



Regional Water Management Group

LOCATION: Online (ZOOM)

MINUTES

Monday, August 28, 2023, 1:30 pm

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:31 pm, by Bobby Macaulay, chairperson.

Those present included:

Al Solis – SEMCU

Aleta Allen – Madera County

Becky Horn – Triangle T WD

Bobby Macaulay – Madera County

Clyde Wheeler – Indian Lakes

Craig Wagner – Madera County

Don Roberts – Gravelly Ford WD

Emily Garcia – Madera County

Fahed Mosleh – Madera County

Gretchen Heisdorf – Root Creek WD

Jacinta Cabral – Madera County

Jacob Roberson – RWMG Coordinator

Jason Rogers – City of Chowchilla

Jeannie Habben – Madera County

Jenny Nunez-Rodriguez – Madera County

John Cottingham – Coarsegold RCD

Keith Helmuth – City of Madera

Kim Witten – Madera County

Kimberley Sandoval – Madera County

Leticia Tapia – Madera County

Luis Alvarez – USDA NRCS

Lyndall Erb – Coarsegold RCD

Stephanie Anagnoson – Madera County

Tukta Phetasa – Madera County

2. Review & Approval - Agenda & Minutes

- A motion to approve the June minutes and August agenda was made by Gretchen H; Al S second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment

- Items of interest were mentioned by Jacob R (for more information, reach out to Jacob):
 - The final guidelines for the 1st round of funding under the Regional Resilience Grant Program have been published. The grants are for projects that advance climate resilience and respond to climate risks.
 - The DWR's innovative Statewide Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) Survey Project recently release data for the entire Central Valley.
 - The CAL FIRE Business and Workforce Development Grants is currently accepting applications for the 2023 Q3 review. Deadline to apply is September 30th.
 - Two virtual workshops have been scheduled in September to cover three resource management strategies that will support the California Water Plan Update 2023.
 - DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Office will be hosting a webinar on August 30th to provide an update on the California Statewide

Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Program and details about the release of recent updates.

- The Water Summit 2023 registration has opened. It will be held in Sacramento on October 25th. This year's theme is, "Taking on the Improbable in Western Water".
- A webinar is being held on August 30th to focus on dealing with problems brought on by sewer overflows and urban stormwater. An overview of the EPA's Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant Program will be discussed as well.

4. Discussion & Action - Financial Report/Warrant Approvals

- July 2023 & August 2023 Financial Report
 - Jacob R reported that for July, we had \$5,667.71 as income from the Prop 1 DAC grant. For expenses, we had \$2,362 for Jacob's position, \$5,192.71 to the Madera County Farm Bureau for the Prop 1 grant, \$99 for our website, and \$500 for the Prop 1 grant administration. Total outgoing expenses for July is \$8,153.71. This leaves us with \$32,092.50 at the end of July.
 - Jacob R reported that for August, we had no income. For expenses, we had \$2,362 for Jacob's position and \$99 for our website. Total outgoing expenses for August is \$2,461. This leaves us with \$29,631.50 at the end of August.
 - A motion to approve the July 2023 and August 2023 financial reports was made by Jason R; Gretchen H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion & Action – Madera RWMG Vice-Chair

- During the June meeting, Phil J was nominated to be the new vice-chair for the group.
- A motion to approved Phil J as the vice-chair was made by Gretchen H; Al S second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion – Madera RWMG Accounting Functions

- Jacob R reported that Madera ID is no longer wishing to do the accounting functions for the group. They have been doing the functions for the past 10+ years. Jacob and Bobby M reached out to Madera County about taking over the functions, but they are unfortunately not able to handle the accounting functions for us since we are not a formal government which by statute is not authorized to deposit and hold funds in the County's Treasury Pool. They did recommend Jacob to reach out to a local CPA.
 - Jacob reached out to the Madera/Chowchilla RCD who had a CPA support them with setting up a QuickBooks account to handle their finances. If we choose this route, we will need to setup a bank account to link to the QuickBooks account which is \$30/month. Lis Bundli is the CPA who assisted Madera/Chowchilla RCD with setting up their QuickBooks. Lis' rate is \$80/hour, but Lis mentioned that setting up QuickBooks is

something we can do on our own. Lis would be available for any assistance we may need at \$80/hour.

