

FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

A State of California Water Agency



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eugene F. West, Chair, *Director, Camrosa Water District*
David Borchard, Vice Chair, *Farmer, Agricultural Representative*
Lynn Maulhardt, *Director, United Water Conservation District*
Bert Perello, *Councilperson, City of Oxnard*
Carmen Ramirez, *Supervisor, County of Ventura*

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Jeff Pratt, P.E.

NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) will hold an **Operations Committee Meeting** at **2:00 p.m. on Monday, August 1, 2022**, in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Ventura County Government Center, Hall of Administration, 3rd Floor, at **800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, California**.

FCGMA OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

August 1, 2022

Members: Chair Carmen Ramirez
Co-Chair Lynn Maulhardt

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Introductions**
- C. Public Comment** – Audience members may speak about FCGMA-related matters not on today's Agenda.
- D. Approval of Minutes** - May 2, 2022
- E. Water Supply and Infrastructure Projects** – Develop recommendations for Board consideration of criteria, guidelines, policies, and procedures to evaluate and rank water-supply and infrastructure projects for prioritization for funding and inclusion in the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (continued from May 2, 2022, meeting).
- F. Adjourn Operations Committee**

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MINUTES

Minutes of the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency's (FCGMA) Operations Committee Special meeting held **Monday, May 2, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.** in the Atlantic Conference Room at the Ventura County Government Center, Hall of Administration, 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura California.

Members: Chair Carmen Ramirez
Vice Chair Lynn Maulhardt

A. Call to Order / Introductions

Chair Ramirez called the meeting to order at 2:11 p.m.

B. Introductions:

In attendance were: (1) Carmen Ramirez, FCGMA Operations Committee Chair; (2) Lynn Maulhardt, FCGMA Operations Committee Vice Chair; (3) Arne Anselm, WPD, Deputy Director; (4) Kim Loeb, FCGMA, Groundwater Manager; (5) Keely Royas, FCGMA Clerk of the Board; (6) Jason Canger, Assistant County Counsel; (7) Jennifer Tribo, City of Ventura; (8) Shiri Klima, City of Oxnard; (9) Joseph Marcinko, City of Oxnard; (10) John Lindquist, United Water Conservation District (UWCD); (11) Sam Collie, OPV Coalition; (12) Jurgen Gramckow, Southland Sod; (13) Omar Castro, City of Oxnard.

B. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

D. Water Supply and Infrastructure Projects

Kim Loeb presented background information, the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) project selection process, Department of Water Resources (DWR) scoring criteria for project grant funding, and the goals, guidelines and policies for establishing a Capital Improvement Projects List.

The Committee discussed the criteria from DWR on whether the Agency would be considered for Round 2 Grant funding.

Vice Chair Maulhardt stated that the DWR criteria might change and he asked what the criteria methodology that the Agency will use to push projects through for state review. He said that the Agency criteria and DWR's criteria should mimic each other.

Mr. Loeb said that while grant funding is very helpful and the Agency will be very aggressive in applying for grant funding, it won't be enough and that local funding will be needed.

Chair Ramirez stated that projects need to be feasible, with assurance they will not be harmful to the aquifer and neighbors.

Mr. Loeb stated that stakeholders are looking for the best cost/benefit. Additionally, he said that projects don't exist in a vacuum, some projects rely on each other, and some are exclusive alternatives.

The Committee discussed the agenda for the next meeting. Vice Chair Maulhardt requested that for the next meeting, staff memorialize the process used by FCGMA to adopt projects onto the list for the GSPs. Next, the Committee should review and revise the criteria and work to develop a revised checklist that incorporates the DWR grant criteria as well. He also said that he is concerned with some entities who may be cheating the system and the Agency needs to revisit how we track well systems from pump head to meter. It was agreed that this issue needs to come to the full Board first. The Committee set the next meeting date for June 6, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.

E. Adjourn Operations Committee Special Meeting

Chair Ramirez adjourned the Operations Committee meeting at 3:25 p.m.

FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY



MEMORANDUM

Date: August 1, 2022
To: Operations Committee
From: Kim Loeb, Groundwater Manager *KL*
Subject: Item E – Water Supply and Infrastructure Projects

Background

The FCGMA Board tasked the Operations Committee to develop recommendations for the criteria, guidelines, and policies for vetting, adding, and prioritizing projects to be considered for funding and implementation. The Committee met on May 2, 2022, to begin this process. The Committee reviewed FCGMA's past processes to select projects for inclusion in the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). The Committee reviewed the process conducted by the Committee in 2018 including the criteria for project evaluation and the checklist used for submittal by project proponents. Additionally, the Committee reviewed Department of Water Resources' (DWR's) 2021 evaluation criteria for application of Round 1 Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) grant funds and the process by which these projects were selected. At the May 2nd meeting, the Committee said it wanted to review the previous GSP checklist in more detail and to revise it to include the DWR grant criteria.

Criteria, Guidelines, and Policies

Before beginning revision of the checklist, staff recommends the Committee first prepare recommendations to the Board for its adoption of criteria, guidelines, and policies that will be used to prioritize projects for funding and inclusion in future GSP amendments.

