

**Record of the Minutes of the
Beaumont Basin Committee Meeting of the
Beaumont Basin Watermaster
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 6, 2021**

Meeting Location:

Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
560 Magnolia Avenue
Beaumont, CA 92223

I. Call to Order

Chairman Arturo Vela called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

II. Roll Call

<i>City of Banning</i>	<i>Arturo Vela</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>City of Beaumont</i>	<i>Jeff Hart</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District</i>	<i>Daniel Jagers</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>South Mesa Water Company</i>	<i>George Jorritsma</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>Yucaipa Valley Water District</i>	<i>Joseph Zoba</i>	<i>Present</i>

Hannibal Blandon and Thomas Harder were present as engineers for the BBWM.

Thierry Montoya was present as BBWM legal counsel.

Members of the public who registered and / or attended:

Joyce McIntire, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Matt Porras, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Jennifer Ares, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Logan Largent, California Association of Mutual Water Companies
Mark Swanson, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Erica Gonzales, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Lynda Kerney, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Robert Rasha, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Allison Edmisten, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Larry Smith, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
Lance Eckhart, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
Todd Parton, City of Beaumont
Bryan Brown
Greg Newmark, Meyers Nave
John Covington, Morongo Band of Mission Indians
David Armstrong, South Mesa Water Company

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Vela led the pledge.

IV. Public Comments:

Mr. Lance Eckhart, general manager of the San Geronio Pass Water Agency offered support in identifying potential sites, obtaining grant funding, and assistance with technical aspects related to water in the Beaumont Basin.

V. Consent Calendar

1. Meeting Minutes for August 4, 2021
2. Meeting Minutes for August 17, 2021

It was moved by Member Zoba and seconded by Member Jagers to approve the Meeting Minutes.

AYES:	Hart, Jagers, Jorritsma, Vela, Zoba
NOES:	None.
ABSTAIN:	None.
ABSENT:	None.
STATUS:	Motion Approved

VI. Reports

- A. Report from Engineering Consultant – Hannibal Blandon, ALDA Engineering

Mr. Blandon reported that the groundwater modeling files were delivered as requested.

- B. Report from Hydrogeological Consultant – Thomas Harder, Thomas Harder & Co.

Mr. Harder reported on the Committee's request for the return flow from overlayers. Golf courses: Total production of 1,370 acre-feet (af) of which 25 percent is assumed to be return flow (342 af annually). Others total 50 af (production assuming 50 percent of outdoor use and 25 percent indoor).

- C. Report from Legal Counsel – Thierry Montoya, Alvarado Smith

Mr. Montoya reported that on August 31, 2021, Riverside Superior Court heard arguments on the Yucaipa Valley Water District motion for an order to amend the Watermaster's 2019 annual report and adjust water rights, and companion motion to rescind Watermaster Rule 7.3. The Court denied both motions without prejudice.

VII. Discussion Items

- A. Discussion Regarding the Date and Time of Regular Meetings of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster

It was moved by Member Vela and seconded by Member Hart to change the time of the Watermaster Committee meetings to 11 a.m. and add the text of Resolution 2012-01 to the Watermaster Rules and Regulations. The motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Hart, Jagggers, Jorritsma, Vela, Zoba
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
ABSENT: None.
STATUS: Motion Approved

- B. Discussion Regarding the Assignment of an Ad Hoc Committee for the Development of a Procurement Policy

Recommendation: That the Watermaster Committee appoint an Ad Hoc Committee

Mr. Hart reminded the Committee that there is no procurement policy for the Committee and volunteered to serve on an ad hoc committee. Mr. Jagggers also volunteered.

It was moved by Member Zoba and seconded by Chair Vela to establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Procurement Policy. The motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Hart, Jagggers, Jorritsma, Vela, Zoba
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
ABSENT: None.
STATUS: Motion Approved

- C. Financial Status Report

Recommendation: Presentation only

Member Zoba presented the update. There were no questions or comments.

- D. Discussion Regarding the Development and Inclusion of Items on a Meeting Agenda

Recommendation: Pending

Member Zoba explained that consultants submit their memorandums approximately one week in advance of the meeting, and the agenda packet is compiled from there. He suggested making available the template for the memorandum for any member who wants to sponsor and present an item.

