COUNTY OF COLUSA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION

100 Sunrise Boulevard Suite A, Colusa, CA 95932 | 530-458-0719

COLUSA COUNTY GROUNDWATER COMMISSION

Darrin Williams, Dist. 1 | Deke Dormer, Dist. 2 | Matt LaGrande, Dist. 3 | Tom Charter, Dist. 4 | Jeff Moresco, Dist. 5

Meeting Agenda

Location: **Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room**
100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932

Date: **July 11, 2018**
Time: **10:00-Noon**

* *Indicates Action Item*

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   a. Pledge of Allegiance
   b. Introductions
   c. Roll Call
   d. *Approval of Minutes from the April 4, 2018 Meeting
   e. *Acceptance of Agenda
   f. Period of Public Comment
   Any person wishing to address the Commission on any item not on today's Agenda may do so at this time. The Commission will not be making a decision or determination on items brought up during Public Comment.

2. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS** *(*action item)*
   a. Presentation/Discussion from Colusa Groundwater Authority Long-term Funding Committee Representatives regarding Landowner Participation on the Committee
   b. * Review and Adoption of Annual Statement of Goals and Objectives
   c. * Discussion and Potential Action to Support Water Storage/Shasta Dam Raise Project

3. **UPDATES AND REMINDERS**
   a. Staff Report
   b. Reminder; Commissioner Terms of Office
   c. Commissioner Comments and Updates
   d. Items for Next Agenda
      i. Review/approve year-end Groundwater Commission Update to be Presented to Board of Supervisors
      ii. Other

4. **ADJOURNMENT**
   Next Regular meeting date: **November 28, 2018**

A complete agenda packet, including back-up information, is available for inspection during normal business hours at 100 Sunrise Blvd., Suite A, Colusa, CA 95932. The full agenda packet can also be found on the Colusa County website: https://colusagroundwater.org/meetings/agendas/

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In compliance with the Americans with Disability Act, if you require special accommodation to participate in CGA Board or Subcommittee meetings, please contact the Colusa County Water Resources Division at 530-458-0719 prior to any meeting and arrangements will be made to accommodate you.

TO THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE IN COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS: California Government Code Section 84308 requires you to disclose campaign contributions to Groundwater Management Commissioners if they amount to $250 or more and were made within the last twelve months. Please announce your applicable campaign contributions when you speak. Any disabled person needing special accommodation to participate in the Commission proceeding is requested to contact the Colusa County Water Resources Division prior to meeting and arrangements will be made to accommodate you.

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Meeting Minutes

Location: **Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room**
100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932

Date: **April 4, 2018**
Time: **10:00 a.m. - Noon**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Williams opened the meeting at 10:02 a.m. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance, a Roll Call of Officers and introductions of others in attendance.

Introductions

Staff and public in attendance:
Mary Fahey, Colusa County Water Resources Manager
Tana Loudon, Colusa County Community Development Department
Tiffany Sines, Vann Brothers
Elaine Rominger, Arbuckle

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Williams, Dormer, Moresco and LaGrande(at 10:05 a.m.)
Commissioners Absent: Charter

Approval of Minutes from the October 3, 2017 Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Dormer moved to approve the October 3, 2017 Meeting minutes. Commissioner Moresco seconded. The motion passed 3-0 (2 absent).

Commissioner LaGrande arrives at 10:05 a.m.

Acceptance of Agenda

Motion: Commissioner Moresco moved to accept the agenda. Commissioner Dormer Seconded. The motion passed 4-0 (1 absent).

Period of Public Comment

Chair Williams opened the Period of Public Comment, hearing none the Period of Public Comment was closed.

Election of Officers
Motion: Commissioner Moresco moved to retain Commissioner Williams as Chair and himself as Vice Chair. Commissioner Dormer Seconded. The motion passed 4-0 (1 absent).

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Review of Groundwater Commission Bylaws
Ms. Fahey provided a general review of the bylaws. She stated that setting the quarterly meetings and review of the annual goals are both on today's agenda. She added items will be added in future agendas allowing the Commission to better receive and address groundwater concerns and issues as well as serving as a forum for presenting and discussing groundwater information for the general public.

Discussion was held regarding Reports to the Board. It was agreed upon by the Commissioners that the end of the year would be the best time for a Report to the Board.

Ms. Fahey stated she will bring a Report to the Board to the Commission for review prior to going to the Board.

Review and Adoption of Annual Statement of Goals and Objectives
Ms. Fahey stated that these were similar to the previous ones with a few edits.

Commissioner Williams referenced Goal 3 and asked Ms. Fahey what she sees happening there.

Ms. Fahey replied that SGMA (Sustainable Groundwater Management Act) is taking on a lot of what the Commission would do. The GSA (Groundwater Sustainability Agency) is doing tech studies regarding groundwater recharge.