- If we do not want to use QuickBooks, Lis can do the accounting for us. Lis' rate is \$80/hour for this and estimates about 1 – 2 hours per month to perform the accounting functions for us. If we need to do taxes for any reason at the end of the year, Lis' rate for that is \$145/hour.
 - Stephanie A asked if this would be cheaper than what we currently pay, and Jacob mentioned we were paying Madera ID \$450 for the full year, and Lis' rate would come out to more than that on a yearly cost.
- Jacob did reach out to a few other IRWM groups to see how they handle their account:
 - For the Kings Basin Water Authority (Fresno County), Kings River Conservation District serves as the administrator and fiscal agent for the Kings Basin Water Authority and they are a board member. Checks require two signatures.
 - For the East Contra Costa County IRWM, Contra Costa WD manages the finances and all of the grants. The WD receives payments and writes checks. They also provide financial management services in-kind, or are reimbursed for labor through IRWM grants.
 - For the Ventura County IRWM, Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County has their finances handled by the County. They are currently looking into having the WD handle the finances for them. The county is not wanting to do it anymore.
 - Jacob also reached out to Southern Sierra IRWM and Merced County IRWM but did not hear back from them.
- Bobby thanked Madera ID for performing the accounting function for the group and is not sure what the best option is for the group moving forward.
 - Al S asked what Jacob would recommend, and Jacob mentioned that if no other group member is willing to take on the accounting, the best option would be QuickBooks. Before any checks are written, approval would be needed from the group before paying any outgoing expenses and get a signature from Bobby (chairperson) or Phil J (vice-chair) for checks each month. QuickBooks is not difficult to setup, we just need to have a bank account first. Paying Lis to do the accounting for us would be around \$1,800/year.
 - Bobby asked Jon C how they handle the accounting at Coarsegold RCD. Jon mentioned they have a bookkeeper which handles their accounting on QuickBooks. Their bookkeeper is not a CPA but she is a licensed bookkeeper. Her rate is about \$35/hour. It's about 1 – 3 hours/month for their accounting.
- Jacob will reach out to Jon with Coarsegold RCD to see if their bookkeeper would be able to handle the accounting for us. The group will have 3 options to choose from next month and make it official during the September meeting as an action item.

7. Discussion – Draft Bylaw Updates

- Jacob R mentioned he hasn't heard back from any new members regarding approving the draft Bylaw updates. Jacob has heard back and received approval from:
 - Gravelly Ford WD
 - Madera Ag Water Association
 - Madera ID
 - Madera WD
 - Root Creek WD
- Keith H did mention to Jacob that their attorney for the City of Madera thinks we may be subject to the Brown Act. They are waiting to hear what the County's Counsel has to say before digging a little deeper into the subject.
 - Bobby M added that the County's Counsel continues to persist that we are a legal government body that is subject to the Brown Act. The County won't sign off on Bylaws stating that we are not. They have asked for review by the Attorney General's office who will make a final determination.
 - Keith added that their attorney gave several options for meetings if we are subject to the Brown Act. None of them are really good, but we would need to have a quorum in-person at some facility. There would always be a few people traveling to get a quorum. Anyone who is a member and is attending remotely would be required to state where they are attending and voting from. They would need to have an "open door policy" for anyone who wants to sit in on the meeting at that particular location. The City's attorney did recommend getting with the Attorney General to get their opinion as well.
 - Once Bobby hears back from the Attorney General's office, he will update the group. Until then, we will continue to meet online.

8. Discussion – Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding

- San Joaquin Valley
 - Self-Help Enterprises – Projects 12 and 13
 - Nothing new to report.
 - Chowchilla Nitrate Control Program / Chowchilla Management Zone – Projects 12 and 13
 - Becky H reported that they are continuing to do domestic well testing with the funds. Applications have slowed down a bit but they are still sending out mailers twice a month. They have been focusing on the MZIP which has been taking up a lot of time for their group and members.
 - Jacob R added that the grant has been extended through the end of this year, with possibility of being extended through the end of June 2024. Jacob will keep Becky updated regarding the extension through June 2024.

9. Discussion – Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Funding

- Mountain Counties and San Joaquin Valley Counties
 - Indian Lakes and Parkwood
 - Craig W reported that they had some storm damage to the boxes that they are putting their meters in. Those have been reordered.

There are also some parts that they have been waiting on receiving to be delivered. Those are looking to be delivered October 1st. They are calling Aquametrics to get an installation schedule on the meters for Indian Lakes and Parkwood. They are hoping to have this discussion soon. Miami Creek Knolls has been having some issues with getting the readings off of the meters installed. They are looking to get direction on what needs to be done to get those readings before installing other meters. They will know more come September 1st. Installation for Indian Lakes and Parkwood is looking to be late October and in to early November.

- Craig added that they have an extension agreement they are holding onto until they get the installation schedule. They have requested an extension through the end of December 2024 to complete these projects. The State came back and requested for the projects to be completed by the end of September 2024. Until they get the installation schedule, they do not want to return the extension agreement if they are not able to meet the finish date of September 30, 2024, without an explanation to the State.
- Clyde W asked if the County can keep Indian Lakes updated and notify them when installation starts. Craig will get an installation schedule over to them when they get it updated with Aquametrics.
- City of Madera
 - Keith H reported that this project has no new updates. One of the projects is in the middle of construction. Their piece/phase should be advertised some time before the end of the year.
- City of Chowchilla
 - Jason R reported that they received notification from the State that they reviewed everything and are good with the City of Chowchilla going out to bid. They are putting the bid package together and hope to release it next week. It will close early October with construction starting soon after.

