

Groundwater Management Area 1

Joint Planning Group Meeting

Thursday May 21, 2020

9:30 AM

MEETING MINUTES

The Groundwater Management Area Number 1 (GMA #1) met on Thursday, May 21, 2020, at 9:30 am via a Zoom web meeting, with the following members in attendance:

Voting Members Present:

Bob Zimmer, North Plains Groundwater Conservation District
Lynn Tate, High Plains Underground Water Conservation District
Danny Hardcastle, Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District
Tom Isaacs, Hemphill County Underground Water Conservation District
Jim Haley, Hemphill County Underground Water Conservation District

Other Groundwater Management Area 1 Representatives Present:

Janet Guthrie, Hemphill County Underground Water Conservation District
Jason Coleman, High Plains Underground Water Conservation District
Steve Walthour, North Plains Groundwater Conservation District
C.E. Williams, Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District

Guests Present:

Robert Bradley, Texas Water Development Board
Temple McKinnon, Texas Water Development Board
Chad Pernel, Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
Kent Satterwhite, Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
Victoria Whitehead, High Plains Water District
Wade Oliver, INTERA

PRPC Staff Present:

Dustin Meyer, Local Government Services Director

1. Call to Order – Welcome

Meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with Chairman Zimmer presiding.

2. Roll Call/Introductions/Quorum

Dustin Meyer called the roll for the GMA #1 board and established that a quorum was present. Tom Isaacs was introduced as a new voting member for Hemphill County Underground Water Conservation District. Jim Haley thanked everyone for his time serving as a voting member.

3. Opening Pledge

Chairman Zimmer led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Public Comment

No members of the public indicated a desire to make comments.

5. Discuss and Consider – Updates from Texas Water Development Board

Robert Bradley stated that TWDB staff has been working from home since March and that they can now approve management plans remotely. Mr. Bradley indicated that the most recent exempt use estimates will be provided in June and Natalie Ballew or Jean Perez can be contacted with any questions. Third, Mr. Bradley stated that the planning staff requested that DFCs be submitted earlier as they are trying to do irrigation demands for 2022 for the next water plan; otherwise they will have to use the old MAGs. Questions can be directed to Mr. Bradley or Natalie Ballew.

Wade Oliver asked how early MAGs would need to be developed. Mr. Bradley stated that draft numbers could work as well, and that he would get Mr. Oliver in touch with the people working on the plan.

Steve Walthour asked if 2019 and 2020 production numbers for agriculture would be needed in addition to 2018 numbers. Mr. Bradley stated that he would have to ask the planning team.

Temple McKinnon stated that she was available for any questions. Mr. Oliver asked if she could discuss how irrigation demands are limited by the MAG. Ms. McKinnon indicated that it's the same methodology utilized for the regional plans that were developed to be in sync with the groundwater availability for the irrigation demands. Demands were held constant based upon historical trends of use for the first decade and commensurately reduced following the trend of depletion through the DFC. Ms. McKinnon reiterated that it's dependent upon their agency developing those MAGs and they just wanted to make everyone aware of the timelines. For the next plan, they will be developing the projections for the non-municipal demands first because there's an anticipated delay in census data and looking at the municipal demands second.

6. Discuss and Consider – The Minutes from the December February 18, 2020 GMA #1 Meeting

Danny Hardcastle made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Lynn Tate seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Discuss and Consider – Presentation by INTERA Regarding Results of the Model Run As Requested by GMA #1 at the February 2020 Meeting

Wade Oliver stated that model run results were not yet available. Developing confidence in the model run results is taking longer than expected; however, INTERA has been working diligently on the model runs. From a DFC standpoint, the results seem very similar to the last round of DFCs, which is good as it provides a comparison, but there are some differences: (1) extension to 2080, (2) updated the historical period in the model/changing the baseline, and (3) trying to match a 40/50/80% remaining over 50 years for every 50-year increment. As such, some tweaks are being made that are making the runs more complex.

Mr. Oliver stated that he would like to get the results out to the GMA #1 members and district staff at least a couple of weeks before the next meeting for review and feedback. Mr. Oliver stated that the runs are close to completion, but he did not want to risk presenting results that had to be pulled back as some questions still exist.

Mr. Hardcastle asked if there is an anticipated timeline of when they might receive the results. Mr. Oliver estimated that the results would be ready for everyone to review in approximately 2 weeks, allowing 2 weeks of review prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Oliver asked for confirmation about whether or not DFCs similar to the Dockum are what the members would like to see. Chairman Zimmer asked the managers for their opinion. C.E. Williams asked Mr. Oliver to refresh the group on what they had last time. The Dockum DFCs for North Plains District were at least 40% of the available drawdown remaining over the 50-year period; for Panhandle GCD, the DFCs were 30 feet of average water level decline over 50 years; for the High Plains UWCD, the DFCs were 40 feet of average drawdown over 50 years. Mr. Oliver stated that for the Ogallala the DFCs include volume remaining targets and average drawdown targets. The DFCs for the Dockum include available drawdown targets and average drawdown targets.

Mr. Williams stated that he thinks they would be looking at something similar to what they had for the Dockum last time. Mr. Walthour stated that he would like to see the runs based on the DFCs developed last time and that would help them decide if different DFCs were needed.

Jason Coleman stated that a GMA #2 meeting was held on Tuesday in a similar format. Dr. Bill Hutchison is engaged in consulting for modeling and explanatory report and he reviewed some of the pumping scenarios that will be carried out to 2080. Mr. Coleman stated that he would share that information with Mr. Oliver to help coordinate the efforts.

Chairman Zimmer confirmed with Mr. Oliver that they would be trying to involve the actual drawdowns as current as possible with the projected drawdowns. Mr. Oliver stated that they updated the historical period of the model through 2018 as part of what was discussed at the last meeting, so for most of GMA #1, 2018 is the base year (for High Plains, 2012 is the base year). The drawdown and percent remaining calculations are for different base years depending on where you are in GMA #1 for both the Dockum and the Ogallala.

Mr. Oliver stated that everyone is free to reach out to him as needed.

8. Discuss and Consider – Potential Paths Forward in Joint Planning Process Including but not Limited to Selection of Additional Model Run Scenario Metrics for Further Evaluation

Wade Oliver stated that this item was contingent on Agenda Item #7. He stated that he is assuming the group's decision regarding a path forward is to review the first model run before making a decision about additional model runs, to which no one objected.

9. Discuss and Consider – Scheduling of the Next Meetings of GMA #1

Thursday, June 25th, at 9:30 am was agreed as the next GMA #1 meeting date and time (in-person vs. digital to be determined).

10. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10 am.