

**Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District (EPCWD)**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**August 11, 2021**

Windfall Farms Conference Room, 4710 Flying Paster Lane, Paso Robles

**ATTENDANCE**

Directors Present:

Lee Nesbitt (by videoconference)  
Jerry Reaugh (by videoconference)  
Hilary Graves (by videoconference)  
Herb Rowland (by videoconference)

Others present:

Lee Knudtson, GSI  
Nate Page, GSI  
Paul Sorensen, GSI  
Randy Diffenbaugh  
Alan Doud  
Guests (by phone and videoconference)

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM by Hilary Graves.

**ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 14, 2021 MEETING**

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES made by Jerry Reaugh, seconded by Lee Nesbitt, roll call vote:

Hilary Graves– yes  
Jerry Reaugh – yes  
Lee Nesbitt – yes  
Herb Rowland - abstain

Motion passed 3-0, and one abstention.

**ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT**

Willy Cunha commented that EPCWD's efforts are much appreciated. (Thank you, Willy)

**ITEM 4: REVIEW OF PRESENTATION MADE TO SHANDON-SAN JUAN WATER DISTRICT ON 3D-VISUALIZATION OF SKYTEM AERIAL SURVEY DATA**

Lee Knudtson, GSI, presented an introduction to "Leapfrog", initially developed for Shandon-San Juan Water District, a three-dimensional visualization of the Paso Robles groundwater subbasin utilizing the data collected in 2019 by the SkyTEM scanner. That data was brought into Leapfrog and combined with data from existing studies to show subsurface areas with higher transmissibility of water. The model confirms some of the earlier studies' conclusions such as the Creston anticlinorium's barrier to flow. The data also shows faults including at least one previously unknown. The model builds upon our general knowledge of the Basin, and allows for study of potential recharge areas within the Basin, such as the upper Huer Huero Creek area.

**ITEM 5: CONSIDER PROJECT PARTNERSHIP WITH SHANDON-SAN JUAN WATER DISTRICT ON 3D-VISUALIZATION OF SKYTEM AERIAL SURVEY DATA**

Hilary Graves opened the discussion by describing the model as the kind of tech that should be expanded upon. Jerry Reaugh asked Willy Cunha of the SSJWD to give some background on the project. He reported that the original study participants developed the Basin cross sections and that once the data was made public, GSI was able to bring it into Leapfrog in order to create the more-enhanced 3D visualizations. This allows for cross sections all across the Basin, with substrate layers matched to surface features (streams, creeks, rivers, etc) and topography. Additional data can be obtained to further develop the model by driving the data-gap areas (as opposed to flying over them) with similar equipment onboard. The model has great value in pinpointing potential best future project locations, as well as adding to the GSP model. Jerry Reaugh confirmed that the cost for Leapfrog to date is \$20,000 and asked the question as to whether EPCWD would like to participate as well as whether SSJWD would like to have EPCWD participate. Herb Rowland commented that the data is good and now would be a good time to pursue adding data points where there are gaps as there is a fair amount of fallowed land currently which allows for more easily obtained data collection. Willy Cunha confirmed that additional partnership(s) on the project, including the County should it want to participate, would only benefit the knowledge base. Hilary Graves asked if there is money in the EPCWD budget to allow for participation and Jerry Reaugh responded that yes, there is \$30,000 to \$50,000 set aside and uncommitted at this time for projects.

MOTION TO SHARE 50% (\$10,000.00) OF CURRENT COSTS ON THE PROJECT WITH SHANDON-SAN JUAN WATER DISTRICT AND NOMINATION OF HERB ROWLAND TO WORK WITH SHANDON-SAN JUAN WATER DISTRICT TO DEVELOP A PROPOSAL FOR NEXT PHASE made by Jerry Reaugh and seconded by Herb Rowland, roll call vote:

- Jerry Reaugh – yes
- Hilary Graves – yes
- Herb Rowland – yes
- Lee Nesbitt – yes

Motion passes 4-0.

**ITEM 6: CONSIDER EXISTING SOLTERR STRATEGIES AGREEMENT AND POTENTIAL SIX-MONTH EXTENSION AT \$1500.00 PER MONTH**

Staff reviewed the proposed extension as covering the period of June through December 2021. Jerry Reaugh described the scaling back of the Economic Study outreach effort made by Solterra, and an increased availability to be on call for press releases assistance (such as for the Groundwater Level Monitoring System) and tracking of current issues. Hilary Graves asked if there is sufficient funding in the budget for this extension, and also why Shandon-San Juan Water District is choosing not to continue participating at this time. Randy Diffenbaugh explained that with the recent applications for Nacimiento water made by Shandon-San Juan Water District, their District must conserve funds wherever possible.

