



# **Regional Water Management Group**

LOCATION: Online (ZOOM)

## **MINUTES**

Monday, July 27, 2020 1:30 pm

### **1. The meeting was called to order at 1:34 pm, by Tom Wheeler, chairman.**

Those present included:

Tom Wheeler – Madera County BOS  
Carl Janzen – MID  
Al Solis – SEMCU  
Jeannie Habben – Madera County  
Stephanie Anagnoson – Madera County  
Kristi Robinson – Water Wise/Triangle T  
Robert Macaulay – Madera BOS Staff  
Jacob Roberson – RWMG Coordinator  
Jason Rogers – City of Chowchilla  
Keith Helmuth – City of Madera  
Angela Islas – SHE  
Dina Nolan – Madera Irrigation District  
Eddie Mendez – Madera Public Works

Eddie Campo – SHE  
Phil Janzen – MWD/MAWA  
Jack Rice – MAWA  
Patrick Konersman – Penny Newman  
Matthew Nicoletti – Penny Newman  
Igal Treibatch – SEMCU  
Mark Hutson – Local Farmer  
Steve Haze – Southern Sierra RWMG  
Julie Konno – CRC&D  
Brandon Tomlinson – CWD  
Gretchen Heisdorf – Provost & Pritchard  
Loraine Goodwin – Local Resident  
Dennis (no last name given)

### **2. Review & Approval - Agenda & Minutes**

- A motion to approve the July agenda after adding items 8a and 8b below was made by Carl J; Jason R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to approve the June minutes was made by Carl J; Igal T second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Public Comment**

- Steve H introduced himself as being with the Southern Sierra Regional Water Management Group as well as one of the Watershed Coordinators for the Southern Sierra Forest Health Watershed Program. There is an overlap with the Madera RWMG and the Southern Sierra RWMG. There has been a MOU between the two groups. There is now funding under Proposition 1 and will be other opportunities. Steve H wanted to reach out to the Madera RWMG and also met with Jacob R last week to see what deliverables there are in the EOC and how we can work together in the Mountain County Funding Area. Steve H wanted to re-establish the relationship between the two groups, make himself available, and welcome the opportunity of collaboration on future funding opportunities. Steve H would like to go into more detail about this.
  - Tom W mentioned we will have to go into more detail at another meeting. Anyone looking to get ahold of Steve H can get his contact information from Jacob R or Jeannie H.
- Jeannie H mentioned that on July 8<sup>th</sup>, Jeannie did a presentation about IRWMP and Madera RWMG to MAWA. Jeannie also did a presentation on July 11<sup>th</sup> about the Madera RWMG to the SHE leadership group. During the SHE leadership group meeting, Stephanie A also did a presentation for SGMA.
- Jacob R went over a couple of items for interest:
  - There are a couple of grant opportunities out there.
  - New website portal for all state grants ([grants.ca.gov](https://grants.ca.gov)).

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **4. Discussion and Action - Financial Report/Warrant Approvals**

- Carl J commented on the report, saying it shows what we have in so far. Everyone has paid up to this date. We spent \$21,000 in the last pay period, and we have \$32,169 in the account at this time.
- Move to accept the financial report by Carl J; Jason R second; all voted; motion passed unanimously.

### **5. Discussion – Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding**

- Mountain Counties
  - Julie K updated that the project is moving right along. The tank's installed, the pump booster is in, all of the hardware work is done. All that is left to do is to build the shelter. Bids for the shelter are coming in a little higher than what was originally expected but there is money left over from the actual pump work. Julie has a meeting later today or tomorrow about moving numbers on the budget around. Julie also built in a \$5,000 contingency line item just in case this happened. One thing that changed with the SOW is the size of the tank. We originally said we would install a 12,000-gallon tank, but after Jason did the work with the actual mechanics of the system, he felt we should go with a 5,000-gallon tank since he was able to make a repair to an existing tank. So, there will be a total of 15,000 gallons that will be able to be constantly filled so that is what needs to be revised on the SOW. Not sure how long the shelter will take to construct but we will have it done before the original December deadline which is being extended due to COVID anyway.
    - Tom W got the cement donated for the water tank pad from Curtis. Julie to write him a thank you letter and include the Madera RWMG logo.
      - Jeannie H mentioned to have a signature line for both the Coarsegold RCD and the Madera RWMG. Tom agreed. Tom asked Julie to send the letter to him or Bobby when it is done so it can have Tom's signature for the Madera RWMG.
      - Jacob will send Julie the logo for the Madera RWMG
    - Julie has a lot of pictures of this project and is wondering if the group would like to have them. Julie will send them to Jacob R
      - Jacob R mentioned that at the last meeting for the Roundtable of Regions, pictures and success stories to go along with the pictures.
        - This is a great success story. Had cement donated to help stretch the funds received to go further and the project was completed during a pandemic, and it was still completed early.
- San Joaquin Valley Counties
  - Jeannie H commented that there were some funds leftover from our Prop 1 DACI project, so we have applied to receive those funds and the extension. We received both. It was interesting how they decided to give the funds to us. We won't see the actual funding, but we will get the work done. Project 9 will be getting the work done, and the funds will be going to Self Help Enterprises who will be doing the work for Project 9 which is for Madera County. The work will include more meter testing, more for quality and quantity at more houses for free and working with them on their quality of water. We won't see the actual dollars because they are putting the dollars in to projects 12 and 13, but we are getting the work. SHE will need to work with Contra Costa because they are doing projects 12 and 13. SHE will need to bill Contra Costa for work completed for the

