



Stanislaus County Water Advisory Committee

Minutes

September 24, 2025
9:00 a.m. Stanislaus Farm
Bureau

Members Present to Vote:

Daniel Bays
Caitie Diemel
David Wright
Sean Roddy

Christy McKinnon
Jim Mortensen
Tom Orvis
Sue Zwahlen

Tim Sanders
Edward Tobias
Terry Withrow
Navjot Athwal

Members Absent:

Rachelle Antinetti
Louis Brichetto
Larry Byrd

Vince Dkyzeul
Rod Vilas
Cooper Rossiter
Katie Staack

Joseph P Day
Trent Voss

- I. Call to Order at 9:00 a.m. (The entire meeting can be viewed at <https://www.stancounty.com/er/groundwater/wac.shtm> and by selecting the video option for the September 24, 2025, Water Advisory Committee meeting. Due to lack of a quorum until 9:14 a.m., public comment and approval of the July 30, 2025, meeting minutes were moved further down the agenda.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Roll Call

Terry Withrow arrived at 9:04 a.m.
Daniel Bays arrived at 9:10 a.m.
Tim Sanders arrived at 9:14 a.m.
Trent Voss joined online at 9:10 a.m.

A quorum of voting members was present.

IV. Informational Items (not subject to a formal vote)

1. Mike Tietze – East Turlock Subbasin: Update, Groundwater Accounting Platform Demo, and Review of Approach to Issue Resolution

Tim Sanders inquired as to the total number of acres to be included in the GSA's land fallowing program, Mike clarified that several thousand are targeted, however the bigger project, the Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program (MBLR) will provide additional options for voluntary land fallowing to reduce groundwater extraction fees and allow pooling, credits and trading options for growers. Additionally, the TID replenishment water program provides 35,000 AFY when available as the program has been during the past three years which has significantly benefited SGMA implementation progress with growers signing up and the GSA to help with infrastructure upgrades to expand the program where possible. MBLR pilot projects, and additional projects that will enhance watershed services and deliver flood flows, and other small-scale projects such as water basins are set to begin next year.

Sean Roddy asked if the GSA is providing incentives for water use efficiency upgrades to reduce the total percentage of necessary land to be fallowed, such as the potential for the GSA to provide credits for micro-drip system credits to help lessen the burden to water users. Mike explained that to his knowledge about 90% of the irrigated crops have upgraded their systems, and that the GSA encourages further conservation measures to be taken where possible and will look into finding additional incentives to add to GSA programs.

2. Jarin Tasnim Anika, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources – URCTA SGMA Technical Assistance for Small Farms – **Attachment 2**.

The URTC program is a partnership with the California Alliance of Family Farms and focuses on the socioeconomic perspective of small farmers and barriers to SGMA implementation. The primary focus of the program is to educate small farmers and provide access to language translation services where needed. One on one field consultations are available with program staff and can focus on increasing irrigation efficiency, obtaining resources for SGMA compliance and customized technical services to analyze water consumption data, soil quality, and obtain available grant funding opportunities to support small farming operations, and larger farms when available. Program staff has observed that additional outreach is necessary to engage small farmers for participation in SGMA and GSA activities and programs, and to obtain additional data to close data gaps related to identifying water demand for shared crop and tenancy variations, and possible disparities between GSA fee assessments and impacts from small farming operations.

V. **Action Items (subject to formal vote)**

1. Approval of July 30, 2025, Meeting Minutes - **Attachment 1** The minutes of the July 30, 2025, meeting was presented by the Chairperson. The members were asked to consider the minutes for approval.

Motion: Tim Sanders

Second: Jim Mortensen

Vote: Unanimous

VI. **Informational Items (continued - not subject to a formal vote)**

3. Ryo Takanashi – WaterOne App – Practical Tools that Help Stakeholders Navigate SGMA – **Attachments 3, 4.**

The WaterOne Ai team has discovered two pain points while researching and working with growers which are challenges associated with managing GSA groundwater allocations and inability to efficiently obtain vital information: changes and progress - from GSA and other regulatory agencies responsible for overseeing compliance with SGMA and GSP development and implementation. Ryo and his team built 2 tools to help growers. The WaterOne App allows growers to take a picture of their meter and uses Ai to help manage groundwater use and resolve issues with tracking and storing data, addressing issues associated with evapotranspiration product data lag, plan for the future, and comply with GSA groundwater accounting and well registration requirements where applicable.

The second tool is a Podcast that uses Ai to take a summary of GSA and related water agency meetings, provide Board action summaries, lists of consultants, and information about key topics such as state meeting determinations, and subsidence best management practices. All Podcast material is screened by human staffed prior to computing by Ai and chat bot access is granted to users at no cost for normal landowner/grower use.

4. Christy McKinnon – SGMA Updates

Modesto Subbasin – Important Dates

October 1, 2025: Draft Well Mitigation Plan to be Released to Public

October 15, 2025: Workshop No. 4: Well Mitigation Plan

October 24, 2024: Public comments due for Well Mitigation Plan

Turlock Subbasin – ETGSA Upcoming Workshop

September 25, 2025: Groundwater Accounting Platform Self Reporting

Delta-Mendota Subbasin – Next Steps

Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSAs Joint Powers Authority Agreement
Delta-Mendota Subbasin Domestic Well Mitigation Policy- Amended for
Water Quality Mitigation – **Attachment 5**

Additional Water Advisory Committee - Drought Task Force Meetings scheduled for:

January 28, 2026: 9 a.m., Farm Bureau

March 25, 2026: 9 a.m., Farm Bureau

VII. Public Comment

Rueben Wegner, Stanislaus County Office of Emergency Services, announced that requests for participation are open through October 30, 2025 to help provide input on the Stanislaus County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

Terry Withrow updated the Committee on his efforts in partnership with Buck Condit to develop an ad hoc group to work together and resolve issues that have arisen with the development of management actions in the Modesto Groundwater Subbasin. A meeting occurred with representatives from the Non-District East and Non-District West, irrigation districts, Modesto Chamber of Commerce, and Turlock Subbasin GSA managers to obtain all perspectives of Subbasin management and find common ground to work through issues. The meeting was heated but productive and attendees considered past experiences between the West and East Turlock GSAs and how the GSAs had come to find an agreement on how to effectively manage the Turlock Subbasin. Ad hoc group members were appointed by Withrow to work with a facilitator and provide a recommendation to the STRGBA GSA and possibly the Water Advisory Committee before the end of October to improve the process and assist the GSA member agencies in developing and approving a good end product that will contribute to the needs of all groundwater users.

Bill Lyons encouraged Withrow to include the City of Riverbank and the community of Del Rio to attend future meetings regarding these matters.

Ryo Takanashi from WaterOne Ai informed the Committee and guests that there is also a weekly newsletter associated with the WaterOne Ai products and that he will sign anyone up if they reach out to him by text, email or phone if interested.

VIII. Roundtable Discussion

IX. Meeting Adjourned: 10:56 a.m.

5. Scheduling of Next Regular Meeting - Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. - Meeting location: Stanislaus Farm Bureau, 1201 L St. Modesto, CA.

PREPARED BY:

Christy McKinnon, Groundwater Resources Manager