Jerry Reaugh reported that the budget for outreach such as Solterra would provide is currently \$5,000; this commitment would require \$9,000, but there are still uncommitted available funds to cover the overage.

**MOTION TO EXTEND THE SOLTERRA STRATEGIES AGREEMENT FOR SIX MONTHS UNTIL DECEMBER, 2021**

made by Herb Rowland, seconded by Lee Nesbitt, roll call vote:

Hilary Graves – yes

Herb Rowland – yes

Lee Nesbitt – yes

Jerry Reaugh – yes

Motion passed 4-0.

**ITEM 7: UPDATE ON STATE WATER CONSULTIN PROJECT**

The ad hoc committee has met twice with consultant Paavo Ogren, and with the legal consultants once. All are conducting research on how to move forward. The Board of Supervisors in their August 10 meeting considered adopting a set of tools to allow more flexibility in utilizing State Water, with August 24 as their date to accept and adopt those tools. Randy Diffenbaugh considers the County's past management of State Water to have under-utilized the option of selling water that was otherwise spilled with no benefit. The tools the County is considering would allow for such sales, which could then be used to fortify options in the County basins needing support.

**ITEM 8: UPDATE FROM AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE GROUNDWATER LEVEL MONITORING NETWORK PROJECT**

Jerry Reaugh reported that the next cycle of readings were completed August 3-4, with 28 to 29 wells measured. There has been some difficulty performing the actual readings on some well do to well design and physical constraints, but well records on some of these have been well-maintained and may be added to the District database. He asked whether this middle reading is useful, with the next reading coming post-harvest, and perhaps the District should consider taking reading twice-yearly, the same schedule as the County is using. Hilary Graves commented that it would be good to review the data collected to date before making a decision on going from three to two times per year.

**ITEM 9: STAFF UPDATE ON ELECTIONS PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

Staff reported that at the final deadline (August 6), only three candidates had filed for the three open seats: Hilary Graves, Lee Nesbitt, and Dana Merrill. This means that there will be no need for an election for the three seats in November, as the Board of Supervisors, at the request of the District, will appoint the three candidates who filed. The letter requesting same is prepared and will be sent August 12, 2021 to the Board of Supervisors, at which time it will be placed on their consent agenda for a future meeting, but prior to the expiration of the open seats' term in early December.

**ITEM 10: TREASURER'S REPORT**

Jerry Reaugh reported that the assessments invoices totaling approximately \$92,500 were sent out in July and \$38,716 has been collected to date. The current bank balance is \$144,000.

**ITEM 11: NEW BUSINESS – REQUESTS FOR ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON NEXT AGENDA**

Jerry Reaugh reminded the Board that the August 24 meeting of the Board of Supervisors will have an item on extending the current Ag Offset Ordinance to August 31, 2022. There was a discussion of the tiered

nature of the proposed replacement planting ordinance, and the potential of up to 90,000 additional acre/feet of water that could be pumped if the replacement ordinance changes the 5-AF exemption to 25AF as is being discussed. Jerry Reaugh noted that the new ordinance will have to undergo CEQA review due to the potential for additional pumping. He also noted that County staff reported that there are currently 40 unused offset permits granted and questioned whether those would transfer to a new ordinance or expire.

Staff reminded the Board that Governor Newsome's executive order allowing for virtual meetings will end on September 30 and that the District will return to in-person meetings after that date. Alan Doud expanded on that with an explanation of the accompanying requirements of a physical quorum required within the District boundaries, and 72-hour noticing requirements for any remotely-attending director who must be in a location allowing public attendance.

Willy Cunha announced that there will be an approximately 15 minute long video summary of the presentation given today in Item #4 made available to the District for distribution and posting on the District's website.

**ITEM 12: SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**

**ITEM 13: ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Jerry Reaugh, seconded by Lee Nesbitt, roll call vote:\

Hilary Graves – yes

Lee Nesbitt – yes

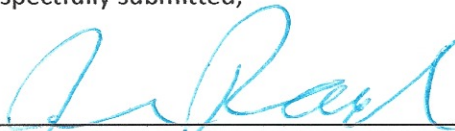
Herb Rowland – yes

Jerry Reaugh – yes


Motion passed 4-0.


Meeting adjourned at 4:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jerry Reaugh, Secretary/Treasurer

Accepted:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Merrill, President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date