Commissioner Williams asked if the GSA could designate certain projects to us (the Commission) to allow the two bodies to work hand in hand.

Ms. Fahey replied that they could. Public outreach is important.

Commissioner Williams stated that the Commission could vet some of these projects.

Commissioner Moresco stated that this Commission would be the oversight of areas not in the CGA.

Ms. Fahey will consolidate Goals 3 and 4 and add language regarding assisting the CGA in recharge projects or other projects that could benefit the basin.

Discussion was held regarding Goal 2 and coordination with the CGA. This discussion also included where to focus Public Outreach.

Commissioner LaGrande stated that a newsletter is a good idea. It is hard to get people to meetings especially during the busy time of the year.

Commissioner Dormer added that Social Media can reach a lot of people.

Discussion was held regarding large public meetings versus smaller meetings in each community.

Commissioner Dormer recommended partnering with the Sites Project on some outreach meetings.

Commissioner LaGrande agreed and stating it may produce better attendance.

Commissioner Dormer also suggested reaching out to the Family Water Alliance.

Ms. Fahey to add some language to Goal 2, Public Outreach.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Update
Colusa Groundwater Authority (CGA) Board Activities
HCM/Water Budget and GSP Development

Ms. Fahey stated the grant funding has come through. There is $1 million dollars for GSP development for the Colusa Basin. David's Engineering will be developing a Hydrogeologic Model and Water Budget. They will get started in the next couple months. There is a big push for public outreach for this project.

Proposed Basin Boundary Modifications, West Butte Subbasin

Ms. Fahey updated the Commissioners on the discussions surrounding basin modifications. RD 1004 wants to stay as a standalone GSA. The West Butte basin will most likely be absorbed into the East Butte basin with the western portion being pulled into the Colusa Basin.

Discussion is held regarding RD 1004 becoming a standalone GSA.

Ms. Fahey stated that the requests for basin modifications are due Jun 30, 2018.

Water Supply and Groundwater Conditions Update

Ms. Fahey gave a brief update on allocations. It was a dry year but the reservoir conditions are good. Shasta is holding water back.

Commissioner Dormer stated that we may get 100% allocations but the timing could be an issue.

Ms. Fahey stated there is concern about domestic well outages this year.

Commissioner Williams added that domestic wells didn't recover well even after a wet year and he is concerned people will get familiar with blaming ag wells as the reason. Domestic wells and ag wells are drawing at different depths.

Set Quarterly Meeting Schedule; Next Meeting Date

Discussion was held.

The next meeting dates will be:
July 11, 2018, 10:00 a.m.
November 28, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

Items for Next Agenda
1. Legislative Update
2. Resolution in support of more water storage. (Ms. Fahey to draft Resolution.)

ADJOURNMENT
Next Regular meeting date: July 11, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

CGA Long-term Funding Committee Landowner Participation Information

The Colusa Groundwater Authority (CGA) is looking for up to three landowners to participate as members of the CGA's Long-term Funding subcommittee. Specific landowners have been invited to attend the July 11, 2018 Colusa County Groundwater Commission meeting to learn about this opportunity.

The purpose for landowner participation is:

- Gain an understanding of the need for the Prop. 218 Assessment for ongoing operations of the Colusa Groundwater Authority
- Provide support, and advocate to other landowners for approval of the Assessment
- Provide Input on the Prop 218 process; including review of consultant deliverables

There is a concerning lack of knowledge among landowners in Colusa County (and throughout the State) about SGMA. The California Farm Bureau Federation states: "SGMA is the most significant change to water law in a century and will significantly impact farmers and ranchers throughout California." Yet most landowners are either unaware of SGMA, or do not have an understanding of the law.

Groundwater conditions in the Sacramento Valley are in good shape, but SGMA implementation will still require significant local resources to ensure compliance. The Colusa Groundwater Authority was formed as a multi-agency Joint Powers Authority in order to pool resources among the member agencies to keep SGMA implementation costs to a minimum. It is of upmost importance in our region to maintain SGMA compliance and avoid State intervention at all costs.

The need for the proposed Proposition 218 Assessment is simple: if the Colusa Groundwater Authority is not funded, the organization will dissolve. If the CGA dissolves, the groundwater basins in Colusa County will come under management of the State Water Resources Control Board, at a much greater cost to landowners than the Assessment, and with the potential for groundwater pumping curtailments.

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Colusa County Groundwater Commission

Annual Statement of Goals and Objectives

For the period of March 1, 2018 – February 28, 2019

Adopted by the Groundwater Commission on _____

As per Colusa County Groundwater Commission Bylaws, page 6, Annual Goals: *The Commission shall adopt a statement of goals and objectives annually, not later than March 1. Such statement may be amended no more than once each year.*

Goal 1: Comply with SGMA Regulations and Deadlines

a. The Groundwater Commission will coordinate with the Colusa Groundwater Authority (CGA) and support their activities to maintain sustainable groundwater conditions in Colusa County.

b. The Groundwater Commission will coordinate with, provide input to, and support the Colusa Groundwater Authority and other GSAs during development of Groundwater Sustainability Plans for the Colusa and West Butte Subbasins.