This allows all members to put proposals before the Committee, Zoba noted. Member Jagers indicated that the concern was for others (i.e., overlies) who may want to approach the Committee. He noted that as the Secretary for the Watermaster, the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District was approached during a holiday period about calling a special meeting and was unable to find an outline of a process for overlies or other agencies to place an item on the Watermaster agenda.

Mr. Zoba indicated willingness to follow the regular process of submission for any group. Chair Vela indicated preference for a process to assure the Committee agreed on agenizing of an item.

Chair Vela suggested the Committee Secretary and Chair collaborate to determine whether an agenda item submitted by an outside entity is appropriate. Chair Vela advocated for agility in being able to address issues, but Member Hart indicated preference for a process.

Member Jagers will draft a potential process for Committee evaluation.

- E. Status Report on Water Level Monitoring throughout the Beaumont Basin through September 22, 2021

Recommendation: No recommendation.

Mr. Blandon reviewed the report. He noted the potential for a monitoring well at the development above Cherry Valley Boulevard.

- F. A Comparison of Production vs Extraction Credits through August 2021

Recommendation: No recommendation. Informational only.

Mr. Blandon explained that previous reports used the term, "allowable extractions" which was confusing. The new concept of "extraction credits" is reported for Committee consideration, he stated.

At the beginning of the year, each agency has certain credit which comes from the transfer of unused production by the overlies in the previous 5th year, i.e., credits for 2021 are from 2016, and are spread among the various appropriators based on the certain percentages in the judgment, Blandon explained. The other initial credit comes from

permanent transfer of overlying water rights. Appropriators can increase their extraction credits by spreading imported water, he added.

If production exceeds credits, the excess must be drawn from storage, and if production is less than credits, water remains in storage at the end of the year, Blandon explained.

Blandon reviewed the report and noted that imported water has been delivered only to the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District. Production has totaled 12,079 af and noted some agencies have exceeded their credits.

Member Zoba asked about rollover of extraction credits. Mr. Blandon assured that those overlying rights and extraction credits are accounted for and roll over at the end of the year. Mr. Zoba pointed out that the water must be used on the property. Mr. Blandon suggested an annual accounting for parcels, and Zoba requested a separate chart to clarify.

Being that the Court ruling is new, Member Jagers suggested bringing this back as an agenda item.

G. Storage Accounting Issues – Preliminary Framework

Recommendation: No recommendation. Informational only.

Mr. Blandon advised that it has been brought to attention that the historic amount of water may not be commensurate with the amount of water that is in the Basin. He presented historic hydrological conditions of the Beaumont Basin.

The 2003 basin adjudication assigned production to the overlies based on the 1997 to 2001 period, he explained. There is no documentation regarding the determination of the initial safe yield of 8,650 af and water rights assigned to overlies, he said.

Overlies have been producing one-third to one-half of the amount they are allowed to produce, Blandon said. This has been documented on a monthly basis, and is the reason there is a significant amount of water being transferred to the appropriators on a five-year lag, he noted.

In response to a question from Chair Vela, Mr. Blandon explained that the concept of managed overdraft was introduced to allow the extraction of 16,000 af per year over a 10-year period. All appropriators and overlies had the right to extract a certain amount of water.

Mr. Harder pointed out that there is no operating safe yield defined in the judgment. The term is used to present the annualized safe yield.

The safe yield was recalculated in 2013 as 6,700 af, Blandon noted. The ten-year control of overdraft terminated in 2013 and is no longer available to appropriators. He pointed to significant production above the safe yield and stated that figures show the western and central portions of the basin in decline, while the eastern portion is trending up.

Additions to the Basin are the unused overlying production with a five-year lag, a temporary surplus of 16,000 af per year, contribution of imported water, and determining transfers to appropriators. On the subtraction side, there is groundwater production by appropriators. Overlying underproduction transfer by appropriators is equivalent to 5,000 to 6,000 af per year, resulting in underproduction by 69,680 af by overlies that has been transferred.