10. Discussion – SGMA Implementation Grant

- Gretchen H reported that Progress Report 4 and Pay Request 4 were submitted to DWR on August 14th. The Progress Report and Pay Request were approved by DWR on August 18th. Once DWR pays RCWD, the various project sponsors will be paid. Under the Grant administration project, a grant amendment was requested on August 18th to alter the Project 2 Workplan to include continued development on the GSP Groundwater Model Update utilizing remaining funds in the project budget. Minor changes to the Project 4 Workplan were requested. These changes can take up to 3 weeks – 4 months to receive approval.
- Other updates for the different projects:
 - Project 2 – GSP Updates – project is complete and waiting on amendment request to move forward. If the amendment request is not granted, the project’s final project report will be developed.
 - Project 3 – Madera WD – project is ongoing, plans are at a 90% level, and waiting on comments/approval from the various permitting agencies.

- Project 4 – Root Creed WD – project construction is ongoing. They are looking to be complete come late September or early October. This depends on any other issues coming up in the field.
- Project 5 – Madera County – Pipeline Project planning/conceptual locations are being evaluated by John Davids Engineering.

11. Discussion – Drought Working Group

- Jenny N reported that they had their last meeting on August 18th. Staff from the Environmental Department provided a presentation about wild fires and wells. They are still reviewing the drought plan and anticipate bringing the plan to the Board of Supervisors for Madera County before the end of the year.

12. Discussion – IRWM Round 2 Application

- Craig W reported that the project is for Sierra Highlands. They just received an update on their agreement from the State. Public Works will need to go through the agreement, make any changes needed, and send it back to the State so they can enter in to the agreement. The project is for well head treatment for Iron and Manganese.

13. Report – Sustainable Groundwater Management – SGMA

- Stephanie A reported that in the Chowchilla Subbasin, there are 4 GSAs and 1 GSP. The GSP was deemed inadequate and they have started conversations with the State Board. They've also had a few meetings with staff. They have hosted some board members in Chowchilla so they can see all the hard work that is underway in the Chowchilla Subbasin. They submitted a revised draft to the State Board and met with them to discuss it. The State Board has told them that they are going to coordinate with DWR. The goal is to avoid the State Water Resources Control Board hearing. Revised GSPs in this subbasin are expected to be released in the next couple of months to board members.
- In the Delta-Mendota Subbasin, their GSP was deemed inadequate as well. There were originally 23 GSAs and 6 GSPs. This was deemed to not show coordination between the GSP groups. Currently, they are working on 1 water budget and 1 GSP which will take a while.
- In the Madera Subbasin, they have 7 GSAs and 4 GSPs. Those plans were submitted and are now posted for public review. They are also undergoing review by DWR.

14. New/Suggested Members for the Madera RWMG

- Jacob R commented that he will be presenting at the Yosemite Lakes Park HOA meeting on September 5th about the Madera RWMG. If they decide to join, they would be a paying member since they are not considered to be a DAC. Their community is on well water which is privately funded and maintained.

15. Future Agenda Items

- Bobby M mentioned that an update to the IRWM Plan is coming up soon, and was wondering if Jacob R knows when that needs to be completed by. Jacob mentioned he has not heard of anything. The plan was last updated in 2019. Jacob was wondering if it needs to be updated every 4 or 5 years, and Bobby

mentioned every 5 years. Jeannie H added that the Roundtable of Regions mentioned during their last meeting that updated plans being needed is coming up since it has been 5 years.

- Bobby asked Jeannie if the update has been done through a working group or through another way. Jeannie mentioned that an engineering firm, consultant, etc. was hired before for the update. Once it was Provost and Pritchard. Another time it was QK. The first update was done by a group that doesn't exist anymore. Once the update is completed by the engineering group or consultant, it comes to the Madera RWMG multiple times for revisions and reviews. The Roundtable of Regions didn't give an official date, but mentioned it was coming up. Jacob will check on this and get it added to the agenda for September's meeting.
 - Stephanie A added that the last update cost about \$100,000+. We would want to get a grant, if possible, to help with this. Stephanie mentioned it would be good to ask if the State would be opening up IRWM Plan Update funding again. Jeannie mentioned the 1st update was paid for by the State and the 2nd update was paid for by members. Al S added that there was some controversy during the 2nd update.

16. Next Meeting

- Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 25, 2023, at 1:30 pm on Zoom.

17. The meeting was adjourned at 2:14 pm.