

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

Tulare Basin Watershed Connections – Working Group

April 6, 2016

Participants

Michelle Selmon – California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (working group lead)
John Austin – retired National Park Service
Dezaraye Bagalayos – Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (TBWP)
Nancy Bruce – Circle J Ranch (CJR)
Carole Combs – Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (TBWP) (on the phone)
Ron Goode – North Fork Mono Tribe (NFM Tribe)
Rob Hansen – Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (TBWP)
Dave Hoffman – Deer-Creek Tule River Association (DC TRA)
Matt Hurley – Angiola Irrigation District (AID)
Bobby Kamansky – Kamansky Biological Consulting (KBC)
Adam Livingston – Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT) (on the phone)
Jennifer Morales – California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Justine Reynolds – Yosemite-Sierra RCD (Y-S RCD)
Mohammad Safeeq – UC Merced Sierra Nevada Research Institute (UCM)
Candace Toogood – US Forest Service (USFS)

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The group agreed that the TBWC could/should offer assistance GSA's to encourage Integrated Groundwater Management (e.g. considers environment, tribes, DAC's, surface water, snow pack, ETC.)
- The group agreed that supporting the Mill Creek Project is a good use of our time and resources.

DETAILED MEETING NOTES (Note – speaker is identified when it makes sense for context, otherwise comments not attributed to encourage free dialogue)


Opening remarks – Michelle Selmon

- Agenda and ground rules were reviewed

Dezaraye Bagalayos – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Update

 Kaweah Sub-basin has held no public meetings recently

- 4-5 GSAs have been meeting regularly with other stakeholders that could form a GSA on their own, except for agricultural interests.
- Received \$500,000 for facilitation assistance

 Kings County

- 5 GSAs; coordination meetings held monthly

- Also received \$500,000 for facilitation assistance
- 🚧 Tule Sub-basin is meeting regularly
 - Tri-county already filed and is on the 90 day clock.
 - The basin, as a whole, is cooperating.
 - Last month they reviewed DWR's SGMA rules and gave comment, and are hoping for changes.
 - There are concerns about taking interim actions while awaiting DWR approval, and they don't like the uncertainty.
 - Tri-county website – allows information to be uploaded
- 🚧 We could start approaching GSAs and offering TBWP resources; we won't know who is receptive until we offer.
- 🚧 Lower Tule has open meetings on Thursdays 2pm. Tri-county has a website and welcomes all contributions of education.
- 🚧 Adam suggested that the basins could incorporate Greenprint/Data Basin information (e.g. mapping of GW recharge areas).
- 🚧 GSAs are formed according to sub-basin boundaries, not recognized hydrologic units, more like management units which must coordinate within and with adjacent subbasins
- 🚧 (John) the past is not a good predictor for the future, considerations of climate change 15-20 years out should be included in GSPs; this provides us with an opportunity to discuss the issue
- 🚧 (John) who creates the sustainable GW yield?
- 🚧 (Matt) the sub-basin does it themselves in their Groundwater Sustainability Plans.
 - John is concerned the sustainable yield will be too subjective.
 - Matt- DWR will consider the sustainable yield listed by the GSA and compare it for consistency among other GSA's and entities will need to consider future changing conditions.
- 🚧 (John Austin) this group can help provide GSA's with the GW basin information they may need to form a realistic sustainable yield.
- 🚧 (Matt) DWR regulations should be final by June 1st, so the Watershed Connections group could be very valuable in providing as precise data as we can create.
- 🚧 (Rob) is there a time during which the uptick of climate change clearly began?

- (John Austin) if you take out human effect then it looks like increased temps started in the 1850s at the time of settlement, precipitation changes started in the mid- 1980s very dramatically, but we didn't notice it until recently.
- ✚ (Dez) DAC's are not getting enough outreach, especially with regard to understanding governance structures and SGMA
- ✚ Michelle gave Dick Moss's update about GSA basin concerns and presented the watershed connects draft outreach graphic handout.
- ✚ TBWC could/should offer assistance GSAs to consider and incorporate concept of Integrated GWM (environment, tribes, DAC's, surface water, snow pack, ETC.) in their GSPs

