

**Fw: Groundwater Management Plan**

**Susan Baker** to: Vicki Shelby, Cherie Aispuro, Susan Devine, Debbie Geaslen, Amy Gilman

03/23/2012 03:37 PM

Cc: cr\_board\_clerk Clerk Recorder

Susan Baker  
Secretary, Board of Supervisors  
805/781-4335  
Fax: 781-1350

----- Forwarded by Susan Baker/BOS/COSLO on 03/23/2012 03:36 PM -----

From: "Lisa Bodrogi" <lbodrogi@pasowine.com>  
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Date: 03/23/2012 03:23 PM  
Subject: Groundwater Management Plan

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Dear Susan,

Please forward the attached letter to the Board of Supervisors for their hearing on Tuesday regarding the Paso Robles Groundwater Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Lisa Bodrogi  
Government Affairs Coordinator  
Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance  
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BOS3-23-12GMPAdoptionLetter.doc

ITEM #17  
MEETING DATE: March 27, 2012  
PRESENTED BY: Lisa Bodrogi  
RECEIVED PRIOR TO MEETING  
POSTED ON: March 23, 2012



March 23, 2012

Honorable Board of Supervisors  
of San Luis Obispo County  
County Government Center  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Re: Adoption of the Groundwater Management Plan

Dear Chairman Patterson and Members of the Board:

The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance appreciates the opportunity to comment on the adoption of the Paso Robles Groundwater Management Plan. We have been key stakeholders at the table throughout the development phase of the Groundwater Management Plan and have actively participated in the implementation as a representative on the Steering Committee for the past year plus. We have continually expressed our support for an open dialogue and deliberative stakeholder-driven process, recognizing that implementation of the Groundwater Management Plan will be a many-year undertaking.

We continue to commend the efforts of the County Flood Control and Water Conservation and the City of Paso Robles in paving the way to bring stakeholders together to understand groundwater issues and management opportunities in the Basin, and appreciate the countless hours that have been spent by all stakeholders engaged in the process. This approach develops a spirit of cooperation and trust which is necessary to ensure sound water resource management. We look forward to continuing to actively participate in the implementation of the plan.

Since it is not the practice of our Association to “adopt” plans, we wish to lend our support to the purpose of the plan most simply stated on page 3 as: “The purpose of this Plan is to develop a common understanding of the groundwater issues and management opportunities in the Basin and to identify and support projects such as conjunctive use, recycled wastewater, and demand management, which will improve groundwater management.”

During the course of the last year the Steering Committee has made significant progress as outlined in their letter dated March 13, 2012. We wholeheartedly support these efforts and have contributed to the success of the committee. One item of significance that was identified during the Steering Committee meeting of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 has been the realization that the groundwater model is based upon data collection up through 1997. This presents a 15 year limitation in understanding the state of the basin. Due to the assumptions made in the model,

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historic, and current data limitations, it was suggested that the model be updated to reflect current conditions. An updated model is necessary in order to understand what it would take, and how long it might take, to stabilize groundwater levels. The #1 Basin Management Objective of the Groundwater Management Plan, agreed upon by all subarea stakeholders, is to stabilize or maintain groundwater levels in the basin. Likewise, the stated goal of the Steering Committee is to “coordinate with stakeholders to implement the Groundwater Management Plan to ensure the health of the basin.”

Based upon this new information and reflective of previous comments made by the Alliance we view the importance of completing a Groundwater Model Update has risen to the surface as the #1 priority. The model update is necessary to meet the purpose of the Groundwater Management Plan “to develop a common understanding of the groundwater issues and management opportunities” and the agreed upon Best Management Objective “to maintain or stabilize the groundwater levels” agreed upon by all subarea stakeholders.

Once it was understood the significance of the limitations of the groundwater model (15 years outdated) and with the encouragement of Supervisor Jim Patterson, the Steering Committee moved swiftly to develop a sub-committee to work with the county in developing a preliminary scope or work and budget for this effort. The main objective of the Steering Committee is to develop the necessary means to quantify the volume of water needed to restore groundwater levels in the Airport/Jardine Area (i.e. cone of depression). As a result, an estimated budget of \$175,000 has been developed for this effort and a time table of approximately 6 months to complete the update upon execution of an agreement.

In order to accurately depict and develop a common understanding of the groundwater management opportunities, we believe the following must occur:

- 1) Update input data sets of the model by compiling data from 1997 (the end of the base period data in the original model) through 2011;
- 2) Evaluate the effectiveness and feasibility of projects whether a project is large or small. A small project may be easy to implement, but results in little effectiveness on overall changed groundwater conditions. The updated groundwater model will assist in measuring effectiveness of various water management solutions including, conjunctive use, water recycling, and demand management. (stated purpose of the plan)
- 3) An understanding of the effect of the Salinas underflow and Atascadero sub-basin on the main basin;
- 4) Accurate and meaningful simulations to understand the effect of the basin regarding various land use patterns, well pumping activity, water conservation, and/or water supply solutions.

