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Eel River Valley Groundwater Basin Working Group

Meeting 7 December 2, 2016

Slides posted at <http://www.humboldt.gov/groundwater>

Minutes prepared by Bob Vogt, Humboldt County Public Works

1. Introduction

An agenda was presented and introductions made (see slides).

Presentation by Hank Seemann, Humboldt County Public Works (see slides)

Hank reviewed the three potential compliance steps under SGMA: Basin ranking change from Medium to Low Priority, Alternative Submittal, and formation of GSA and completion of GSP.

2. Irrigation Water Use

Presentation by Hank Seemann, Humboldt County Public Works (see slides)

Review of the work done by the Humboldt County Resource Conservation District (RCD), producers, Cheryl and Don Laffranchi, and Jeff Stackhouse to complete the irrigation water use study for the basin. Cheryl was recognized by Hank as being instrumental in helping complete the study. The RCD is finalizing a technical memorandum to document the methods, data, and analysis. The estimates developed in this study for irrigated acreage and irrigation water use are significantly less than previous estimates.

3. DWR Basin Priority Ranking

Presentation by Hank Seemann, Humboldt County Public Works (see slides)

Review of DWR's eight ranking criteria and their scoring ranges used for calculating the total score for basin priority ranking. Based on the new, more accurate information on irrigated acreage and irrigation water use, there may be grounds for re-evaluating the medium priority ranking for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin.

Discussion

There was a discussion amongst the group on how the process for re-considering the basin priority ranking would work, and how to proceed.

Bill Ehorn, DWR (present via phone): Discussed that the original basin prioritization took place during the 2009-2010 time period, and that DWR plans to update the prioritization in early 2017. He stated that DWR wants to utilize the most accurate, up-to-date data and information and will take the RCD's study results into consideration. DWR's state-wide review of groundwater basin priority levels is expected to be completed around June 2017.

4. DWR Alternative Submittal

Presentation by Hank Seemann, Humboldt County Public Works (see slides)

Review of Alternative Submittal requirements from a DWR webinar earlier this morning. Discussion amongst attendees on the very short time frame and the list of items that need to be addressed prior to the January 1, 2017 submittal deadline. The most pressing issue is the action item required to be agendized at a Board of Supervisor meeting, it was presented that the December 13th meeting would be the only chance to get this done. An e-mail notification will be sent once it is determined whether it will be possible to place this item on the Board's December 13 meeting agenda.

5. Initial Results From Groundwater Basin Assessment Data Collection

Presentation by Jason Buck, SHN Engineers and Geologists (see slides)

Review of the existing geological and water data, as well as review of new water data collected recently. Initial results are consistent with sustainable groundwater use. Additional work was discussed: continued field data analysis, refining water balance numbers, preparing an Alternative Submittal, and completion of required field work in 2017.

6. Review Timeline and Next Steps

Presentation by Hank Seemann, Humboldt County Public Works (see slides)

Review of the Alternative Submittal time frame and technical work that will be ongoing through Fall 2017. Hank mentioned that it would be good to have some representation from the Working Group at the Board of Supervisors meeting on December 13, 2016 to support the action item for the Alternative Submittal.

Next meeting to discuss Alternative Submittal progress is proposed for Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 1:00 at the Humboldt County Agricultural Center.

Working Group Members Present:

Cheryl Laffranchi	Northcoast Pumphouse
Tom Gast	Thomas Gast & Associates
Denver Nelson	Humboldt County Fish & Game Advisory Committee, dairy owner
Summer Daugherty	HCRC
John Vevoda	Rancher, Humboldt County Farm Bureau
Katherine Ziemer	Humboldt County Farm Bureau
Doreen Hansen	HCRC
Frances Tjanstrom	HCRC
Ben Dolf	Humboldt County Environmental Health
Merritt Perry	City of Fortuna
Jill Demers	HCRC
John Corbett	RWQCB
Joseph Alexandre	Dairyman
Troy Hubner	Del Oro Water Company
Lee Mora	Humboldt Grass Fed Beef
Ryan Rice	Commercial
David Fisch	Fisch Drilling

Other Interested Parties Present:

Lisa Stromme	SHN Engineers & Geologists
Jasper Oshun	HSU

Jason Buck	SHN Consulting Engineers
George McAneny	HSU Geology
Jeremiah Puget	RWQCB
David Sopjes	Eel River Recovery Project
Mario Kalson	Humboldt County Environmental Health
Mark Verhey	Humboldt County Environmental Health
Mark Wheatley	CDFW

Via Phone:

Bill Ehorn	DWR
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