

**MERCED AREA GROUNDWATER POOL INTERESTS**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
March 4, 2009

**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

At 2:07 P.M., Chair Eltal welcomed those present and called the meeting to order. He stated this meeting is a preface to future Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) meetings.

The sign in sheet showed the following present:

<b>Position/Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chairman/Merced Irrigation District	Hicham Eltal
Vice Chairman/Secretary/ Stevinson Water District	Bob Kelley
CA Dept. of Water Resources	Tom Lutterman
Dauids Engineering	Grant Davids
East Merced Resource Conservation Dist.	Cindy Lashbrook
Geomatrix Consulting	David Bean
Le Grand-Athlone W. D.	Kole Upton
City of Livingston	Richard Warren
Mason, Robbins, Browning and Godwin	Art Godwin
City of Merced	David Tucker
Merced County Farm Bureau	Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo
Merquin County W.D.	David Nervino
San Joaquin et al.	Maureen McCorry
Winton Water and Sanitary District	Johnnie Baptista
WRIME Inc.	Ali Taghavi
Yolo County Flood Control and	
CA Dept. of Water Resources	Tanya Meeth
CA Dept. of Water Resources	Dane Matthis
San Joaquin Raptor Society	Lydia Miller
City of Atwater	Lyn Gulett
City of Atwater	Jeff Mondlock
Mariposa County RCD	Brenda Ostrom
UC Merced Fiscal Planning	Gene Barrera
Merced County Planning	Bill Nicholson
Merced County Planning	Marion Carosso
San Joaquin Valley Conservancy	Bill Hatch
Merced County Environmental Health	Ron Rowe
Merced County Public Works	Kellie Jacobs
Merced Irrigation District Director	Suzy Hultgren

Chair Eltal recognized that at this time there is a quorum.

**ROLL CALL**

See above.

## **WRITTEN PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None

## **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None

## **BOARD ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None

## **BOARD CONSENT CALENDAR**

### **1. Acceptance of Draft Minutes by Consensus: Board Meeting of October 29, 2008.**

On motion of Mrs. Lashbrook, seconded by Mr. Kelly, the Board unanimously approved the above referenced minutes.

## **REPORTS**

### **1. Review MAGPI 2008 through 2010 Activities Plan.**

Groundwater model funding breakdown is as follows: Department of Water Resources (DWR) 50%, City of Merced 25%, and Merced Irrigation District 25%. Purpose of Groundwater model is to learn the different characteristics of our groundwater basin so that it may be better managed. An agreement will be entered into so that only one agency will need to sign with DWR, MID will sign on behalf of group. Tom Lutterman stated that with the State budget being passed, he is hopeful that projects will start to move forward.

Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo asked if other agencies can contribute to Groundwater model funding, Mr. Eltal stated that there is a mechanism in place that will allow agencies contribute as the project is implemented.

### **2. DWR Status Report on Items Pertinent to MAGPI's Activities.**

Tom Lutterman stated that new projects have been placed on hold but that the money that had been tagged for the groundwater model is still there. Mr. Lutterman further stated that in a few weeks the state would test the bond market and if the results were good projects would begin to move forward. Some changes should be noted: Dane Mattis has replaced Ben Igawa and Bret Wykoff is the IRWMP Planning contact and Tanya Meeth is the IRWMP implementation contact.

### **3. Review Water Statistics Report.**

Mr. Eltal stated, generally not much has changed in regards to urban water use. Also, as a rule the year will dictate groundwater use, dryer years will show higher groundwater use. Groundwater monitoring charts reflected monthly water consumption for areas throughout the MAGPI region. Mr. Baptista stated that a large percentage of properties have been changed to meters and those metered communities use less water.

Mr. Eltal stated that the figures that were shown include municipal and agricultural groundwater usage. Mr. Eltal stated that recharge contributed by urban was constant but significantly less than agricultural recharge. However that latter is cyclical and dependant on the water year. Agriculture well data is primarily from MID wells because most of the other irrigation districts do not own wells, they are private. Bob Kelly has information regarding well uses and will provide it for further research. Cindy Lashbrook asked if there was any statistics on per capita water use. Mr. Eltal stated that the cities would be better suited to handle that data as it would require analysis of lot size and other factors. Mrs. Lashbrook stated that these statistics would be useful for an educational program for droughts.

Tanya Meeth stated that educational projects could be funded under proposition 84 and that multi faceted projects would rank higher for funding under the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan.

