THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
NORTH KINGS GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FOR
APRIL 24, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.
2907 SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE – FRESNO, CA

TELECONFERENCE / IN-PERSON MEETING

AGENCIES – DIRECTORS / ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT
County of Fresno – Alternate Director Bernard Jiminez
Bakman Water Company – Director Steve Pickens
City of Clovis – Alternate Director Drew Bessinger
At-Large Seat 7 (Fowler Packing) – Director Kyle Moeller
Fresno Irrigation District – Chairman Jerry Prieto, Jr.
Garfield Water District – Director Karl Kienow

BOARD SEATS ABSENT
City of Fresno – Alternate Director Brock Buche

MEMBER STAFF PRESENT
Executive Officer – Kassy Chauhan
City of Clovis Representative – Scott Redelfs
Fresno Irrigation District Representative – DeAnn Stork
Fresno Irrigation District Representative – Adam Claes
Fresno Irrigation District Representative – Bill Stretch
Legal Counsel Dave Boyer − Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud, & Romo (via teleconference)

OTHERS PRESENT (who wanted to be identified for the record)
None

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Prieto at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Prieto led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Chauhan noted that there were no members of the public present online; however, legal counsel was in attendance virtually. As has been the ongoing practice, the Board will invite verbal public comments following each agenda item. No advance requests for public comments or written comments were received.

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3. **REVIEW AGENDA**
   (Additional Agenda Items – Requires Majority Approval of Board - §54954.2(b)

No changes to the agenda.

4. **REVIEW OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

No changes to future meetings.

5. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (for items not on agenda) – 3 Minutes Maximum Per Person, 10 Minutes Maximum Per Subject**

No public presentations.

6. **POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**
   Any Board Member who has a potential conflict of interest may now identify the item and recuse themselves from discussing and voting on the matter. [FPPC §18705]

None stated.

7. **FINANCIAL MATTERS (Stork)**

   a. **Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of the Financial Statements as of February 28, 2025**

Ms. Stork presented the February 2025 financial statements, previously reviewed by the Advisory Committee, noting that expenses were routine and within budget. One item under professional services lacks an assigned budget and will be addressed later in the meeting.

   b. **Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of the Expense Reports for February 2025**

Ms. Stork stated that there were no out-of-the-ordinary expenses during February 2025.

M/S/C (Kienow/Moeller) That the Board of Directors approved the Financial Statements as of February 28, 2025 and the Expense Reports for February 2025, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Moeller, Prieto, Jr., Bessinger, Jimenez; Nays – 0; Absent – Buche; Abstain – 0)

c. Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of the Revised Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget

Ms. Stork presented the revised 2024–2025 budget, previously reviewed by the Advisory Committee. Key adjustments included a $10,000 reduction in legal expenses, a $570 increase in office supplies, a shift in funds between professional services and engineering consultants (with the latter reduced by $10,000), and a $20,000 increase in public information. Offsetting these increases, the executive officer's budget was reduced by $30,000 and supporting staff by $10,000.

M/S/C (Pickens/Bessinger) That the Board of Directors approved the Revised Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Moeller, Prieto, Jr., Bessinger, Jimenez; Nays – 0; Absent – Buche; Abstain – 0)

8. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

a. Discussion / Possible Action on Regular Board Meeting Minutes – March 27, 2025

There were no corrections or suggestions to the March 27, 2025, meeting minutes.

M/S/C (Kienow/Pickens) That the Board of Directors approved the minutes of the March 27, 2025, Regular Board meeting, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Moeller, Prieto, Jr., Bessinger, Jimenez; Nays – 0; Absent – Buche; Abstain – 0)

b. Kings Subbasin Coordination Update

Mr. Samuelian reviewed the following.

