MINUTES

NKGSA Advisory Committee Meeting
March 14, 2025

IN-PERSON AND TELECONFERENCE

In attendance:

*Jarrod Takemoto (Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District)
*Shay Bakman (Bakman Water Company)
*Adam Claes (Fresno Irrigation District)
*Paul Armendariz (City of Clovis)
*Nick Keller (Garfield Water District)
*Anthony White (City of Fresno)
Kassy Chauhan (NKGSA)
David Boyer (NKGSA legal counsel) – online
Ronnie Samuelian (Provost & Pritchard)
Dejan Pavic (City of Fresno)
Kristen Freberg (City of Clovis)
Lisa Koehn (Clovis)
Erik Rodriguez (UCANR)
Don Wright (Reporter)
Sayre Miller (Ag)
Miguel Serrano (Kings River Drilling)
Tom Krazan (Kings River Drilling)
Randy Witt (Well Owner)
John Hurtado (Well Owner)
Ngodoo Atume (UCANR) – online
Jasmine Ramirez (Self-Help Enterprises) – online

** - Committee Chair
* - Voting representative on Advisory Committee

*__**Note:__ This meeting was conducted in-person at the City of Clovis Public Safety Community Room (1233 Fifth Street, Clovis, CA 93612) as well as via web conference for members of the public wishing to participate remotely.*

Item 1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 1:33 PM.

Instructions:
Instructions for participation by both remote and in-person attendees were given by Executive Officer Kassy Chauhan. Both written and verbal comments are accepted by all attendees and time will be made after each agenda item for comments to be heard.

Members of the Advisory Committee attended in person and were present/absent as follows:

Agency Name	Present/Absent	Name of Person
Bakman Water Company	Present	Shay Bakman
Biola CSD	Absent	---
City of Clovis	Present	Paul Armendariz
City of Fresno	Present	Anthony White
City of Kerman	Absent	---
Fresno County	Absent	---
Fresno Irrigation District	Present	*Adam Claes
Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District	Present	Jarrod Takemoto
Garfield Water District	Present	Nick Keller

**Serving as Committee Chair during this meeting*

Item 2. Public Presentations

Item 2a. University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) – SGMA Small Farms Technical Assistance Program
(Presented by Ngodoo Atume and Erik Rodriguez)

A presentation was provided on the services and resources provided by UCANR, specifically their Small Farms Technical Assistance Program. One of their primary goals is to educate small-scale farmers about the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) and its potential impacts to the small farmers.

Small-scale farmers are considered to have a range of 0.5 to 60 acres of land (the median for the San Joaquin Valley is 8 to 10 acres). The farmers come from

diverse cultural backgrounds, and many of them are former farm workers transitioning to owning their own farms. They often focus on diversified crop groups and heavily rely on farmers markets and wholesale packing for their businesses. On average, they use less than 2 acre-feet per acre of water each year for mixed-vegetable farms (much lower water usage than the farms with nut tree crops). Because of their unique circumstances, there is a need for resources to educate about SGMA and provide guidance for compliance.

Among the services provided are: translation services (live events or documents), identification of which GSA the small farmers belong to, SGMA compliance assistance, engagement and accessibility of information, outreach, reviewing small farm lease agreements, and facilitating communication between farmers and GSAs. Erik Rodriguez serves the Fresno and Madera Counties.

Item 3. Approval of Minutes

Item 3a. Approval of Minutes from January 10, 2025 Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes made by member Armendariz; second by member Takemoto. Motion passed unanimously 5-0, with 1 abstaining (member Bakman) and 3 absent.

Item 4. Financial Report

Item 4a. Discussion / Possible Action – Recommend Approval of the Expense Reports for December 2024 and January 2025
(Presented by Lisa Koehn)

Transactions for December 2024 totaled $29,659.11, including payments to ACWA, Constant Contact, FID, Intuit Quickbooks, and Provost & Pritchard.

Transactions for January 2025 totaled $70,845.69, including payments to attorneys, the CPA company for the State Controller's report, Constant Contact, FID, Intuit Quickbooks, KRCD, Onset Computer Corporation (for work related to monitoring wells), and Provost & Pritchard.

Motion to recommend approval of the December 2024 and January 2025 expense reports made by member Keller; second by member Bakman. Motion passed unanimously 6-0, with 3 absent.

Item 4b. Discussion / Possible Action – Recommend Approval of Financial Statements as of January 31, 2025
(Presented by Lisa Koehn)

As of January 31, 2025, assets totaled $1,781,478.77. Expenses through January 31 totaled $275,584.32, which is approximately 23% of the budget.

Motion to recommend approval of the financial statements made by member Armendariz; second by member Keller. Motion passed unanimously 6-0, with 3 absent.

Item 5. Receive – Basin Coordination Update
(Presented by Ronnie Samuelian)

Periodic evaluation and revised GSPs were submitted on January 31st. DWR has posted them for public review, which will close on April 20th. It is anticipated that their review will be complete a couple of months following that but could take through the end of the calendar year.

The domestic well mitigation program has been up and running since October. So far, only one inquiry has been received. A webinar for well drillers and pump companies will be held on March 25th.

Coordinated work on interconnected surface water continues with the Madera Basin.

The annual report is due April 1st and is in final stages of completion.

Allocation framework discussions were initiated in February 2025 and will continue through much of 2025.

The Kings Basin is considering hiring a lobbyist to focus on SGMA-related issues due to the large number of groundwater-specific items needing attention.