Mr. Eltal stated MID board has committed to provide growers the same amount of water as last year and a growing season similar to last year as well which will leave the lake at about 218,000 ac-ft. However, he added, should condition change to the better, the Board could ease restrictions on water.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Merced Water Supply Plan: recommends actions that need to be undertaken, if the plan is to be used by any entity.**

Mr. Eltal stated that the Merced Water Supply Plan (MWSP) made certain recommendations: 1- MID pursue water conservations efforts. 2-, groundwater basin users recharge 40,000 ac-ft by 2040. The concern is that many projects are referencing the study but not implementing the recommendations. Mrs. Westmorland-Pedrozo stated that many of the municipalities are allowing consultants to use the MWSP within their development plan but not including mitigation. MID board accepted but did not approve the MWSP when it was finished in 1995, since recharge basins were yet to be proven to succeed. Mr. Eltal states that MAGPI cannot stop people from using the MWSP document, but we can let people know that the study calls for actions, and those would be mitigation measures. Mr. Eltal stated that using the MWSP study as justification for availability of water, is not sufficient without following it recommended actions. He added, Mr. Eltal stated that the plan recommends intentional recharge only, as a means for sustaining groundwater levels. However from a water budget standpoint there are other methods to achieve the same result and that is why a water resources model discussing such alternatives is crucial to make the plan feasible. Many members and attendees showed concern regarding the long term effects of misrepresentation of the MWSP. Richard Warren stated that cities are doing their part in regards to recharge by allowing storm drainage water to percolate back into the ground as well as treated water percolating back into the ground. Mr. Warren further stated that the urban sector is a major contributor to recharge. There was a debate regarding efforts taken towards recharge. Mr. Davids recommended to MAGPI to look forward on not backward.

### **2. Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) kickoff meeting: Two panelists from other Central Valley Regions shared their regions' IRWM plan experiences with MAGPI.**

Mr. Eltal discussed Importance of the Integrated Regional Management Plan where is water look at as one resource, regardless of its form: agricultural supply, municipal supply, wastewater, recycled water, environmental water, flood water, recreational water etc. There are proposition 84 monies for those regions that can form a viable region that is approved by the State Department of Water. The RAP process is a new process that is intended to move region boundary away from jurisdictional lines and into hydrologic lines (e.g. watershed, groundwater basins, a combination thereof, etc.). Mr. Eltal stated that MID service area exists in both, the Turlock groundwater basin and the Merced Groundwater Basin as well as its Merced River Project which is located in Mariposa County. MID therefore, does not necessarily see the viability of a region following or including its entire jurisdictional boundary. Brenda Ostrom representing Mariposa IRWMP stated that the Stated does not want to see overlaps or gaps between different regions. Rita Kidd of Mariposa stated that the groundwater basin is not a basin without the water source which is the watersheds in the hills. David Tucker stated that the groundwater basin is recharged by water that flows from Mariposa County.

Mr. Eltal stated that the types of water use within the Merced groundwater basin are similar to Turlock and Stanislaus. Bob Kelly expressed concerns that too big of a region will be too hard to manage in the future. Mr. Eltal suggested that one way to look at the region boundary is controlled streams verses natural streams and weave in and out of Mariposa County. Ali Taghavi stated that parties that would be working together should have a common thread in regards to water supply. Also there will be a commonality between the water supply users within the watershed and by going up into the high country could make finding commonalities within the watershed more difficult. Kole Upton felt that outreach should extend to Mariposa and continue with an open dialog. Cindy Lashbrook stated that there is usually a cap per region so having one large region will yield less money than two or three smaller groups. Mr. Eltal stated that if there is anyone who feels that MAGPI should step back from heading process than MAGPI will do so. Mr. Tucker asked about funding through IRWMP. Mr. Eltal states that the boundary need to be identified prior to any grant money becoming available. Ms. Meeth stated that the RAP will be an annual process and so if everything is not perfect there will be another opportunity. Most of the questions can be answered in a conceptual context. The larger the area the longer it will take to analyze the data for the RAP. Ms. Meeth further stated that stakeholder outreach is a very important function of the RAP process and that it should not be overlooked. The following people have volunteered to participate in a rap committee:

Cindy Lashbrook  
Ron Rowe  
Bob Kelly  
Gene Barrera  
Lydia Miller  
Bill Hatch  
Maureen McCorry

## **BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD**

None

## **NEXT MEETING**

Chair Eltal stated the next MAGPI meeting will discuss how to approach the RAP and IRWMP processes. The next meeting will be on March 25, 2009, at Merced County Administration Building.

**ADJOURN**

At 5:00 P.M., on motion of Vice Chair Kelley, seconded by Mr. Upton, the meeting was adjourned.