- Periodic Evaluation and Revised GSPs submitted January 31, 2025
    - DWR posted and public comment period ending April 20, 2025

    - Timeline for DWR review and comments unknown, possibly July/August, likely December if not later
- Domestic Well Mitigation Program ongoing
    - Webinar for well drillers and pump companies completed
    - Still just a few inquiries
        - 1 in North Fork which was denied
        - 2 in NKGSA, 1 was a partial application and 1 has been denied
- Coordinated work on Interconnected Surface Water (ISW)
    - Working with Madera Basin GSAs, FWA, USBR, SJRRPRA. Technical committee being formed
- Annual Report for WY24 (10/1/23-9/30/24) submitted by March 31, 2025
- Allocation Framework discussions initiated in February
- Considering Lobbyist consultation services

Mr. Samuelian reported that Proposition 4 passed, and the Department of Water Resources (DWR) will roll out its funding plan during fiscal year 2025–2026. However, applications will not be accepted until 2026–2027, with contracts awarded in 2027–2028.

Mr. Samuelian stated that an Allocation Framework discussion will be held at the Basin Coordination meeting tomorrow. It was noted that six of the seven GSAs have submitted responses on the ten identified decision points. There appears to be strong consensus on many of the items, which aligns with the goal of identifying agreement early and focusing time and effort on resolving areas of conflict.

Chairman Prieto requested that Mr. Samuelian raise concerns during the upcoming Allocation Framework discussion regarding the potential negative impact on growers with 20 acres or less, noting that it could jeopardize their operations. Mr. Samuelian responded that in areas without additional water supplies, this is a significant concern. Each GSA will ultimately need to determine how to implement the framework. In regions with a strong Kings River supply, it is believed sustainability can be achieved through additional supplies and project development, though some years may still require reductions in use. Despite ongoing projects, parts of the basin continue to experience declining groundwater levels. Adjustments in cropping patterns and usage may be necessary, particularly in areas without supplemental supplies, where the impact is expected to be more severe and GSAs will face difficult decisions.

c. Water Conditions Update

Mr. Claes presented the following water conditions with the Board.

CVP & San Joaquin River as of April 24:

- Millerton Lake Storage: 411,000 AF
- Friant-Kern Canal: ~1,200 cfs
- Madera Canal: ~300 cfs
- Friant Class 1 – 100% (announced March 27)
    - Initial 45%, then 80%
- Friant Class 2 – none
- Low Potential for Uncontrolled Season

Kings River as of April 24:

- Pine Flat Storage: 752,000 AF
- Pine Flat release: 2,400 cfs
- Pre-Project: ~5,600 cfs (FID Entitlement: 1,266 cfs)
- FID Pine Flat Storage: ~127,000 AF
- FID Started Ag Water Deliveries April 1
- Total FID Diversions: 1,390 cfs (Kings), 32 cfs (CVP), 0 cfs (BDC)

Kings River Snow Conditions

- April 1 Snow Survey:
    - Field survey: 78% of April 1 avg
    - ASO flight: ~810k AF of estimated actual yield
- Runoff Forecast:
    - DWR B120 April-July forecast: 84% of avg
    - NOAA CNRFC April-July forecast: 84% of avg

Mr. Claes presented the Tulare Basin 6-Station Precipitation Index for the 2024-2025 Water Year, which began in October 2024. The data showed no precipitation in October, above-average precipitation in November, below-average precipitation in December and January, above-average precipitation in February and March, and as of today April precipitation levels are below average.

Mr. Claes presented a chart comparing current and prior year snow water content in the Southern Sierra region, noting that levels are lower this year than at the same time last year.

d. Advisory Committee Update

Mr. Redelfs reported that the advisory committee met on April 11, 2025, to review the financials, approve the revised FY 2024-2025 budget, and update the roster for the upcoming year. The committee also reviewed and discussed the extraction facility well registration policy, which will be presented and considered for approval at tonight's meeting.

Recommended Actions:

- Approval of Financial Statements as of February 28, 2025
- Approval of Expense Reports for February 2025
- Approval of Proposed Revised FY 2024-2025 Budget
- Approval of NKGSA-2025-001 Groundwater Extraction Facility Registration Policy

e. Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of North Kings GSA Groundwater Extraction Well Registration Policy – NKGSA 2025-001

Ms. Chauhan noted that considerable time was spent in the Technical Workgroup and Advisory Committee discussing the need for a policy and how to structure it to improve accounting of wells within the NKGSA boundary.