The concept of temporary surplus is defined in the judgment as the amount of groundwater that can be pumped safely in excess of the safe yield, Blandon continued. In 2003, the idea was that the appropriators would be able to pump a certain amount of water and begin a controlled overdraft of the basin to minimize basin losses. These 16,000 af were split between the various appropriators, with Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District allocated the largest percentage at 42.15 percent. The intent was to create a depression into which water from the San Timoteo wash would move into the Basin (controlled overdraft).

There is no documentation regarding how the 16,000 af was determined at the time, Blandon stated.

In response to a question from Chair Vela, Mr. Blandon explained that the amount of water moved into the depression from the San Timoteo wash has never been quantified, but through groundwater modeling, there are estimates.

The annual imported water deliveries began in 2006 when 3,500 af were spread and have continued over the years. The maximum was in 2017 when close to 50,000 af were spread, and cumulative, the contribution is 123,000 af with Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District having acquired and used 91 percent.

Water in storage consists of unused overlying production, surplus allocation, imported water, permanent transfers, and groundwater production, all of which have been documented, Blandon continued.

There was a significant rise in storage prior to 2013, then slowing. This is due to the controlled overdraft: whatever was not produced was stored. Although it was given to appropriators, this does not mean that water was created physically in the basin, but it gave the appropriators the right to produce and overdraft up to that amount, Blandon explained.

The City of Banning has the largest amount in its storage account with close to 51,000 af, followed by Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District with 40,000 af, South Mesa Water Company with 10,000, and Yucaipa Valley Water District with 16,000, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency with 500 af. The Morongo Band and the City of Beaumont also have accounts but neither have water in storage. A total of 290,000 af of storage has been allocated to the storage accounts since the inception of the judgment.

Mr. Thomas Harder continued the presentation. He reviewed change in groundwater levels over time and explained the hydrological conditions on the basin map.

In the fall of 2013, 10 years into the judgment, the northeast part of the Basin including the Noble Creek spreading basins show the recharge beginning in 2006. In 2003, water from the San Timoteo wash was already flowing into the west end basin, he said. The idea was to capture more of that water, Harder surmised.

The contrasted changes shown on the 2020 contour map include areas of mounding and pumping depressions, and trends of groundwater levels. Much of the decline is on the west and northwest sides, and on the east side, levels are rising while the south side is staying the same or having some drop.

The change in storage from 2003 to 2013 basin-wide was approximately negative 64,000 af. Between 2013 and 2020, it was 22,000 af to the positive, Harder noted, mainly due to managed recharge in the east part of the basin. Of the negative 42,000 af change in the basin from 2003 to 2020, all of it is occurring in the west side of the basin, Harder stated. Due to overdraft, storage space has been created on the west side, and it is time to put some water in the ground there, Harder recommended.

The overall change in storage from 2003 to 2020 was between negative 42,000 af and negative 59,000 af basin-wide, Harder continued. For comparison, he said, the total groundwater (usable amount of water) in storage in the basin is approximately 1.4 million af, which is a little higher than the previous estimate by Wildermuth.

Member Jaggars pointed to return flow and suggested that 2,500 af may be in transit to the basin. He also noted use for grading water and new development. Chair Vela noted these figures are through 2020.

Member Zoba indicated that the production of Yucaipa Valley Water District and South Mesa Water Company have not changed much over the period. He pointed to the water levels in the Well 29 area and asked if recharge was working. Mr. Harder noted that the west side is much

more sensitive to precipitation trends and since 2011, may have been influenced by drought. Based on this trend, and pumping in Calimesa, the water level will decrease on the west side, Zoba posited; Mr. Harder confirmed that would be the case without recharge.

Member Zoba asked about the amount of water accessible by wells today. Mr. Harder said that based on current well settings, the 1.4 million af is not entirely accessible, and noted that pumping past the usable water at the San Timoteo formation (model layer 1) would likely create some major negative effects. Zoba requested determination of the accessible water level above the bowls; Harder said it would be possible to determine using data from the appropriators' pump settings.

Jaggers pointed out some active management activity but posited that the drought has had some significant effects. The 10-year safe yield update will inform that, Harder noted.

