

Big Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee (BVAC)

Approved Meeting Minutes

BVAC Members:

Lassen County BVAC – Aaron Albaugh, Board Representative; Gary Bridges, Alt. Board Representative; Kevin Mitchell, Public Representative; Duane Conner, Public Representative
Modoc County BVAC – Geri Byrne, Board Representative; Ned Coe, Alt. Board Representative; Jimmy Nunn, Public Representative; John Ohm, Public Representative

Thursday, September 9, 2021

2:00 PM

Adin Community Center
605 Highway 299
Adin, CA 96006

BVAC Convene in Special Session.

Present: Committee Members: Byrne, Albaugh, Conner, Ohm, and Nunn.
Absent: Committee Members: Mitchell

Also in attendance: BVAC Staff Tiffany Martinez
BVAC Staff Gaylon Norwood (designated BVAC Secretary)
BVAC Recorder Brooke Suarez
Alt. Board Representative Gary Bridges

BVAC Chairman Byrne called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. She read the public comment rules for the meeting.

Flag Salute: Chairman Byrne requested Representative Nunn lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

General Update by Secretary: None

Matters Initiated by Committee Members: Nunn asked if GEI was using data from Stone Coal. David Fairman responded that data from Stone Coal is available from 2010-2020 but prior to that it is in paper form and will be difficult to obtain.

Representative Mitchell subsequently arrived at 2:08.

Correspondence (unrelated to a specific agenda item): G. Norwood stated that the correspondence is related to subject #3 and will be brought up then.

Approval of Minutes (July 7, 2021) –

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Albaugh to approve BVAC meeting minutes from July 7, 2021. The motion was seconded by Representative Nunn. The motion was carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 – Byrne, Albaugh, Mitchell, Conner, Ohm, and Nunn.

Laura Snell facilitated the meeting.

SUBJECT #1:

Introduction of public comments received on GSP chapters during the August 14, 2021, Groundwater and Watershed Health Workshop

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Receive reports from the BVAC Secretary, Staff, and/or Consultant.
2. Receive public comment.

L. Snell gave a brief recap of the workshop that was held August 14, 2021 in Bieber. The workshop received more ideas for projects from those in attendance. They had presenters and took comments.

Presenters were: Claire Bjork and Laura Snell gave background GSP project.
Sharmie Stevenson from the Pitt River RCD gave a lot of suggestions for projects.
Pam Giacomini gave a presentation on the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, which is a fee program.
Ian Espinoza of DWR gave presentation on the Aero-electromagnetic (AEM) survey that will be done in Big Valley.

Comments were pertaining to: Watershed health
Wells
Conservation
Resources available
Water storage
Concerns about the future of Big Valley

Committee members comments: Vice-Chairman Albaugh said the team did a great job at the workshop. Representative Nunn asked if the AEM has been scheduled or if a flight plan has been determined. L. Snell said the neither has been established.

Online public comment: None

Public comment: None

SUBJECT #2:

Introduction of the Public Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP – *all chapters*)

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Receive reports from the pertinent ad hoc committees, BVAC Secretary, Staff, and/or Consultant.
2. Receive public comment.

G. Norwood reviewed the GSP time schedule and the approval process of the GSP. Chapter sections were identified; Chapters 1-3 give the background, Chapters 4-6 are the science chapters and the GSAs had to rely on GEI Consultants for this data, Chapters 7-9 were the planning chapters and where the GSAs had the most input, and Chapters 10-12 are the project implementation chapters. He also recapped the changes to the GSP “set aside” chapters.

Detailed review of Chapters 1-3 was presented by T. Martinez.

Committee comment: Committee members had many verbiage and grammar changes.

Vice-Chairman Albaugh commented that the GSP needs to be consistent regarding the data numbers used throughout. He pointed out that the wildlife area is NOT a managed area. He wanted an addition to the GSP goal to be to make the basin a “low priority basin.” He stated that the GSP has to be scientific but DWR can have a subjective scoring system, i.e. using a 60-year-old map to identify the basin boundary. He wants DWR’s flaws, data gaps, and inconsistencies pointed out in the GSP, especially as they relate to the basin boundary lines.

Representative Mitchell was concerned with the single principle aquifer as written in the GSP. D. Fairman responded that by having one aquifer it reduces future work that will need to be done (thresholds and monitoring).

Chairman Byrne was pointing out that the verbiage and grammar should be correct at this stage of the GSP. D. Fairman said that the GSP is currently under going editing by GEI staff.

Online public comment: I. Espinoza of DWR stated the EAM is not scheduled yet.

Julie commented that the inventory of wells drilled to current standards in Adin is incomplete. There are at least 50 wells in the Adin main block. The concept that the majority of wells here are “hand-dug,” deficient because they are less than 100’ deep, or substandard because they don’t have a modern sanitary seal appears to discount the importance of maintaining an adequate groundwater resource here. D. SmithPower wanted to know where to write comments that the committee would see, that there was no packet on the portal, she wants feedback on comments, she thought chapters 1-6 were passed for publishing so she wanted to know why we were reviewing. She also had comments on wells.

Public comment: Gary Monchamp was concerned with the single aquifer and how does that relate to one person having water and another having no water. How will one aquifer be managed? He would also like to see an economic impact report of the GSP.

Detailed review of Chapters 4-6 was presented by D. Fairman.

Committee comment: Committee members had many verbiage and grammar changes.

T. Martinez said that Figures 4-9 through 4-11 should include information outside the basin. She also did not like Figure 4-12. Chairman Byrne and Vice-Chairman Albaugh both said to take that table out if not needed.

Discussion was held on subsidence in Chapter 5. Subsidence should be presented in a way to show minimal subsidence. Section 5.6 needs to be reviewed in an ad hoc committee meeting. GEI will continue to work on Chapter 5.

D. Fairman explained some of the gross estimates that went into the water budget in Chapter 6. Discussion was held on the accuracy of the maps. Vice-Chairman Albaugh asked L. Snell and D. Lile if the water budget worked for them. The response was that with so many assumptions, the budget will definitely change in the 5-year update. T. Martinez wanted the word “estimated” added to all of the diagrams and maps so that all the maps and tables are not considered set in stone.

Online public comment: D. SmithPower wrote that the total number of wells in Big Valley needs to be defined. She also suggested that maps be certified by the preparer and be attached to the appendix of evidence. She asked if a title company could review the maps and certify by parcel number.

Public comment: None

Detailed review of Chapters 7-9 was presented by D. Lile. He recapped the planning and implementation topics of these three chapters. He went over the various project ideas and where they came from and that there may be various funding sources available.

Committee comment: Committee members had many verbiage and grammar changes.

Vice-Chairman Albaugh wanted to add the undesirable result of Big Valley stays as a medium priority basin.

Online public comment: D. SmithPower had comments on wells and defined acre feet. It is hard to comment online. Julie wants the deadline for submitting comments on the revision of the plan so they can be considered by the GSA. Julie also asked on what grounds are we economically disadvantaged?

Public comment: None

SUBJECT #3:

Introduction of the draft “Notice of Intent to Adopt the Big Valley Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan”

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Receive report from the BVAC Secretary, Staff, and/or Consultant.
2. Receive public comment.
3. Possible recommendation to the GSAs regarding language for the notice.

G. Norwood presented “Exhibit A” which was the correspondence regarding the adoption of the Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan. He reviewed the requirements of notice being sent out.

Committee comment: None

Online public comment: None

Public comment: None

Matters Initiated by the General Public (regarding subjects not on the agenda): None

Establish next meeting date: October 6, 2021 at 2:00 pm in Bieber.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Chairman Byrne adjourned the meeting at 6:43 pm.