Counties
 - Indian Lakes and Parkwood
 - Eddie M reported that they received the shipment of meters for Indian Lakes around the end of October which are being stored up in Oakhurst until the project is ready to start. They are still looking to begin the installs in Spring 2023.
 - Eddie also added that the meters for Parkwood were delivered at the end of last month. The meters are being stored at the Almond yard. They are still waiting on the radio units.
 - City of Madera
 - Keith H reported that they will be pre-purchasing transmitters for their meters to address the supply chain issues. Their PS&E is

going to show up next month for 3” and larger meters then they will be moving to the smaller meters for the design.

- Parksdale
 - Eddie reported that the well is still producing the right amount of water for the system.
- City of Chowchilla
 - Nothing new to report.

8. Discussion – Prop 68 Funding

- Domestic Well Project – Madera County GSA
 - Jeannie H reported that they are working on getting the year closed out. They are working on getting all the plans together for their projects, which includes land repurposing, domestic wells, and groundwater recharge. They are working on getting all these together by the end of the year and submitted to the Board of Supervisors. There will be more to update on during the January 2023 meeting.
- Prop 68 Round 2
 - Jacob R mentioned that DWR extended the application deadline to December 16th at 10 am. For questions, please submit them to SGWP@water.ca.gov.

9. Discussion – SGMA Implementation Grant

- Gretchen H reported that the first report and payment request went in to DWR last week. It will be reviewed and anything that requires a response will be sent back. Stephanie A is in charge of projects 2 and 5. Project 2 has to do with the GSP updates. Gretchen and Stephanie’s team will be meeting to talk about the project and see where they are with everything. Projects 3 and 4 are being ran by Madera WD and Root Creek WD. Those projects are moving forward.

10. Discussion – California Wildfires / Forest Management / Watershed

- Tom W commented that we are fortunate that there were no large fires like we have experienced the past few years. Jeannie H added that it was down a lot this year. Tom also added that there were about 20 homes lost in North Fork. Those homeowners are being assisted by the County right now.

11. Discussion – Drought Working Group

- Jenny N reported that their last meeting was held on November 18th. Laura Ramos and Cordie Qualle from the California Water Institute at Fresno State presented on well construction, well operation, and well maintenance for owners. They also presented on what to do if a well goes dry. Madera County Department of Water and Natural Resources is working on a drought plan required by SB 552. They plan on having a presentation on the drought plan either in December 2022 or January 2023.

12. Discussion – 2023 Madera RWMG Officer Nominations

- Jacob R commented that Supervisor Wheeler is stepping down as chairperson for the Madera RWMG. The group will need to vote on a chairperson and vice-chair during the January 23rd meeting next year. Nominations can be made for

the 2 positions during today's meeting, then the voting will take place during the January meeting to make it official.

- Clyde W nominated Carl J to be the chairperson for the group and Keith H seconded it.
- Tom W nominated Kristi R to be the vice-chair for the group and Jack R seconded it.

13. Discussion – 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief Grant Program

- Jacob R commented that the Madera RWMG is an eligible applicant for this funding program. Jacob reached out to a few organizations with projects on the IRWMP Project List that would be eligible. City of Chowchilla and the Chowchilla Management Zone responded to Jacob, but the Chowchilla Management Zone's project would not be eligible due to the language that is written into the guidelines for the program. For the City of Chowchilla, they have a project for two new wells and one water storage tank on the East side of Chowchilla. They are working on getting pricing together for these for Jacob, but they are estimating roughly \$2M - \$2.5M. There is a \$3M minimum per grant application, so the City of Chowchilla may include turf replacement and drought tolerant landscaping at their City Hall if needed to meet the \$3M minimum. Chowchilla is considered a DAC/underrepresented community according to the DWR DAC mapping tool and CalEnviroScreen 4.0, so the requirement to avoid the cost share will be met ("50% of the primary benefit goes to an underrepresented community or Tribe"). Jacob will be working with Chowchilla to get the application put together, and the application deadline is January 31, 2023.
 - Jeannie H asked if the City of Chowchilla will be the applicant, and Jacob mentioned that the Madera RWMG can be the applicant. Jeannie mentioned that the Madera RWMG is a nonentity made up of a group of people. The group is not a DAC, not an organization, not a non-profit, not a city, not a community, not a county, so we are not eligible to apply. The group can sponsor organizations that apply, but we cannot be the applicant for anything. We can't even do the IRWM grants because we are a nonentity. Someone else needs to be the applicant, like the County or somebody else. Tom W asked if the City of Chowchilla or the Chowchilla WD could be the applicant, and Jacob mentioned that he has not spoken with the Chowchilla WD about this funding, but Jacob will be following up with Jason R later this week.
 - Jeannie added that this is an issue that the group always runs into when it comes to grants. We are here to assist others to get grants, but the group is not eligible for grants.
 - Tom added that the group can write a letter of support if the City of Chowchilla is looking to apply.

