

Borrego Water District
MINUTES
Groundwater Management Standing Committee
Wednesday, December 9, 2009, 9:15 a.m.
806 Palm Canyon Drive
Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Attendance: Directors: Mendenhall, Smiley
Staff: Richard Williamson, General Manager
 Jerry Rolwing, Operations Manager
 Wendy Quinn, Recording Secretary
Public: Jim Engelke, Lundberg Marshal Brecht
 Rebecca Falk Lane Sharman, Borrego Water Exchange

CALL TO ORDER
INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jerry Rolwing pointed out that the two references to Proposition 85 at the bottom of page 1 of the November Minutes should be Proposition 84. The Minutes of November 11, 2009 were approved as corrected.

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. Viking Ranch – Discuss Status of Water Credit opportunities. Jim Engelke distributed a chart outlining the proposed Viking tree removal program. His client, Lance Lundberg, proposes to fallow 60 acres of citrus for \$5,000 per acre foot over 30 years at 5 percent interest. The remainder of the fallowed property (65 acres) would be used for County mitigation. Based on calculated water savings and ultimate development of the Viking Ranch, the project should save money. Pending development, the property could be used as a campground. Director Smiley stated he would favor immediate granting of mitigation credits for the fallowing, but was reluctant to have the District purchase them. Mr. Rolwing pointed out that the District's last bond issue had failed due to the lack of an identified purpose for the proceeds. Perhaps another attempt could be made, with the funds to go toward purchasing Mr. Lundberg's credits. Rich Williamson suggested that if the District does purchase the credits, they be retired so as not to compete with others who have credits for sale. He also felt that for the price proposed, the District should retain the land, which might eventually be used for a solar field. It was agreed that there are still too many options to make a recommendation to the Board, but Mr. Engelke can present his campground proposal at the next meeting and the Committee can provide a status update.

2. Status of Financing/Grant Requests. Mr. Williamson reported he was still waiting for EPA action on the scope of work for the \$250,000 STAG grant. The District's I-bank loan application is on their January agenda. It was delayed pending completion of our audit, which will be presented to the BWD Board at its next meeting.

Mr. Rolwing reported that funds have been released for the Clark Lake monitor well. The District has also applied for funds from the Department of Public Health to reduce man-made water contamination. The money could be used to fallow farmland adjacent to wells, thereby reducing nitrate levels.

3. Update on Groundwater Management Study. A meeting with USGS and DWR has been scheduled for January to consider different scenarios for water mitigation and recharge. Committee members are welcome to attend.

4. Status of Sustainable Water Supply Projects.

a. Clark Lake. Mr. Williamson reported he had received correspondence from Rebecca Falk regarding the right-of-entry agreement for the Ellis property. The District's five-acre parcel in the area is being surveyed, and the adjoining Decker property will also be surveyed.

b. Southeast Importation. Mr. Williamson announced that the design of the Southeast Importation Line is 95 percent complete. The sewage lift station is out to bid, with an engineer's estimate of \$488,000.

5. Discussion: Integrated Water Resource Management Plan.

a. Groundwater Banking option Development. As part of the Proposition 84 process, BWD has been designated as part of a regional water management area. Information will be available on our website.

b. Stakeholder Involvement/process. There have been two meetings of the policy committee (BWD, the County and the Resource Conservation District). Mr. Rolwing added that a meeting is scheduled for January 21 for other agencies interested in joining the program. A regional water management plan will eventually be developed.

6. Status of applications for water credits. Lane Sharman reported that the Dragon Fruit Farm issue has been resolved, a provisional letter issued and plans are proceeding for the fallowing and easement.

Mr. Engelke asked whether the County had commented on BWD's water mitigation credit policy. Mr. Williamson replied that they had commented before the policy was adopted, but made no response regarding the Negative Declaration and subsequently certified it.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m. The next regular Groundwater Management Committee Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2010 at 9:15 a.m.