Madera County project. The additional funds come to \$152,400. For Project 9, we have paid all invoices through January 31, 2020 now. The rest that has not been paid has been invoiced, so we are all caught up.

- Eddie C mentioned that essentially the administrator is going to be East Contra Costa County Water District and they will be the ones to bill DWR and they will pass it on to us. Eddie is excited about this effort on the water quality testing side because there is a possibility to leverage this with other efforts in the region to fill some of the data gaps that exist in the water quality records for Madera County, particularly in the Chowchilla region. Through CV Salts they will be looking in to doing water quality testing as well as other contaminants. Leveraging these two together will allow us to have more of a background on the region's water quality situation overall.
- Eddie C commented on the translation request made by a participant at SHE's July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. If we have in the past had Spanish speaking community members try to attend Madera RWMG meetings, then that is probably why the request for translation was made for this particular group at the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Tom W mentioned we can have this as an agenda item at a future meeting. Eddie agreed

## **6. Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Funding**

- Mountain Counties and San Joaquin Valley Counties
  - Eddie M commented that the award notification letters were received earlier this month for all of the projects in the mountain funding area and the San Joaquin funding area. They are working on getting the requirements in place in order to be able to start executing the grant (acceptance letter, etc.). One thing that needs to be brought to the attention of the board of supervisors for Madera County is that the County Official who was authorized in the original set of resolutions for the grant to complete requirements to execute the grant was the Director for Public Works which is an office that is not currently filled. Eddie is working on a legal counsel to get a new County Official in place because the DWR does require that whoever was listed in the previous set of resolutions be the one who authorizes and executes the agreements moving forward and there wasn't a designee appointed before that office was vacated. Eddie is coordinating with DWR and let them know about the situation right away due to requirement deadlines in order to execute the agreement. DWR is working with Eddie on those deadlines. Eddie has the new set of resolutions ready to submit to DWR so the board letter is being prepared this week so it can get on the meeting agenda for the August 18<sup>th</sup> board meeting. Right now, the resolutions are set to have the County Chief Administrator Officer and the Chief of Development Services under as designees being the new appointed officials so either office can sign.
    - Tom W asked if Eddie could get it on the agenda for the board meeting sooner. Eddie said he could. Tom asked Eddie to get with Bobby M and let the board know it is an emergency and would like to get it on the agenda for the first meeting in August if possible. Eddie will work with his supervisor on getting the resolutions reviewed and submitted as soon as possible.
  - Eddie is working with the City and the County on agreements so we can get the interchange of funds sorted out since the County will be receiving all of the funds.
    - Tom W asked Eddie when he thinks is the earliest the project for Indian Lakes can get started. Eddie estimated sometime in late September or early October.