Goal 2: Public Outreach Program

a. The Groundwater Commission will support and participate in outreach activities to inform the public and solicit public input about groundwater conditions, and SGMA implementation activities. The Commission will coordinate with and support the Colusa Groundwater Authority's Public Outreach and Engagment Plan, and utilize all outreach options as feasible, including email, social media, mail, newspaper articles, community meetings, partnering with other local water-related organizations, and face-to-face interactions with landowners.

Goal 3: Review and Assess potential Projects in Coordination with the Colusa Groundwater Authority

b. The Groundwater Commission will assist the CGA by reviewing and making recommendations on proposed projects that could benefit the groundwater basins, including groundwater recharge projects and others.

Goal 5: Remain informed of Legislative Activities

a. Groundwater Commissioners will remain up to date on Statewide Groundwater legislative activities and report relevant information at Groundwater Commission meetings.

b. A presentation on current legislative activities will be given to the Groundwater Commission each year by an expert speaker at one regular meeting.

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~~a.~~c.

d. Goal 3: Review and Assess potential Projects in Coordination with the Colusa Groundwater Authority

e. The Groundwater Commission will assist the CGA by reviewing and making recommendations on proposed projects that could benefit the groundwater basins, including groundwater recharge projects and others.

~~**b. Goal 3: Seek Funding for Projects**~~

~~a. Staff and Groundwater Commission members will seek to partner with other agencies to pursue funding opportunities for projects and studies to enhance groundwater management activities in Colusa County.~~

~~**Goal 4: Promote Groundwater Recharge Projects**~~

~~a. Seek funding and partners to initiate groundwater recharge studies and pilot projects in Colusa County.~~

Goal 5: Remain informed of Legislative Activities

a. Groundwater Commission ~~member~~sers will remain up to date on Statewide Groundwater legislative activities and report relevant information at Groundwater Commission meetings.

b. A presentation on current legislative activities will be given to the Groundwater Commission each year by an expert speaker at one regular meeting. ~~of the Groundwater Commission.~~

May 30, 2018 Water Deeply

https://www.newsdeeply.com/water/articles/2018/05/30/feds-push-to-raise-shasta-dam-but-would-it-ease-california-water-woes

Feds Push to Raise Shasta Dam, but Would It Ease California Water Woes?

California's largest reservoir may get even bigger, despite opposition from the state. Some welcome the opportunity to store more water, but others are skeptical it could significantly ease competing demands for limited water and aid fish.

Officials with the federal government seem determined to realize a controversial proposal to raise Shasta Dam and increase the storage capacity of the reservoir behind it – despite objections from fish and wildlife agencies and California law that technically forbids such a project. In January, the United States Bureau of Reclamation, which manages the dam, received a $20 million appropriation from Congress to begin design and preconstruction work – and, with the support of water agencies in the San Joaquin Valley, the bureau has announced plans to begin construction as early as the end of 2019.

The project, discussed informally for decades, calls for adding 18.5ft of steel and cement to the rim of the dam. This would add 634,000 acre-feet of extra storage space to Lake Shasta, already California's largest reservoir. Agricultural interests tend to be in favor the project, while environmentalists, tribes and groups dedicated to protecting fish – especially salmon – generally oppose the idea. Several agencies that manage fish, wildlife and water in California have advised against heightening the dam, and opponents are concerned that the proposal could help mobilize a trend of federal agencies and Washington lawmakers overriding or just ignoring state environmental laws.

Making Shasta Dam higher as planned would cause a large area of Lake Shasta's shoreline to flood in wet years, including nearly a mile of the McCloud River. This Lake Shasta tributary – once a prolific Chinook salmon stream that flowed into the Sacramento River – is strictly protected under the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

In a March 2018 letter, John Laird, the secretary for the California Natural Resources Agency, asked members of Congress to "not pursue the Shasta Dam enlargement project," primarily because heightening the dam would violate the McCloud's Wild and Scenic protections.

But the feds don't seem to be listening.

"Congress hasn't yet given permission [to the Bureau of Reclamation] to waive the state law, but they did give them 20 million bucks," said Ron Stork, senior policy advocate with the Sacramento-based group Friends of the River. Stork said the current presidential administration and the Republican-dominated Congress, recognizing the potential for Democrats to take back control of Washington, may take action to break ground on the project while they can, regardless of California law.

“Republicans may be concerned that this could be their last year for some time with a majority, so they need to strike now,” he said.