14. Review & Approval – Madera RWMG 2023 Meeting Calendar

- Jacob R commented that the draft calendar was sent to the group members about a month or so ago to see if any dates needed to be changed. There was one question about the March 2023 meeting being on the 3rd Monday of the month rather than the 4th. Jacob will be on vacation during the 4th Monday of March, so that is why the March meeting is scheduled for the 3rd Monday.

- A motion to approve the 2023 meeting calendar was made by Kristi R; Jack R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

15. Review & Approval – Madera RWMG Website

- Jacob R reported that CalTech Web put together a demo site for us (www.maderarwmg.com). Jacob shared the demo site during the meeting. CalTech Web does charge a \$1,500 fee for designing the website, which is a discount from the normal amount they charge which is \$4,000. They also charge \$99/month for any changes, additions, or maintenance that needs to be done to the website. Jacob mentioned that there are a few changes that he has noted that need to be made if the group decides to go with the website that CalTech Web designed. CalTech Web does provide backdoor access to make changes on our own. They use WordPress to design and manage the site.
 - Tom W likes the website that CalTech Web designed. Kristi R and Gretchen H agreed with Tom.
 - Kristi asked if the \$1,500 upfront fee is accounted for in the 2023 budget that was reviewed at the beginning of the meeting today. Jacob mentioned that Carl J already accounted for the \$1,500 being taken out of the 2022 budget and included the \$99/month fee in the 2023 budget.
- Jacob also reached out to Digital Attic and had a call with them, but they have not provided a quote to Jacob yet. Jacob is not sure on the pricing from Digital Attic, but they do usually charge \$4,000 - \$5,000 for the website design. Digital Attic also provides backdoor access to the site using WordPress.
- Jacob mentioned that for a cheaper option he would recommend HostGator. This is a platform where we would need to design and manage the website on our own. Jacob was not able to create a demo site through HostGator without paying the 2-year fee upfront, but there are demo templates which Jacob shared with the group during the meeting. HostGator charges an upfront fee for a 2-year contract for a total of \$92, then it is \$185 for 2-years after. The domain name is also free for the first year, and then the cost for the domain name is \$20/year after.
- Jacob recommends the site that CalTech Web designed, and it is also helpful to Jacob that CalTech Web can maintain and update the website on their end as needed.
- A motion to approve the website designed by CalTech Web was made by Kristi R; Gretchen H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

16. Review – North Fork Rancheria Project for IRWM Round 2

- Clyde W asked if there was an update regarding the Water System Improvements project for Indian Lakes. Eddie M mentioned that he is talking through the project with his supervisor. The scope will be refined a little bit prior to the application being submitted to DWR. The scope is being refined because some of the other water system improvement projects that Public Works is working on have different components that have been more expensive to complete. They are looking into the scope for Indian Lakes to see if anything can be refined to make it fit within the allocated amount that we have for this funding. They are budgeting for items to be covered that may possibly come up to avoid any overrun. The cost for some components has increased recently. They want

to be sure that everything in the scope for Indian Lakes' project will be covered with the available funds.

- Jacob R asked Eddie M if they would be moving forward with the application for the North Fork Rancheria Muddy Falls project. Eddie mentioned that they were having some challenges with refining the scope into something that makes sense. There is part of the original project description which has already been completed and there was another component that, after speaking with Paul I, was not wanted any more by North Fork Rancheria. Eddie spoke with Provost & Pritchard, and they are going to work together on a refined scope for this project to see if it's going to make sense and fits within the budget.

17. Review – IRWM and SWRP Project List

- Jacob R commented that the updated lists have not been sent out to the group members to review yet since he is giving organizations till the end of the year to send over revised project proposal forms if needed. The updated lists will be sent out to the group members prior to the January 2023 meeting.

18. Report – Sustainable Groundwater Management – SGMA

- Jacob R commented that Stephanie A usually comments on this topic, but she is on vacation today. Jacob opened the floor to the other GSAs on the call today to provide an update.

19. New/ Suggested Members for the Madera RWMG

- Jacob R commented that he reached out to Aliso WD, New Stone GSA, and the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors about joining the group but did not hear back from either of them.
- No new members suggested.

20. Future Agenda Items

- Madera County Drought Plan presentation by the Zanjero Group.

21. Next Meeting

- Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 23, 2023, at 1:30 pm on Zoom.

22. The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 pm.

**THANK YOU, SUPERVISOR WHEELER, FOR
YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE FOR MADERA
COUNTY AND ALSO FOR THE MADERA
REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP.
ENJOY YOUR WELL-DESERVED RETIREMENT!**