## 7. Call for Projects

- Jacob R mentioned that there are a few changes/updates for the list. Keith H had an update for the list regarding project #28 and the estimated cost. Keith is estimating the cost for the project to be \$1,531,000. Keith added that all they are requesting is for the cost estimate to be updated on the project list.
  - Jeannie H mention MID had asked why they were listed on projects #28 and #31. Keith H mentioned MID was originally included because they are abandoning one of their lines along Sunset Road. With the abandonment of that line, the City will have to either take maintenance of that line or have an alternative to the drainage. The City is trying to limit the amount of water that is sent down that line since it is full of roots. It does not need to say MID; we can remove them from it.
    - This question came from Dina N from MID and she confirmed that they were just looking for clarification about the projects. MID is fine with the projects being done as a City project.
    - A motion to approve the cost estimate to project #28 and remove MID from project #28 was made by Keith H; Stephanie A second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- Dina N mentioned MID was looking for more information about project #31 since they are listed on that project as well. Wondering if it's a joint MID and County project or just a County project.
  - Stephanie A mentioned that the project form for this will need to be pulled to find out more information. Looks like it could have been a Public Works Department project. We will pull the project form and get back to MID with more information.
    - Tom W said to leave project #31 as it is for now until more information can be found.
- Jacob R mentioned that MID also had a question about projects #87, #88, and #89. MID had mentioned that they need to be removed from those projects.
  - Dina N commented that MID needs to be removed because the projects are occurring outside of the Madera subbasin
    - Brandon T has no issue with removing MID from these three projects. Brandon is not real familiar with the projects and will need to pull the forms for more information if needed.
  - Jeannie H mentioned these projects are listed as conceptual on the project list so she doubts there are any project forms for these three projects. If Brandon is OK with removing MID, it would be OK to vote on right now. This idea worked with both Dina and Brandon.
  - A motion to approve was made by Carl J; Jason R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
- Jacob R commented that 8 project proposals were received since the meeting held in June. Four for Chowchilla WD, two for Madera County, one for Penny Newman Grain Co., and one for Triangle T WD.
  - Penny Newman has two reps at today's meeting to talk about their project. Patrick K and Matthew N introduced themselves. Several years ago, Penny Newman started developing and marketing soil amendments to the agricultural market. The initial focus of the flagship product was mitigating salinity issues that we have as well as the water efficiency issues. Patrick and another colleague identified a new and unique application of our flagship amendment to increase infiltration rates in recharge basins to help bank water and mitigate loss due to evaporation. We have been running observational trials ourselves in which we have gone to different irrigation districts and asked them for a basin site where infiltration rates have been struggling. Lakeside irrigation district had one site in particular where we did a topical application on about 5-acre feet of water that had been standing for several months. After one day, the water had dropped

about 14-inches. Salts, nitrates, and other contaminants can be broken down as well with the application of our product. For our proposed project, we are looking to plant safflower initially in various basins since it has a deep tap root to help increase and maintain infiltration and apply our product once water is introduced to the basins. We believe in doing so that infiltration rates will be increased by over 50% and also break down nitrates along with other contaminants. We can use lysimeters and groundwater monitoring wells to collect data, along with working with research partners to help legitimize what we are doing.

- Igal T has asked Jacob R to send him the contact information for the Penny Newman reps at today's meeting so he can talk to them more about their product.
- For the other 7 project proposals, Jacob R asked the group the procedure they would like to have in place to review project proposals. Currently what is in place was written 10 years ago and with all the SGMA projects that are going to be coming in, Jacob does not think that it will work anymore. Jacob pulled up what was currently in the bylaws for the participants to see.
  - Tom W asked Jacob to send the bylaws about project proposals to the members of the group to review so it can be voted on during the meeting in August. Tom also asked for the project proposals to be sent to the group at least one week prior to meetings so they can be reviewed prior to discussion.
    - Everyone agreed with this

#### **8a. \*ADDED AGENDA ITEM\* Spanish translation for Madera RWMG meetings**

- Stephanie A mentioned that at the Self Help Leadership Institute workshop on July 11<sup>th</sup>, someone requested Spanish translation at the Madera RWMG meetings and asked why we didn't have the meetings translated. The Madera Subbasin had pretty much everything translated into Spanish for a few years. Stephanie did get a quote for translation at the Madera RWMG meetings being on Zoom and scheduled for 2-hours. The cost for that is \$225 per meeting for online translation.
  - Tom W asked how the translation is done through Zoom. Stephanie mentioned that Zoom has a translation option. One option would be for English and the other would be for Spanish in the form of "channels" at the bottom of the screen. The translation only works using computer audio. If you are using the phone, it won't work.
  - Stephanie and Tom both mentioned that a translation request for the group's meetings has never been made in the past. Tom also mentioned that for the cost for translation, he wonders if any money from other organizations like SHE is available to help cover the cost.
  - Angela I mentioned that with the leadership institute, they have seen a lot of passion through the Madera cohort. They are really interested in getting involved in the conversation of regional water management and SGMA. They are beginning to see how they can help out their communities, including community members from La Vina and Parksdale. They did mention that they would like to participate in Madera RWMG meetings but asked if Spanish translation is available. We did make it clear that translation has not been available because we have not seen any Spanish speakers attend the meetings to require translation.
    - Tom W said the only way the group would provide translation is if we know we have Spanish speakers coming to the meeting ahead of time. We would need 5 or 6 Spanish speakers at the meeting to spend the \$225 on translation; it would not be feasible to spend the \$225 if only one person needs translation. Angela will interview members of the Madera

cohort to get a count on how many would be interested in attending the meetings if translation was made available. Tom W mentioned that if the leadership council really wanted to attend the meetings then maybe they could join the group and those funds could help pay for translation too.

- Igal T commented that if the community members are bilingual, then they will not need translation. That is something that needs to be observed too. Angela said they ask cohort members if they are bilingual as part of the program.
- Eddie C mentioned that some funding for translation may be available through the foundation. Angela and Eddie will talk more about this outside of this meeting.