Upcoming Grant Opportunities – Michelle Selmon

- ✚ Michelle gave a group accomplishments update, and passed out grants spreadsheet and targeted opportunities handout.
- ✚ (Adam) Re: SJV Greenprint Demo Projects
 - SRT is applying for funding for GW policy, mapping and outreach. They want to connect GW management best practices to riparian area restoration. If we are funded they will be reaching out to this group for input and a way forward re: best practices in conservation and restoration practices for GSAs.
 - Carole offered to provide a letter of support.
 - Rob has students doing relevant work, will send Adam info.
- ✚ Prop 1 funds- April 14th, RFP in Sept.
- ✚ (Dez) RCPP- NRCS \$92 million, \$10 million max per project.
 - Focus on water quality degradation, inefficient use of water, water insecurity, insufficient water for fish, multistate benefits.
 - Pre-proposals due in May.
- ✚ WaterSMART- May 4th, to develop or advance a watershed group
 - Michelle is interested in taking the lead on applying for this grant and is looking for those in the group interested in assisting with the application.
 - Ron suggests tribes with land bases; Cold Springs, Tule, Dunlap, Tejon Rancheria, White Blanket, Tachi.

🚧 Side note: Ron has connected Raymond Gutierrez with Bobby K for project work.

Subgroup and Partner Updates

- Rob working Bobby Kamansky and others to identify lands most worthy/suited for restoration
- 🚧 Climate Change/Agriculture and Grant Writing workshop
 - John- suggests doing a survey of GSAs to see what they are interested in hearing about, and that will serve as advertising for the event as well.
- 🚧 Project WET workshop will be held Visalia in November 4th.
- 🚧 Ron informed the group about the upcoming Big Sandy Pow-wow, and Go Native
- 🚧 Safeeq is working with Roger on Food-Water-Energy movie making project for education and outreach.
 - Looking for financing and assistance. Movie will focus on stakeholders, not politicized.
- 🚧 Nancy discussed the Annual Wildflower Festival, April 17th, SCICON campus, 11-4pm, BBQ, wildflowers, activities for kids, raptor show
- 🚧 Dez discussed the BLM Atwell Island Nature Fiesta – will have guided walks, basket weaving, info booths, BBQ, Ton Tachi Tribal movie 9am-2pm

2016 WCW Priorities and Expectations

Mill Flat Creek Project

- 🚧 Kings River is creating a watershed action plan for all watersheds within their boundary, including San Joaquin and Kings Rivers
- 🚧 (Justine) Southern RCD and SSIRWM have a partnership to do watershed analysis, and a Kings River Assessment.
 - Currently pursuing funding sources. Needs info from Sierra National Forest.
 - (Carol) figuring out who would be the funds administrator, possibly Ag Innovations or Sierra Resource Conservation District?
 - The group agrees that supporting the Mill Creek Project is a good use of our time and resources.

Partner Updates and Next Steps for 2016

- ✚ (Carol) We're proceeding with the AAA trails Project, with funding from BLM Atwell Island, but decided not to apply to the Greenprint grant. Funding is currently at \$232,000, with 80% coming from in-kind resources.
- ✚ (John) the charter is a good place to add in the suggested list of interest groups from the WaterSMART grant. Also, show interest in foothills rangelands.
- ✚ (Ron) Consider doing a presentation with Dirt Charlie's Tribal Forum upper watershed management group?
 - Yes, Michelle would be willing to do those presentations on behalf of this group.
- ✚ (Nancy) It would be great to develop a communications plan; meadows and forests as a giant sponge; visual metaphor with maps on forest snow capture in open spaces, and develop a PR plan.
 - Michelle agrees and shows TBWC Draft Outreach Plan Outline – based on work done by Sarah Campe.
 - (John) Is this outreach plan focused only on upper-lower connection or everything? We may need to expand to include SGMA info, soil salinity, regionally issues, etc.
 - (Dez) Maybe we need a crash course eg. 'train the trainers' for those in this group who would be doing presentations on the TB WCW.
 - (Justine) Dinky Creek Collaborative has messaging guidelines, and we need to make sure we're only speaking for ourselves.
 - (Nancy) Erik Ekiels has "water words that work" list.
 - (Dez) Rob Hansen has collection of slides to help explain the concepts.
 - (Ron) Steve Haze CRCD District Manager has an excellent presentation on the Tulare Basin.
 - Michelle Gilmore Southern Sierra Education Specialist
 - Leigh Burnacchi is also an education specialist.
 - Ron developed for a one-pager with Dr. Aldern on forest health.