Ms. Chauhan reviewed the following.

Well Registration Progress and Next Steps Update

- To Date: 107 wells registered
- Voluntary Well Registration Launched – March 2024
- More than 8,000 wells within NKGSA
- Need More:
    - Policy – Requiring Registration
    - Outreach Efforts
    - Deadlines

Ms. Chauhan noted that many other GSAs, including several in the Kings Subbasin, have already implemented well registration policies. This allowed NKGSA to learn from their experiences and incorporate those lessons into the policy being proposed for board consideration.

Ms. Chauhan stated that the registration policy will include a significant outreach component and follow a phased approach with a set deadline. Initial efforts focused on voluntary participation and regular communications, but upcoming outreach will target large landowners with multiple wells to gain support and compliance, before expanding efforts to all landowners, including domestic well owners, as the registration deadline approaches.

Why Well Registration?

- Demonstrate Local Control
- Better Data for Groundwater Management Decisions
- Needed to Locally Manage Groundwater
- Necessary to Implement Management Actions per GSP

Ms. Chauhan noted that a common question from landowners during outreach on well registration is its purpose. It was emphasized that registration allows landowners to participate in local groundwater management, and exercise local control that we advocated for. Better data supports more effective groundwater management, and with triggers outlined in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, proactive planning is essential. If those triggers are met, management actions must be implemented, so preparation is critical.

Well Registration

- Timeline
    - Board Considers Making Well Registration Mandatory – April 2025
        - Groundwater Extraction Facility Registration Policy –NKGSA-2025-001
    - Deadlines:
        - Proposed Deadline is November 30, 2025 – To Avoid Late Registration Fees – TBD by Board
        - Develop Plan for Non-Compliant Well Owners
    - Which Wells Are Required To Register?
        - Policy Includes All Wells (active and inactive, except for destroyed wells) – Single Deadline for All Wells

Ms. Chauhan stated that if the policy is approved, it will take effect on May 1, 2025, with a proposed registration deadline of November 30, 2025. The Board will retain discretion

to extend the deadline through a grace period if desired. Following the grace period, registration fees will apply.

Ms. Chauhan noted that the Advisory Committee unanimously supports and recommends Board adoption of the well registration policy, with staff in agreement. It was also noted that on May 1, the website will go live, featuring a frequently asked questions document, an upgraded website application to facilitate registration of wells by landowners, and other informational materials related to registration.

Ms. Chauhan noted that participation in the Domestic Well Mitigation Program requires prior well registration with the North Kings GSA. Additionally, coordination with Fresno Irrigation District is underway as they prepare to receive a small-scale grant for well meters. Participation in that program will also require well registration with the GSA.

Further discussion took place regarding the North Kings GSA Groundwater Extraction Well Registration Policy, during which staff addressed all questions from the Board.

M/S/C (Jimenez/Kienow) That the Board of Directors approved the North Kings GSA Groundwater Extraction Well Registration Policy – NKGSA 2025-001, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Moeller, Prieto, Jr., Bessinger, Jimenez; Nays – 0; Absent – Buche; Abstain – 0)

f. Domestic Well Mitigation Program Update

- Total Budget - $1M
- $250K in Year 2 From Reserves
- Well Driller Workshop – March 25, 2025
- Two Applications in NKGSA – 1 Pending, 1 Declined

Ms. Chauhan reported that a well-driller workshop was held on March 25th as the first outreach event for the Domestic Well Program, with approximately 14 participants attending virtually. Two applications were received within the North Kings GSA boundary following the workshop, one was declined due to ineligibility, and the other is pending additional information from the landowner. Updates will be provided as the status of the pending application progresses.