#### **8b. \*ADDED AGENDA ITEM\* Domestic wells as an ongoing agenda item for discussion**

- Stephanie A proposed to the group to have a standing agenda item that talks through domestic wells and their issues both in the subbasins and in the foothills. We do have a Prop 68 grant in the Chowchilla Subbasin to do a domestic well inventory and we can report out here. We are also getting the same grant in the Madera Subbasin so can we can report out on that here as well. GSAs could talk through what domestic well mitigation could or could not look like under this item. This item may work well in this group.
  - Tom W thinks this is a very important topic for the group to stay up to date on. Carl J agrees with Tom, saying this is a topic that is not going to go away and we should have a place to talk about it on the agenda. Jason R agrees as well.
  - A motion to approve was made by Jason R; Carl J second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **9. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act – SGMA – Report**

- Stephanie commented that progress is being made in both subbasins. The Chowchilla Subbasin is working on getting GSP projects in to the IRWMP and so is the Madera Subbasin. Both groups are working on a data management system. In the County GSA, we are talking about allocations in terms of land use and changes over time. The advisory committee as well as the board of supervisors and boards of directors for the GSAs are going to take a look at what an allocation might look like over the next couple of months.

#### **10. Implementation Grant Project Updates – Report**

- Round 1 – Arundo/Sediment Removal Project
  - Jeannie H mentioned that we have received the extension to move this project along. This is extension #6 and will most likely be the last one that we get. The work has to be done by December 31, 2020 so that the reporting can be done by March 30, 2021 which is where the extension ends. We still have sediment removal available as long as there is no water in the channels. Once irrigation is finished, we will have the sediment available again (probably sometime in September/October/November).
    - Tom W asked if we could advertise the sediment being available as well as the permit to use.
    - Igal T mentioned that he has tried to make arrangements to pick up about 50 loads of sand but there is no equipment and people to load at the site if Igal sends trucks. We need to make a schedule for trucks to pick up the sand and there needs to be equipment as well as laborers to load it. All is needed is one person and one piece of equipment to be able to load trucks.

- Tom W mentioned that the county has some big loaders to help. Tom W asked Eddie M to check with the road department to see if we could use a loader for like a month. Maybe advertise that every Monday and Wednesday or for a whole week that the loader will be out there to help load trucks.
  - Stephanie A commented that arrangements have been made with Public Works to remove some sediment. We are just waiting for the water to stop running and for the channels to dry out a little bit. Chowchilla WD potentially can take some and we have worked with some local sand companies as well. Jeannie was leading this grant and has had tons of sand removed in the last year. This fall is the last opportunity to remove sediment under this grant once it dries out.
- Igal T asked if there is a makeup of the sediment available and Tom W said no because we are not going to spend the money on that testing to be done. Tom said it has sand, topsoil, and a little bit of everything in it. Igal asked if it could be used for road cover and Stephanie A mentioned a lot of people have been using the sediment for that purpose.

#### **11. New/ Suggested Members for the Madera RWMG**

- Jacob R mentioned that MAWA has signed the MOU and also provided a signed resolution letter. Phil Janzen will be the representative for MAWA. Both Jack Rice and Phil Janzen are on today's call. Jeannie H commented that they would like to be a member and have filled out and submitted all of the required documents. They will be a paying member if they are voted in today.
  - Jack Rice introduce himself and what MAWA looks to achieve for their members. The board is interested in joining and participating with the Madera RWMG. This is a great place to work on many of the projects that we need to do.
  - A motion to accept MAWA as a member was made by Stephanie A; Igal T second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.
    - Tom W welcomed MAWA as a member to the group.
    - Carl J asked how much to charge them for membership for the rest of the year. Jeannie H said it would be pro-rated. Carl asked Jacob R to send MAWA's billing information, signed MOU and signed resolution letter to Jennifer at MID.
- Mark H recommended the Madera RCD and Coarsegold RCD being a member of the group. Tom W agrees. Maybe we can revisit the reduced rate for members if the RCD is low on funds so we can get them to partner up with us. Mark will bring it up at the next Madera RCD meeting and see if they will consider it.
  - Tom W asked Jeannie H what the discounted rate was. Jeannie mentioned the \$2,500/year rate to join and also the disadvantaged community membership which has no fee. With a disadvantage community membership, they do not have a single vote, they have one group vote for all of the disadvantaged community members.

#### **12. Future Agenda Items**

- Domestic Wells

#### **13. Next Meeting**

- Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 24 at 1:30 pm on ZOOM for now, unless we can meet in person. If we can meet in person, meeting will be held at the \*Oakhurst location.

- \*There is a new meeting location in Oakhurst. The new address is 40232 Junction Drive, Oakhurst, CA 93644.

**14. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm.**