Item 6. Administrative

Item 6a. Domestic Well Mitigation Program Update
(Presented by Kassy Chauhan)

Since October, there have been extensive discussions regarding the funding mechanism for this program. The proposed budget is $1 million, with $250k coming from reserves from year 1. A proposed breakdown by member agency was included in the meeting packet. Staff are recommending the Advisory Committee recommend support of the proposed funding strategy, including total budget amount and member agency contributions, to the Board of Directors, which will then be approved through the FY 2025-2026 budget approval process. The Advisory Committee members did not have any additional discussion related to what was recommended by the Technical Workgroup which included the following contributions:

Agency	Acreage Served	GSA Admin Cost Share	GSA Admin Portion	Remaining Portion	Total
FID	170058	55.67%	$139,175	$285,300	$424,475
Fresno	75659	24.72%	$61,800	$38,200	$100,000
Clovis	15294	4.92%	$12,300	$7,700	$20,000
Bakman	1994	0.64%	$1,600		$1,600
Kerman	2089	0.67%	$1,675		$1,675
Fresno County	38807	12.48%	$31,200	$168,800	$200,000
Garfield	1809	0.58%	$1,450		$1,450
Biola	237	0.08%	$200		$200
International	736	0.24%	$600		$600
		Total Funding =	$250,000	$500,000	$750,000

Item 6b. Discussion / Possible Action – Recommend Approval of North Kings GSA Domestic Well Mitigation Program Revolving Fund Policy – NKGSA-ACCT-511
(Presented by Kassy Chauhan)

Per the policy, funding for the domestic well mitigation program would be earmarked and held in a special reserve and dedicated for use to pay for domestic well mitigation costs. The draft policy includes a program fund balance of $3 million or three years of average expenses, whichever is less. Use of the funds would be delegated to the Executive Officer but would require reporting when funds are used. In the event that the program fund is to be dissolved, contributions paid by individual agencies would be refunded. The policy has been reviewed by North Kings legal counsel, the fiscal agent, the Technical Workgroup, and the Admin/Fiscal Workgroup.

Motion to recommend approval of NKGSA-ACCT-511 made by member Keller; second by member Claes. Motion passed unanimously 6-0, with 3 absent.

Item 6c. 2025 Goals and Priorities for North Kings GSA
(Presented by Kassy Chauhan)

Goals for 2025 include: submittal of the updated GSP and periodic evaluation; implementation and continued funding for the domestic well mitigation program; monitoring network improvements; submittal of the 2024 annual report to DWR; well registration; continuation of the interconnected surface water study; review of member agency mitigation targets and efforts/progress to address overdraft; continued outreach and stakeholder engagement; engagement with elected officials and policymakers; and routine engagement with the NKGSA Board of Directors.

Item 6d. 2025 Well Permitting Update
(Presented by Kassy Chauhan)

There was a total of 229 applications submitted in 2024. As of right now, the current number of well permit applications is trending lower than this time in 2024.

Item 6e. Well Registration Program Update and Next Steps
(Presented by Kassy Chauhan)

To date, 107 wells have been registered through the well registration portal through a voluntary program started in March 2024. There are more than 8,000 wells within the NKGSA boundary and the NKGSA needs to have a better accounting of the wells within its boundary. To improve participation in the well registration efforts,

there is a need to move towards requiring well registration in the future, rather than the current voluntary registration program.

Well registration is important to maintain local control (as opposed to state control) and to provide better data for groundwater management decisions. It is also necessary to implement management actions listed in the GSP. Staff will be bringing back a well registration policy for consideration by the Advisory Committee during its April 2025 meeting. The NKGSA Technical Workgroup is working on developing the draft policy for consideration.

Erik Rodriguez raised a concern regarding data confidentiality and the importance of ensuring that well owners' private information isn't unnecessarily accessible. Work is being done to ensure that information is kept secure.

Item 7. Workgroup Updates and Actions

Item 7a. Technical Workgroup Update
(Presented by Adam Claes)

The well registration program will be a focus in upcoming months.

Funding for year 3 and beyond of the domestic well mitigation program is still uncertain and needs further discussion/work. This will be a major priority for the workgroup.

Item 8. Member Agency / Committee Member Reports

Item 8a. Advisory Committee/Member Agency Reports/Updates

i. Water Supply Update
(Presented by Member Claes)

Friant Class 1 allocations are currently at 45%.

FID is trying to determine when to start the water delivery system for the year. The winter was very dry but recent storms could change the data regarding FID supply.

The snow water content is just below this time last year. On March 1st, the on-the-ground snow survey indicated 60% of the April 1 average water content. This does not take mid-March storms into account.

Item 9. Executive Officer Update
(Presented by Kassy Chauhan)

Item 9a. SGMA Implementation Projects Update
Prop 4 funds were approved and the first round of that funding should be available for project applications later this year. The EO urged the agencies to be prepared with their projects with the funds are announced.

Item 9b. Outreach / External Affairs Update
2024 analytics show growth in new followers and engagement on social media, as well as an increase in email subscribers. Several improvements have been made to the NKGSA website in the past year. There will be speaking engagements in March and May 2025.

Item 9c. Representative Monitoring Network Update
We are currently in the process of obtaining easements for 12 new wells. Spring 2025 water level measurements have been taken. Data loggers have been purchased and are ready to install.

Item 9d. Miscellaneous
We continue to follow other basins who are currently going through the State Water Board probationary process. The Kern Basin has been given more time to work on implementing items from their GSP before it is revisited in September.

Item 10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:11 PM.

Next Meeting: April 11, 2025