Harder continued detailing the physical change in storage. Supplemental recharge has been a major benefit to the basin to stabilize the storage change, he stated, but there is a balance of recharge issue. Pumping in the basin has not changed very much, still approximately 15,000 af per year. Zoba acknowledged the consistency of pumping and noted that the change in storage plummeted. Harder said that was because there was no recharge occurring between 2003 and 2006, then took a while to ramp up, and it takes a while for that water to manifest in groundwater levels.

In terms of management of the basin, and the negative change in storage at 60,000 af, Zoba noted that to return to the zero point would cost around \$20 million and there is probably not enough State Project Water. Harder agreed and indicated that the Committee must make the decision as to significance in the overdraft, i.e., are there undesirable results due to the overdraft, should the overage be partially filled, or other option. He noted that there may be legal obligations to fill the hole. He discussed options from a physical operational standpoint and suggested there is more analysis to be done.

Jaggers pointed to a more sophisticated model to examine data such as return flows and precipitation. He discussed the basin imbalance and needs to be determined. Harder noted the language in the judgment regarding waste of water is subjective. Chair Vela added that it appears there needs to be some true up of the storage accounts related to the basin losses and previous analysis.

Harder showed a graph depicting increases in storage accounts, with physical groundwater storage decreasing. In 2013, there was approximately 130,000 af (close to the 160,000), but by 2020 it was 180,000 af. There are additional things not being accounted for, Harder

explained, such as precipitation and drought. He noted that unpumped overlie water is being added to accounts although the safe yield is lower than that would indicate, and there are losses occurring in the basin, which increase with additional recharge. Those components can be identified, then the Committee can decide what to do, he stated.

In response to Chair Vela, Mr. Harder indicated that, ideally, the storage accounts would be tied to physical water, but that is not the case. The 160,000 was more of a controlled overdraft deficit. He pointed to the comparison of the storage accounts with the physical storage and indicated that something needs to be done about it. Jagers described a component in the judgment that may have led to the 160,000 number.

Member Zoba pointed to the original concept of marketing the basin for water storage, a scheme that has since fallen apart. He suggested some change in the layout of the Comparison of Appropriator Storage Accounts and Storage Change Estimates chart and said the issue pertains to management of the basin and action to maintain the status quo.

The seriousness of the issue is a judgment call, Harder noted. Impact would be felt after pumping for three or four years, he said. Zoba added that logistically, there would be no way to refill the basin.

Harder suggested workshops to a) address the balance of recharge and discharge issue, b) look at the significance and what is to be done about it, c) examine losses. Some discussion ensued and support for the workshops was expressed.

Vela pointed to geology and suggested that impacts will not be the same across the basin. Harder emphasized support of each other's projects to bring in new water and noted that water in addition to return flow will be needed to turn around the decline.

Mr. Blandon returned to the graph. He explained that legally the Beaumont Basin is one basin, but hydrologically, the basin behaves as two separate basins. The west side has no recharge, and the east side has benefitted from all the recharge over the years, he explained. The engineers were tasked with creating a framework and identified preliminary issues: the clearly demonstrated recharge imbalance between the eastern and western portions of the basin; the storage account balances appear in conflict with evidence of the physical storage in the basin; and the current storage accounting does not account for storage losses. These need to be addressed sooner rather than later, Blandon advised.

As of now, storage accounts continue to accumulate without consideration of losses – nothing is subtracted from the account, but

potentially there could be significant losses of 15 to 20 percent, Blandon stated, and pointed out that the cost of imported water is hundreds of dollars per acre-foot. There is an imbalance, and potential for additional losses which are not being accounted for at this time, he warned.

To address the imbalance, recharge facilities need to be developed on the western portion of the basin, Blandon stated. The storage account balances are paper, rather than actuals, he said. He proposed as Task No. 2 of this Task Order, to conduct a series of workshops to begin discussion regarding what can or cannot be done, and to develop a policy to account for the storage losses.

To arrest the recharge imbalance and bring water to the western side of the basin, there is some potential for enhanced stormwater capture, spreading of imported water in existing and in new basins, and use of recycled water, Blandon offered. He detailed two areas for capture that have been identified, extension of the San Gorgonio pipeline to the State Water Project, and the location of the City of Beaumont wastewater treatment plant with the potential for recycled water. Groundwater modeling will need to be done, he advised.

