

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Public Works	(2) MEETING DATE 12/18/2012	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Courtney Howard, Water Resources Engineer (805) 781-1016	
(4) SUBJECT Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Blue Ribbon Steering Committee progress update and staff recommendations. Districts 1 and 5.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is our recommendation that your Honorable Board, acting as the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive a Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (Basin) Blue Ribbon Steering Committee progress update and provide direction as you deem appropriate; and</li> <li>2. Authorize staff to proceed with developing requests for proposals to prepare feasibility studies on the alternatives for stabilizing groundwater levels in the Basin as identified in Exhibit "A" in coordination with the Steering Committee.</li> </ol>			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) Flood Control Fund 19	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT N/A	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT Unknown	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. 60 mins.)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP Attached	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A    Date 3/27/12; #17	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW  <i>Nikki J. Schmidt</i>			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) District 1 - District 5 -			

Reference: 12DEC18-BB-1

# County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Public Works  
Courtney Howard, Water Resources Engineer

VIA: Paavo Ogren, Director of Public Works

DATE: 12/18/2012

SUBJECT: Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Blue Ribbon Steering Committee progress update and staff recommendations. Districts 1 and 5.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is our recommendation that your Honorable Board, acting as the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District):

1. Receive a Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (Basin) Blue Ribbon Steering Committee progress update and provide direction as you deem appropriate; and
2. Authorize staff to proceed with developing requests for proposals to prepare feasibility studies on the alternatives for stabilizing groundwater levels in the Basin as identified in Exhibit "A" in coordination with the Steering Committee.

## **DISCUSSION**

On March 27, 2012, your Board adopted the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) for the portion of the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (Basin) within its jurisdiction exclusive of local agency/water purveyor service areas. The GMP was developed by the City of Paso Robles, in cooperation with the District, and in coordination with a Steering Committee made up of Basin stakeholders, in order to identify objectives and activities for stabilizing groundwater levels.

Your Board acted to form the Steering Committee officially as a "Blue Ribbon" Steering Committee (Exhibit "B") and added the following line to the Resolution of Adoption:

"WHEREAS, the District intends to appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee to advise on implementation of the GMP and intends the Blue Ribbon Committee will: 1) recommend actions to stabilize the basin; 2) recommend structures for management and accountability of GMP activities and 3) recommend financing and cost sharing approaches for implementation activities."

In addition, your Board directed staff to provide an update on the Steering Committee's progress by December 2012. The following is a summary of the Steering Committee's efforts since March:

### Blue Ribbon Steering Committee Achievements

#### *New Volunteers for the Water Level Measuring Program*

The Steering Committee developed a list of property owners overlying the Basin and worked with staff to identify the areas where wells for the groundwater level measuring program were needed. Several Steering Committee members then reached out to their colleagues, acquaintances and friends to encourage them to be considered for the program. As a result, 24 new wells have been added to the County's groundwater level data collection program. Another round of outreach is anticipated prior to level measuring in 2013 to identify potential participants in the remaining data-gap areas. Staff will be considering the potential for using this model for improving the data collection network in groundwater basins throughout the county.

#### *Education and Outreach*

An Education and Outreach subcommittee was formed early on in the process to advocate for water conservation and inform the public about the Basin's condition and the efforts of the Steering Committee. Most notably, the subcommittee developed a brochure that was mailed to all unincorporated-area landowners and distributed to local businesses (Exhibit "C"). The subcommittee has developed goals for education and outreach and is working on developing a website for the Steering Committee.

#### *Groundwater Basin Model Update*

A Groundwater Basin Computer Model Update subcommittee was also formed early on in the process to provide input on the scope of work for the update. The subcommittee's efforts aided the District in submitting a successful Integrated Regional Water Management Program Planning Grant Application, which included \$50,000 for the update. The subcommittee will be reviewing progress on the model update at key decision points.

#### *Local Groundwater Assistance Grant Application*

The Steering Committee assisted the District in submitting a Local Groundwater Assistance (LGA) grant application in June 2012 that requested funding to use the updated Basin computer model to evaluate the effect of implementing various alternatives on Basin water levels. Notification of awards for this grant program is anticipated to be given in winter 2013.

#### *Identifying and Analyzing Solutions*

The main focus for the Steering Committee has been to identify and evaluate alternatives for stabilizing and/or maintaining groundwater levels. A Solutions subcommittee was formed for this purpose. The subcommittee is developing a comprehensive list of all potential solutions and an evaluation system to develop recommendations for which solution or combination of solutions have the greatest potential for implementation and Basin benefit.

## Staff Recommendation

### *Feasibility Studies*

Staff is recommending that your Board authorize staff to develop requests for proposals (RFP) to prepare feasibility studies on the alternatives for stabilizing groundwater levels in the Basin as identified in Exhibit "A", in coordination with the Steering Committee. The alternatives identified in Exhibit "A" are consistent with a list of solutions being developed by the Steering Committee. The alternatives are also consistent with those identified in the County-wide Master Water Report (MWR).

During the MWR development process, a working group of agency staff and Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) members went through the exercise of identifying the likely lead on each alternative. Consequently, staff anticipates that our effort would primarily be focused on RFPs for the supplemental water alternatives identified in Exhibit "A". Nevertheless, authorization to proceed with preparing RFP's for all strategies will enable staff to support the Steering Committee's efforts related to evaluating conservation and recycled water alternatives.

The scope of work the proposals would cover would likely include:

- Defining the various mechanisms for implementing the alternatives, including measured benefits, infrastructure needed, institutional structures and arrangements, environmental considerations, permits, financing mechanisms and cost estimates;
- Using the updated model to evaluate Basin response under each alternative; and
- Conducting the feasibility study in a way that develops information needed for relevant grant programs, Federal and State agency requirements and local planning efforts.

Authorizing staff to proceed with developing the RFPs will enable staff to develop accurate recommendations for scoping and budgeting of physical solutions to the existing groundwater level declines.

### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT**

The Steering Committee will consider supporting staff's recommendation during their meeting on December 6, 2012. Staff will provide a verbal report on the outcome of their consideration during the progress update for your Board. The Water Resources Advisory Committee supported staff's recommendation during their meeting on December 5, 2012, and will be periodically updated on the effort.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Efforts associated with implementation of the GMP for the Basin are included in Flood Control Fund 19, whose revenue source is District General Reserves. The Flood Control Fund 19 budget for the current fiscal year is sufficient for developing requests for proposals, as costs are anticipated to be nominal. Receiving proposals will allow staff to develop an accurate financial recommendation related to the use of available District annual revenue and the need to use District reserves for Fund 19 to conduct the feasibility studies. However, it is anticipated that the timing of receiving the proposals may not allow for inclusion of these efforts in the proposed Fiscal Year 2013-14 District budget, and would require staff to present the recommendations during Budget hearings.

## **RESULTS**

Directing staff to proceed with developing requests for proposals to conduct feasibility studies will allow staff to develop accurate recommendations for the scope of effort and financial requirements to develop information for the alternatives for stabilizing groundwater levels in the Basin. Moving forward with efforts to determine how to stabilize levels will help to ensure the Basin is effectively managed so it can remain a reliable source of water for all of its users, contributing to a safe, healthy, livable, prosperous and well-governed community.

File: CF 500.132.01 Groundwater Management Plan – Paso Robles Basin

Reference: 12DEC18-BB-1

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management Plan (Clerk's File)
3. Exhibit A - Alternatives for Stabilizing Groundwater Levels
4. Exhibit B - Blue Ribbon Steering Committee
5. Exhibit C - Basin Brochure