Ms. Chauhan noted that comment letters on the Domestic Well Mitigation Program were received from Self-Help Enterprises and Community Water Center through the DWR portal, with DWR receiving copies. The comments aligned with anticipated concerns,

including opposition to considering well age, use of pro-rating, and inclusion of loan components, advocating instead for 100% grant coverage. It was also noted that implementation of the program is moving forward as approved by the Board and the Kings Basin, with adjustments to be made if needed upon receiving feedback from DWR.

g. Well Permitting Update

Well Type	Count
Agricultural	5
Domestic Private	19
Domestic Public	2
Monitoring	2
Soil Boring	1
Grand Total	29

Well Type	Count
January	3 (Domestic Private 3)
February	20 (Agricultural 3; Domestic Private 12; Domestic Public 2; Monitoring 2; Soil Boring 1)
March	6 (Domestic Private 4; Agricultural 2)

2024: 229 Total

Ms. Chauhan reported that all well permit applications from Fresno County are reviewed individually. The number of applications received so far this year is lower compared to the same time last year. It was noted that when Fresno Irrigation District begins water deliveries, it typically reduces well usage, which may help keep application numbers down for the year.

9. EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT (Chauhan)

a. SGMA Implementation Projects Update

Ms. Chauhan stated that Malaga County Water District is now positioned to receive water into the basin through a new interconnection with FMFCD Basin CF. Efforts are underway to begin deliveries to the basin this year to meet its mitigation target. Additionally, FID's Carter-Bybee Basin is nearing completion. The basin will soon be ready to begin receiving water.

Ms. Chauhan reported on the Biola Community Services District implementation project, noting that progress continues toward enabling water deliveries. Excavation is underway on the District's small five-acre basin. The canal turnout and pipeline to the basin are in place, and once excavation is completed, the District will be positioned to begin receiving water, potentially later this year or by next year.

b. Outreach / External Affairs Update

- Social Media
- Website

Ms. Chauhan noted that there are frequent updates posted on social media and the website.

- Speaking Engagements
    - March 2025: Fresno State Lecture – Future Water Resource Managers
    - April: Fresno State
    - May 2025: The BIG Think – Realtors
    - May 2025: APWA Meeting

Ms. Chauhan reported an increase in speaker requests, noting recent engagements at Fresno State to educate future water leaders on SGMA and its implementation. Upcoming speaking opportunities include a presentation to a group of realtors on May 7th and a scheduled appearance at the APWA luncheon in May to discuss SGMA progress and implementation, marking 10 years since its enactment.

c. Representative Monitoring Network Update

- Obtaining Easements for New Wells – 12
- Spring 2025 Water Level Measurements Taken
- Data Loggers – Purchased and Ready to Install
- Out to bid – End of April 2025

Ms. Chauhan reported that spring groundwater level readings have been completed for all wells. Challenges persist in using existing agricultural wells for accurate measurements during required monitoring periods. Progress is being made toward establishing a dedicated monitoring network. The Board previously approved up to

$200,000 for this effort, and the first bid for installation of seven monitoring wells is expected to go out at the end of April. The new wells will include sites near the San Joaquin River for monitoring interconnected surface water and in the northeast area to address known data gaps.

d. Miscellaneous

- Proposition 4 Bond Funds
- NRCS Projects
- SWRCB Probationary Process
    - Kern Basin – More Time

Ms. Chauhan noted ongoing collaboration with organizations like NRCS to support landowners seeking to implement on-farm improvements with cost-sharing opportunities. Despite staffing challenges, NRCS has continued to work closely with individual farmers, some of whom are installing meters and soil moisture sensors to support sustainable water use.

Ms. Chauhan provided an update on the State Water Board's SGMA probationary process, noting a recent article stating that the State Water Board believes more action is needed for SGMA. However, no new probationary hearings have been scheduled at this time. The only hearing currently on the docket is for the Kern Basin, which has been postponed from February to September.

10. DIRECTORS REPORT

Director Pickens – nothing to report
Director Kienow – nothing to report
Director Prieto – encouraged everyone to buy their tickets to the Clovis Rodeo
Alternate Director Bessinger – nothing to report
Director Moeller – nothing to report
Alternate Director Jimenez – nothing to report
Director Buche – absent

11. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to discuss, Chairman Prieto adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by,

Kassy D. CA

Kassy Chauhan, Executive Officer-Secretary/Treasurer