Blandon suggested that workshop agenda items may include further articulation of the issues, preliminary identification and discussion of potential projects and management actions to arrest the issues including needs for individual appropriators, discussion of next steps to arrest the issues which may include further concepts, and outline of an implementation plan.

Blandon advised that the initial budget of \$10,000 for this task was underestimated and current expenditures are \$16,700, with the goal to provide a complete picture to the Committee.

In response to Member Zoba and Chair Vela, Mr. Harder further discussed safe yield. Zoba posited that a potential solution in order to keep the basin in balance, is to retain storage accounts, but limit the maximum production to the operating safe yield, to not damage anyone else. He pointed out that extraction of unused water rights results in depletion of the basin.

Jaggers suggested adding wells to the east side and moving water to the western portion of the basin, turning off the wells on the west. Long term goals would be to balance and manage the basin, and determine what water is in the return flow zone, he added.

Jaggers advocated for workshops and identified that the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency has a hydrogeologist who may be helpful. He pointed to the cumulative storage credit of 117,553 af which is the volumetric availability across the basin, but Zoba noted that if all of that were

extracted, it must be subtracted from the already negative basin storage. There is no time to fill up the basin, Zoba posited. The basin will always be depleted, it needs to be determined who will be the most impacted by the dropped water levels, he noted.

The intent is to manage to keep the basin in balance to the best of the ability of the Watermaster and there will be give and take over time, Jagers said. Who pays the price to establish the balance, Zoba continued. The transition has been made from depletion to filling to depletion, and this is a big deal, he said. He reminded the Committee that this group was established as a result of lawsuits regarding getting a fair share. The intent in 2004 was not to go negative, he stated, it was to check each other to assure all have a share of the basin and keep operating.

Jagers pointed to the Urban Water Management Plan and indicated the goal is not to deplete the basin. Zoba suggested establishing a management objective in terms of change in storage and advocated scheduling the workshops quickly. Mr. Bandon proposed the first to be held in November.

Member Hart requested further definition of the workshops to make them fruitful and to assure that allocating additional budget is necessary. Mr. Bandon provided detail on the process and emphasized that much more work is needed. Discussion ensued regarding prioritizing topics for the workshops.

Mr. Zoba suggested a water sustainability consultant and will provide a sample RFP at the next meeting. Mr. Bandon suggested quantification of losses and impacts to storage accounts.

H. Consideration of Change Order No. 1 for Task Order No. 26 for the Development of a Framework to Address Storage Accounting Issues

Recommendation: That the Watermaster Committee consider approving Change Order No. 1 to Task Order No. 26 for the sum not to exceed \$20,000 and to direct the Treasurer to invoice specific Appropriators based on anticipated benefits.

Mr. Bandon reviewed the request for change order but noted that the workshops will delay the need for this work. The initial task was to develop a framework, which is what was presented in the last agenda item, he noted. This is to facilitate further analysis and work on the issue.

The Committee discussed needs and the potential for a workshop facilitator. Mr. Eckhart requested the ability for the San Gorgonio Pass

Water Agency to participate and offered to participate financially in the workshops. Member Jorritsma welcomed the request.

It was moved by Member Jaggars and seconded by Chair Vela to approve amendment of the budget for Task 1 of Task Order No. 26 to add \$6,700. The motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES:	Hart, Jaggars, Jorritsma, Vela, Zoba
NOES:	None.
ABSTAIN:	None.
ABSENT:	None.
STATUS:	Motion Approved

VIII. Topics for Future Meetings

- a. Development of a methodology and policy to account for groundwater storage losses in the basin / Groundwater management
- b. Scope of work and Request for Proposal for a workshop facilitator / consultant
- c. Incidental discharge
- d. Effect of Court ruling on Production vs Extraction Credits
- e. Development of a recycled water policy

IX. Comments from the Watermaster Committee Members

Chair Vela recommended establishment of a Consent Calendar on the agenda.

X. Announcements

- a. The next regular meeting of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster is scheduled for Wednesday, December 1, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.
- b. Future Meeting Dates:
 - i. February 2, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.
 - ii. April 6, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.
 - iii. June 1, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.

XI. Adjournment

Chairman Vela adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

Attest:



Daniel Jagers, Secretary
Beaumont Basin Watermaster