In preparation of the March 27<sup>th</sup> Hearing on the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin, the Wine Industry Water Committee and Alliance Board of Directors met to discuss consideration of the Groundwater Management Plan. During these discussions there was clear consensus regarding

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the importance of the work that is being done, the efforts of the County and City staff, and all of the stakeholders at the table. Likewise, there was consensus that updating the model should be the number one priority at this time.

In understanding that adoption of the plan is necessary to seek funding for its implementation, we accept the county, cities, and municipalities moving forward in adoption. However, before the Groundwater Management Plan is finalized for adoption we ask for the following changes:

- 1) Raise the priority level for completion of the Groundwater Model Update to #1 listed on page 99 as a Phase III-Long Term project (Beyond three years) to Phase I – Ongoing Groundwater Management Activities.
- 2) Bullet #s 1,2, 8-10 listed under Phase II-Near Term Projects should likewise be moved to Phase I indicating their priority status.
- 3) Changes to Table 7-1 Implementation:
  - A. Section 2.4 Data Management System. The Steering Committee should be identified to facilitate these items (1-3)
  - B. Section 4.1 items 1 and 2 regarding Groundwater Recharge should be listed as High Priorities instead of Medium.
  - C. Section 4.4 Modeling and Technical Analysis:
    - a. The Steering Committee should be identified to facilitate all of the items in this section (1-8).
    - b. Priority status in all categories should be listed as High (Items #6 and 7)
    - c. All items in this section should be listed under the Re-occurring (Annual) category to highlight its priority. (Items #1, 2, 5, 6 and 7).
  - D. Section 5.2 Urban Water Management Practices and 5.3 Rural Residential Water Management Practices. The Steering Committee should be identified to facilitate all of the items in both these sections and the priority level should be elevated to High.
- 4) Identify grant opportunities and funding mechanisms to complete the Groundwater Model Update. Section 7.4.1 Grant Funding identifies two grant opportunities, Local Grant Assistance Act (AB303) and Proposition 84. Beyond inclusion of a portion of the model update to be funded through the IRWMP grant request (Prop 84), considered by your Board on February 28<sup>th</sup>, additional funding or grant opportunities to fund the Groundwater Model Update have not been identified.
- 5) Section 5.4.2.1.1 City of Paso Robles page 83 should be updated to reflect the current anticipated timeline and delivery schedule for Nacimiento Water.



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- 6) The Groundwater Management Plan should make clear Nacimiento Water was designed and intended to operate as a supplemental water project, not a primary water source. Atascadero, Paso Robles, and Templeton continue to recognize the primary water source is groundwater for the foreseeable future. This supplemental source is used and intended to offset peak summer demand and allow additional growth. If supplemental water is not available, groundwater would remain the primary source. If sufficient groundwater is not available, water conservation restrictions would be imposed.
  
- 7) The Groundwater Management Plan should integrate the conclusions and recommendations from the Master Water Study and continue to address water planning solutions on a regional level (not just opportunities within the basin), in conjunction with the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Update, including but not limited to:
  - a. Optimization of conservation measures in all sectors.
  - b. Optimization of unsubscribed State Water allocation.
  - c. Optimization of unsubscribed Nacimiento Water Project allocation.
  - d. Opportunities for optimizing other local surface water supplies.
  - e. Opportunities for increasing the efficiency of existing infrastructure.
  - f. Opportunities for water re-use.
  - g. Opportunities for emergency/drought protection measures such as inter-ties and groundwater banking.

Without an Updated Groundwater Model the purpose of the plan and #1 BMO of the Groundwater Management Plan to stabilize or maintain the basin levels cannot be realistically achieved. The Groundwater Management Plan focuses on reduction of water use in the agricultural sector as the key implementation factor. While we support efforts to be water efficient and continue to document the efforts of the wine industry to support and enhance water efficiency practices in the vineyards and wineries, it is worth noting that the Agricultural Sector is the only sector that has experienced a net water consumption reduction by 50% over the last 30 years while other sectors (urban, rural residential and small commercial) have tripled in consumption.

In order to develop solutions to address today's challenges it is necessary to have an accurate depiction of today's conditions. For this reason, we support updating the Groundwater Model to provide for more accurate and complete information based on current data collection points. As we learned last fall, the groundwater model for which the Resource Capacity Study and supporting documentation is based on includes data collection ending in 1997. This provides a 15 year gap in data not reflective of activities in land use patterns in every sector, additional well pumping, water recharge, and precipitation.

The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance remains supportive of projects that develop a common understanding of the groundwater issues; identify management opportunities; and projects that

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identify additional supplemental water supplies. An updated model will enable the ability to run meaningful simulations to understand the effect on the basin resulting from various land use patterns, well pumping activity, water conservation, and alternative water supply solutions. We look forward to the continuation of being key stakeholders in the important efforts to address the issues in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin and develop solution-oriented projects to meet the Basin Management Objective of maintaining or stabilizing the basin.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Bodrogi  
Government Affairs Coordinator  
Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance

Sent via e-mail to:

Susan Baker for distribution to the Board of Supervisors:

1st	District Supervisor Frank Mecham
2nd	District Supervisor Bruce Gibson
3rd	District Supervisor Adam Hill
4th	District Supervisor Paul Teixeira
5th	District Supervisor James Patterson