While grant funding is important and staff will continue to aggressively pursue grants, it will not be nearly enough funding to implement the hundreds of millions of dollars needed for projects currently under consideration. Much of this funding will need to be collected from pumpers through fees. Other agencies may be able to fund, or partially fund, projects as well. The amount of funding that can be collected through fees may not be enough to fund all desired projects. Additionally, some projects rely on each other, and other projects may be mutually exclusive. Prioritization of projects that provide the greatest benefits for the cost will help to assure the Agency' meets its fiduciary responsibilities.

In addition to the question of funding, inclusion of a project in the GSP is a commitment to stakeholders and the State that the project will be constructed and online by the 2040 SGMA deadline to bring the basins into sustainable groundwater management if the project is to be relied upon for the sustainable yield target. Failure to implement a project by 2040 likely will mean that the Agency will need to reduce extractions to achieve sustainable management until the project comes online. Prioritization of projects by likelihood of success will help to assure the Agency's stewardship responsibilities.

In light of the above discussion, staff recommends the Committee consider the following criteria for the project prioritization policies or guidelines that it recommends to the Board (not inclusive or in a particular order):

- Cost / benefit in acre-feet (AF) of increased sustainable yield or supplemental water produced, both capital cost and ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) costs
- Likelihood of success versus uncertainty and risk
 - Whether and what level of environmental review (NEPA/CEQA) will be needed for the project. Whether that environmental review is complete.
 - What permits and regulatory approvals will be needed for the project's construction and ongoing operation. Whether those permits or approvals have been obtained.

- Stakeholder support for a given project and the fees necessary for its construction and operation
- Reliance on, or nexus to, other projects and the likelihood that those projects will be implemented
- Life expectancy of project
- Impacts or benefits to adjacent basins
- Effects on disadvantaged or under-represented communities
- Sufficiency of project documentation such as completed feasibility studies, engineering design, CEQA documentation, etc.

GSP Project Selection

At its May 2, 2022 meeting, the Committee also requested to continue reviewing the criteria used for to select projects for inclusion in the GSPs. For inclusion, projects needed to meet the checklist feasibility requirements in GSP Emergency Regulations Subarticle 5, which are summarized in the following list:

- Circumstances under which the project will be implemented (implementation trigger, if applicable)
- Description of public notice process
- Summary of permitting and regulatory requirements
- Status and implementation timetable
- Expectation and evaluation of benefits
- Explanation of how project will be accomplished (e.g., reliance on other jurisdictions)
- Legal authority
- Estimated cost and description of funding plan
- Uncertainty assessment

The criteria developed by the Operations Committee process in 2018 resulted in a project evaluation checklist for project proponents to submit. The checklist criteria included:

1. Sufficient project information is available for evaluation and modeling
2. Project increases sustainable yield, or reduces groundwater demand
3. Project implementation is planned within 20 years
4. Meets the GSP Emergency Regulations project criteria
5. There is a sponsoring agency for the project
6. Funding for the project is identified

The 2018 “GSP Project Evaluation Checklist” is attached as Item E-1.

Next Steps

Staff recommends the Committee direct staff to prepare draft policies and guidelines with criteria and processes, based on the Committee’s recommendations, for the evaluation of projects for FCGMA funding and inclusion in future GSP amendments for consideration at the next Committee meeting; schedule a future meeting for the Committee to review the draft policies and guidelines and discuss the preparation of its recommendation to the FCGMA Board; and provide any further direction to staff regarding next steps.

Attachments: Item E-1 – GSP Project Evaluation Checklist

**Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency
GSP Project Evaluation Checklist**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Name _____

Description _____

Purpose of Project _____
 Water supply, infrastructure, water quality, etc.

Implementation Trigger (if applicable) _____

Groundwater Basin _____

Location _____

Sponsoring Agency _____

EVALUATION CRITERIA	REVIEW
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Sustainable Yield	
Annual increase in Sustainable Yield (AF/year)	
Sustainability indicators addressed (sub component of increase in SY)	
Project has benefit in impacted area of basin	Yes / No
Technical	
Construction feasibility	Yes / No
Appropriateness of location	Yes / No
Ability to accomplish purpose	Yes / No
Life expectancy of project (for 50-year sustainable management modeling)	
Level of uncertainty	High / Med / Low
Environmental	
CEQA/NEPA type and status (timing)	
Will project likely be permitted? / Consistent with environmental regs	Yes / No
Sensitivity of location	
Political	
Consistent with adopted jurisdictional plans	Yes / No
Consistent with planning agency regulations	Yes / No
Stakeholder support	Yes / No
Permitting	
Permits required	
Status / time required	
Likelihood of project being permitted	High / Med / Low
Construction	
Time table to implement	
Operation and Maintenance	
Description	
Funding	
Total capital cost	
Capital cost per AF/year produced	
Annual cost	
Annual O&M cost per AF	
Funding source(s) - credible funding source	
Likelihood of project being funded	High / Med / Low
Timeline to secure funding	
Project Status	
Estimated Time to Project Completion	