

FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

A STATE OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCY



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FCGMA TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG) MEETING MINUTES June 8, 2009

A meeting of the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)** was held at 9:45 A.M. on Monday, June 8, 2009 in the Pacific Conference Room at the Ventura County Government Center, Courts Bldg. (inside main cafeteria) at 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, California.

- A. **Call to Order** – Chair Steve Bachman called the meeting to order at 9:46 A.M. (14 people present)
- B. **Public Comments** – County Farm Advisor Dr. Ben Faber and Resource Conservation District Manager Marty Melvin made a request for FCGMA funding to supplement or continue the Mobile Irrigation Lab farm and commercial irrigation evaluations. Funds are needed to bridge the gap between their expenses and the Federal EPA Grant money the program was slated to receive. A bridge loan from GMA of \$75,000 would keep the program going until State RCD funds are approved prior to the Federal disbursement. City of Ventura Water System Superintendent Jim Passanisi mentioned AB-1881, a “Model Landscape Efficiency Ordinance” that must be adopted by public agencies by 2010. This bill would apply to new developments and existing landscaped parcels over one-acre if permitted under any new or change request. Since only the FCGMA Board can grant funding, there was no official response to the funding possibility.
- C. **Attending Board Member Comments** – None (Alternate Sam McIntyre was present)
- D. **Approval of Minutes** – The May 8, 2009 TAG minutes were approved after a motion to accept from Henry Graumlich.
- E. **Summary from last SAG Meeting** – FCGMA Staff Geologist David Panaro reported the previous SAG meeting was deferred in lieu of the first meeting of the Oxnard-Pleasant Valley Basin Users Group formed to address basin-specific issues.
- F. **Update on Meter Calibration Progress** – Staff Geologist David Panaro summarized the progress on well flowmeter calibrations and reported there were only a couple of dozen wells left to account for to finish off the program. A question was asked about how many meters had failing results that needed repair or replacement, and the reply was that all the statistics of the program would be submitted at the July or September regular Board meeting.
- G. **Follow-up Report on FCGMA Unregistered Wells** – Mr. Panaro reported more than 80 certified letters had been sent to owners of suspected unregistered wells. So far, between 30 and 40

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responses had been received resulting in six wells being registered with the Agency. Additional efforts will focus on making sure these wells have meters if needed, and in trying to establish past pumping records and make-up billing or penalty charges.

- H. **FCGMA Credits Evaluation and Review** – Joint Hydrologist Bryan Bondy showed slides which depicted 116 operator codes within the FCGMA database that have switched between Irrigation Efficiency (I.E.) and earning Historical Credits. One suggestion to limit the earning of credits was to change how farmers can earn credits. If an Ag operator wants to file under efficiency, he loses all previously earned credits. If he can file under Historical the next year or more, additional credits could be earned anew. Another suggestion was to force operators into separate groups or user codes if they have wells in both upper and lower aquifers so better water use tracking, analysis, and modeling can be done. Bryan finished off his report by saying more than 70,000 AF of credits are “legacy” or “phantom” credits earned by wells that have since been destroyed or abandoned, and these credits could probably be eliminated. Such policy decisions would need to go through the SAG before making it the Board level however.
- I. **Las Posas Basin Management Plan Update** – Bryan Bondy provided handouts to help describe policies, timelines and discussion ideas used to develop priorities for basin specific management. Hope is that what is being done in the Las Posas Valley can translate into similar programs and methods in other basins for the best possible water management effectiveness. Ideas being considered include ways to save water on farms, such as;
- The GMA could require a Mobile Lab evaluation on every farm.
 - The GMA could purchase and supply every farm with one or two tensiometers so the RCD staff could then teach operators how to best use them for maximum water use efficiency.
 - The GMA could limit farm water use to only “required water” per CIMIS station data.
 - The GMA could require farmers to cut back in equivalent percent to M&I scheduled reductions (negates use of I.E. unless Mobile Lab and BMP measures are employed).
 - The GMA could require a one-time Mobile Lab evaluation to determine each farm’s annual water use “cap” or limit, then force use of that cap before surcharges apply.
- J. **Set next TAG Meeting Agenda and Adjourn** – Suggested topics for the next TAG meeting date scheduled for Monday, July 13, 2009 were:
- Meter Calibration statistics presentation by staff.
 - Las Posas Users Group progress update.
 - Oxnard-P.V. Basin Group progress report.
 - Irrigation Efficiency evaluation summary from staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 A.M.