A state law that protects a river doesn’t mean it won’t be sacrificed for a large water project. When conflicts arise that pit federal laws against state laws, the federal laws usually win, said Doug Obegi, a water law attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council. With water projects, though, it isn’t always that simple. The Reclamation Act of 1902, Obegi noted, basically requires the Bureau of Reclamation to abide by state laws when building infrastructure projects. The Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016 also requires that water projects abide by state laws. It is this very law, though, that has been used to allocate the cash for the design and preconstruction of the project, illustrating inconsistencies in how and when Congress obeys laws – even federal ones.

For lawmakers in Washington to override an iconic state law like California’s Wild and Scenic Rivers Act “would amount to breaking a line most congressmen have been reluctant to cross, but this is a fairly bold administration and a fairly bold Congress,” Stork said.

Officials have estimated that adding 18.5 vertical feet to Shasta Dam will cost $1.3 billion. Westlands Water District, a large agricultural region in the western San Joaquin Valley highly dependent on water allocated by the Bureau of Reclamation, seems to be counting on the dam being heightened. More than a decade ago, Westlands spent $35 million purchasing about 3,000 acres of land in the McCloud basin that would be flooded by the project.

This, the district’s managers explained at the time, was intended to ease or eliminate the potential for local objection to the project. The land includes area held sacred by the Winnemem Wintu Tribe, which has argued against raising Shasta Dam. A former attorney for Westlands Water District, David Bernhardt, is now the U.S. deputy secretary of the interior – a connection that Obegi, Stork and others have suggested could unfairly steer the outcome of the Shasta Dam project.

Cannon Michael, chairman of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, which serves 29 member agencies that receive water via the Bureau of Reclamation’s Central Valley Project, said the extra water storage that would result from the dam boost could help alleviate current strains on the water supply of California, where native fish populations teeter on the brink of extinction and farmers remain perennially unsatisfied with their own water allocations.

“Six-hundred and fifty thousand acre-feet of extra water is not something that should be dismissed out of hand,” Michael said. “We would still need to discuss the best way to use the extra water, but I think it’s likely the benefits can potentially outweigh the tradeoffs.”

But state and federal fishery officials determined the opposite in their analyses of the project. Increasing the height of Shasta Dam “would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to fish … while providing limited contributions to additional water supply,” wrote Neil Manji, the regional manager of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in a 2013 letter addressed to the Bureau of Reclamation. The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service came to a similar conclusion, described in a 349-page report published in 2014. The agency said it had concluded “the proposed action, by further restricting high water flows, will result in additional losses of salmonid rearing and riparian habitat.”

Still, the Bureau of Reclamation has assumed the project will be, overall, good for salmon. In a 2015 feasibility report, the agency assigned taxpayers to cover just shy of 50 percent of the cost of the dam raise because the project will ostensibly benefit fish.

Erin Curtis, a spokesperson with the agency, noted that, in the 1980s, officials briefly discussed an idea to raise the dam by 200 feet.

“There was a lot of opposition to a dam raise of that magnitude,” she said. “The project being pursued today is a much-scaled-back version.”

She called the current plan “more strategic” and said it “will improve water supply reliability for agricultural, municipal and industrial, hydropower generation, and environmental uses; reduce flood damage; and improve cold-water temperatures and water quality in the Sacramento River below the dam for anadromous fish survival.”

Michael said that the last drought lucidly illustrated the need for having more storage space – or at least more water – in Lake Shasta. He noted that the Bureau of Reclamation kept more water than necessary impounded behind the dam and “basically treated the reservoir as a cold-water storage pool for fish.” If this was the agency’s strategy, it didn’t work. Nearly all the salmon eggs laid and fertilized downstream of Shasta Dam in the summers of 2014 and 2015 died in released lake water that was too warm.

If the dam is raised, uncertainties will remain about how water is used and who or what will see benefits. For one thing, the project will not create more precipitation, and to fill a larger reservoir will mean holding back more water, or doing so for longer periods of time, instead of allowing that water to flow downstream. This can directly harm fish and aquatic habitat. The project will not necessarily resolve disagreements between user groups over how to handle the reservoir’s water when supplies run low during a drought.

“Having a bigger reservoir doesn’t make the way we use water more sustainable,” said Jon Rosenfield, a biologist and California water policy expert with the Bay Institute. “The pattern of California water use has been to use more water than we have.”

“Just raising the dam doesn’t make more water,” he added. “It could create more water in the reservoir, but only if you don’t use it.”

Name	District	Term
Darrin Williams	1	6/13/2017-12/31/2018
Deke Dormer	2	6/13/2017-12/31/2020
Matt LaGrande	3	6/13/2017-12/31/2020
Tom Charter	4	6/13/2017-12/31/2020
Jeff Moresco	5	6/13/2017-12/31/2018