

DRAFT ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 5, 2015

Members and Alternates Present: Lisen Bonnier, Tom Ikeda, Jerry Diefenderfer, Mark Pearce, Sarah Kramer, Dick Nock, Eric Michielssen, Don Warden, Joy Fitzhugh, Chuck Pritchard, Robert Hartzell, Claire Wineman, Neil Roberts, Dan Rodrigues, Mary Bianchi

Absent Members: Melanie Blankenship, Greg France, Jean-Pierre Wolff, Richard Hawley, David Pruitt

Guests Present: none

Staff Present: Marc Lea – San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture, John Diodati - San Luis Obispo County Planning Department

1. Call to Order: 6:02 Vice-Chair Michielssen

2. Open Comment:

- Claire Wineman discussed that the Board of Supervisors will be addressing proposed changes in the Countywide Water Conservation Program on both October 6 and October 27. Although the final Board action is slated to occur on October 27th, anyone wanting to offer public comment would be able to address their concerns at either of the two meetings since the topic is agendaized on both dates. Additional information regarding the October 27th hearing can be found at:
<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/water-amendments.htm>
- Joy Fitzhugh mentioned a press release she received in September from the USFWS addressing the potential to list nine species occurring in California and Nevada as either threatened or endangered. Details on the listing determinations and 90-day findings can be found at:
<http://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ID=F5F146F6-982D-C07E-25C9939C259054B7&Source=iframe>

3. Announcements from ALAB Members & County Ag Department Staff Updates:

- Marc Lea informed ALAB members that several additional Asian citrus psyllids (ACP) had been detected in the county since the group last met in July. There were additional detections in Cayucos, northeast Arroyo Grande, and the Nipomo area. The ACP quarantines in SLO County have expanded and now cover a geographical region running roughly from the City of San Luis Obispo south to the Santa Barbara county line. The vast majority of citrus growers in the county are now included within the ACP quarantine area, which affects how they harvest, process, and move their fruit.
- Marc also updated ALAB members on recent additional detections of the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) within the county, and the subsequent expansion of the quarantine areas in the southern portion of the county. There was a bit of good news regarding the LBAM quarantine, as winegrapes were recently exempted from domestic shipping

requirements which will ease the regulatory requirements of vineyards occurring within any of the county's LBAM quarantine regions.

- Marc read from a recent statement released by the State Water Board explaining the adoption of a resolution that discontinues the Grazing Regulatory Action Project (GRAP) on a statewide basis, and moves any subsequent actions down to the regional level. ALAB members discussed this decision and requested an update from staff of the local Regional Board at a future ALAB meeting regarding their intended direction on this topic in light of the recent state ruling.
- Marc informed ALAB members of recent legislation passed at the state level with regard to medical marijuana. AB 243 requires the promulgation of regulations relating to medical marijuana and its cultivation. At this time, it's unclear what the impact of AB243 will be, but it's possible that county agriculture departments will have to take on a greater role in the future regulation of growing medical marijuana with regard to pesticide use, certification of scales used to weigh product, and issuing of licenses to approved growers.

4. Previous Minutes: MOTION: Pritchard Approve July 6, 2015 minutes: **Motion 2nd: Warden Approved:** Unanimous by all voting members in attendance with two abstentions from Diefenderfer and Bonnier due to absence from the July meeting. No "No" votes.

5. Presentation: Update on the formation of a water management district for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin, John Diodati – San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department

- Marc Lea gave a little background on the presentation planned for tonight's meeting, and mentioned that a number of ALAB members had requested an update on the current status of regulatory issues surrounding the Paso Robles Groundwater basin.
- Marc introduced John Diodati of the San Luis Obispo County Public Works department, and noted that he had been present for a similar presentation of Mr. Diodati's at another meeting and found the information straightforward and extremely helpful in understanding the overall status of events surrounding the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin
- John Diodati provided a presentation that spoke to both the recent laws passed at the State level and the current status of the proposed Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Water district.
- State legislation passed last year, collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014(SGMA), has become a key impetus for local areas to manage their own groundwater issues, otherwise the State may take over local groundwater management
- Diodati explained that except for a handful of specifically enumerated basins, SGMA covers all areas even basins that are already under adjudication. In our area, the Santa Maria Valley and Los Osos groundwater basins were the only two basins that were specifically exempted from the requirements of SGMA.

- A discussion was had regarding the definition of groundwater basin boundaries, as listed in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118. Diodati explained that the basin boundaries can be adjusted during the upcoming months, but will likely be finalized by 2017 and become permanent at least for the purposes of SGMA.
- The groundwater basins that DWR has placed in their draft list of having conditions of critical overdraft will require the quickest response as regulated by SGMA. Locally, those basins on the critical overdraft list include both the Paso Robles area groundwater basin and the Cuyama groundwater basin. The Edna Valley basin was named to the moderate overdraft category and will also need to have a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) developed.
- Due to its current draft designation as a groundwater basin in critical overdraft, the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Paso Roble basin is due in 2020. If the basin comes off of the critical list, then there would be an additional two years before the GSP was due.
- After explaining the broad requirements of SGMA, Diodati covered the detailed logistics for the potential formation of the Paso Robles Water District. Information presented included the recent LAFCO approval of both the water district powers and the water district boundary, as well as a prohibition on the export of groundwater outside of the water district boundary, a breakdown on the 9 member board of the water district and how those 9 members will be elected, and an explanation of costs required to fund the district based on different parcel types and land uses.
- Diodati went on to explain the ballot by mail process, which will give landowners the ability to vote “yes” or “no” on the formation of the water district, as well as elect two Board of Directors based on one of three categories of acreage owned. A separate ballot issued at the same time will give registered voters the opportunity to elect 3 Board of Directors and vote “yes” or “no” on local funding for SGMA compliance (which will require a 2/3 approval vote); however, registered voters will not have a vote on the actual formation of the district unless they are landowners within the proposed basin boundaries.
- Diodati noted that the Board of Supervisors is expected to call for the water district elections in November, and the elections themselves are expected to take place by mail in March 2016.
- Jerry Diefenderfer and Chuck Pritchard had several questions regarding the proposed boundaries of the water district, how those boundaries currently differ from the Department of Water Resources’ Bulletin 188 boundaries, and how those differences would affect landowners in those areas with regard to costs per affected parcel.

6. Future Agenda Items: local regional boards approach take on GRAP.

Next meeting – November 2, 2015

Meeting Adjourned: 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Marc Lea, County Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures

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