



MEMORANDUM

FC 14

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Agricultural Water
Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Agricultural Water Advisory Committee
(AWAC)
October 7, 2024 Regular Meeting Summary.

DATE: November 12, 2024

This memorandum summarizes agenda items from the meeting of the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee (AWAC) held on Monday, October 7, 2024.

Receive the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Update.

The Committee discussed the following topics: the groundwater divide and county boundary and the general comparison of outcome measures between the Santa Clara and Llagas subbasins and the San Benito County subbasin; confirmed the State Water Board is evaluating further the accounting procedure for the water banked in Semitropics by Valley Water; confirmed a subbasin on probation may require metering, fees, and reporting requirements for pumping groundwater, with 1 year to address any deficiencies in its sustainability plan, otherwise, a state interim plan may be imposed; expressed concern over continued water banking with Semitropics and noted water is banked with Semitropic during wet years at a low price to use in future dry seasons; noted Valley Water is staying in communication and fully engaged with the State Water Board's probationary hearing process for the Kern County Subbasin; confirmed options to recover water from Semitropics or have stored water be purchased for the cost of water at the time it was placed at Semitropic; noted Valley Water is looking at diversifying groundwater banking outside of Semitropic; confirmed subsidence is one of the deficiencies that the State Water Board is reviewing for the Kern County Subbasin; and noted the water quality issues related to 1,2,3 - Trichloropropane (TCP) and arsenic for Semitropic; and noted the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion project is currently going through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process and working towards obtaining water banking partners to provide a significant future watershed capture and off stream storage option. The Committee received and noted the information and took no formal action.

Discuss Policy for Securing Agricultural Water for Food Production/Security.

The Committee discussed the following topics: noted support of public outreach regarding agricultural water supply challenges per regulatory processes and urban development; noted invitation to attend various community meetings to increase representation of farmers and build relationships with agencies to assist with legislation; noted Vincent Gin will follow up with information for the Committee regarding the Family Farm Alliance and the California Farm Water Coalition; confirmed potable reuse recycled water is heavily regulated and non-potable recycled water is also regulated and depleted during peak times. The Committee received and noted the information and took no formal action.

Review Agricultural Water Advisory Committee Work Plan, the Outcomes of Board Action of Committee Requests; and the Committee's Next Meeting Agenda.

The Committee received the information, took no formal action, and noted interest in the AWAC Work Plan focusing on agricultural water, keeping water rates low, and confirmed Chairperson Peter Van Dyke will work with Committee Oversight Managers Vincent Gin and Darin Taylor on the AWAC Work Plan updates; and noted the ongoing challenges to fulfilling the AWAC vacancies.

The next AWAC regular meeting is scheduled to occur at 1:30 p.m. on January 6, 2025.

Board member comments and suggestions can be forwarded to Nicole Merritt, Assistant Deputy Clerk II at (408) 630-3262 or by email to nmerritt@valleywater.org.