

Mono County

Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District

Welcome!

The Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) is using this medium to inform and inspire residents of the Tri-Valley area to become involved in water conservation and understanding of water issues here in our beautiful valleys. We hope this quarterly newsletter will encourage your participation in this work. Soon we will transition from paper to an email newsletter. If you'd like to be on our email newsletter list please notify the TVGMD secretary@tvgmd.org

World Water Day 2022 Groundwater: Making the Invisible Visible

World Water Day was celebrated on March 22nd, but we can celebrate Water Day everyday of the year! Making the invisible visible is a theme that perfectly links into the work and commitment of the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District. And this newsletter :)



Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted February 23, 2022

TVGMD Core Vision: To preserve the ground water within the boundaries of the District (Chapter 844 of 1989 California Statutes).

Mission: To comply with the California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (2014) and other applicable laws (government code, water code etc.) as the law pertains to the District. This plan will be reviewed by the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis and may be amended as needed.

Key Issues:

1. Rebuild reputation with community members of the Tri-Valley.
2. Adopt values of mutual respect between the Board of Directors and the Advisory Board.
3. Move forward as a Groundwater Sustainability Agency after



Contacts and Links

TVGMD Website for more information, meeting reminders, etc. tvgmd.org, email: secretary@tvgmd.org

TVGMD Board of Directors

DIRECTOR A—Resident Owners

Carol Ann Mitchell term expires 11/30/2022
 Marion Dunn term expires 11/30/2022
 Phil West term expires 11/30/24
 Geri Bassett term expires 11/30/2024

DIRECTOR B—Resident/Owners + extraction

Vacancy – On the ballot - June 2022 primary
 Richard Moss term expires 11/30/2022
 Greg Allen term expires 11/30/2024

DIRECTOR EX-OFFICIO

Mono County District 2 Supervisor
 Rhonda Duggan

Advisory Board Members—we welcome your input, questions, etc!

Chalfant

Gina Barsi
 Betsy McDonald
 Amy Saladin

Benton

Michael Cook

Hammil

Dennis Murphy
 Andy Puhvel

being stationary with circumstances from the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority.

4. Improve our communication with each valley through newsletters or announcements on radio etc.
5. Build functioning accountable teams for well monitoring with approval from the Board of Directors. Rules for well monitoring are needed.

Essential Projects for Remainder of 2022:

1. *Reinstate Well Monitoring Program*
 - a. Assign monitoring team for county dump wells.
 - b. Assign TVGMD Director to CASGEM (California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring) to enter data for CA Department of Water Resources.
 - c. Schedule Training for Key Well (wells @ Chalfant & Benton landfills) volunteers.
 - d. Have legal counsel review previous Key Well documents.
2. *Secure District Records and Well Monitoring Equipment:* Work with county to secure records and well monitoring equipment.
3. *Revise District Environmental Handbook and Permit Rules and Fees:* District to work with legal counsel to update required CEQA statutes.
4. *Explore funding for Groundwater Model:* Work with Mono County to obtain funding for groundwater model.**
5. *District Finance:* Develop options for funding of District operations.
6. *Work on a Multi-Year Strategic Plan for use in a future GSP* (Groundwater Sustainability Plan).

**All future newsletters will be via email. Please email secretary@tvgmd.org to be put on the newsletter email list.
Thank you!**

The Legislative Battle for Tri-Valley Water Management

By Carol Ann Mitchell, TVGMD Director

In the late 1980s, a group of Tri-Valley citizens became aware of plans to potentially export water from Hammil Valley. Also of concern to citizens was the potential for the exportation of groundwater to Los Angeles through DWP and its holdings in Inyo County. A citizens group of Chalfant, Hammil and Benton formed the Tri-Valley Advisory Committee and began to bring their concerns to Mono County who was receptive to helping our area prevent water export and potential future environmental problems. In November 1988, Mono County Counsel James S. Reed prepared a memorandum on groundwater law and possible regulation by the County. The Memorandum laid out the basis for adopting a county-wide groundwater ordinance. Mono County spent months investigating possibly adopting a groundwater ordinance similar to the Inyo County model. The Inyo County groundwater ordinance was challenged in court and found to be unconstitutional. A similar ordinance in Nevada County was also found to be unconstitutional. What to do?

By 1989, Mono County Supervisors Paranick, Rake, and Reid began discussing with Assemblyman Norman Waters the possibility of legislating a groundwater management district similar to one approved by the legislature in 1983 for Sierra and Plumas counties. Assemblyman Norman Waters introduced AB 1941 in 1989 and coauthored by John Garamendi. The Mono County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution endorsing AB 1941 and the creation of the Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District. In May of 1989, a meeting was held between Mono County and local ranchers to address their concerns on AB 1941. Some ranchers felt that the bill would "deprive" them of the right to sell their groundwater and that there was ample supply of groundwater to export without affecting groundwater users in the proposed District. Mono County's argument was that under existing law at the time, the overlying groundwater basin users would have a very expensive burden of proving in court that groundwater export was damaging them. AB 1941 bill switched the burden to the proposed exporter to prove there was excess water available for export and sale. The Farm Bureau opposed passage of AB 1941 during all steps through the legislative process. It was their opposition that removed the funding sections of AB 1941 during committee hearings and is the reason that Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District is not funded to this date.

On July 24, 1989, the Senate Agriculture and Resources Committee voted 7-1 in favor of the AB 1941. Current TVGMD Board of Directors member Richard Moss' letter of support was read to the committee which stated "there are no statutes which regulate groundwater use in our county. We are simply asking for the same protections which the legislature saw fit to provide to our sister counties (Sierra and Plumas) to the north"

AB 1941 was passed by ACT 4833, in the statutes of the 1989 legislature. The Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater District was created on January 1, 1990. The passage of AB 1941 was due to the unwavering support of the Board of Supervisors and county staff. In the ensuing years that has never changed. A special election was held later in January of 1990 to form the first Board. The new District's first challenge was Mono Farms Groundwater Export project and U.S. Filter.

Watch in our next Newsletter:

First Big Challenge: French Water Corporation" U.S. Filter".

****What is the purpose of a groundwater model for the Tri-Valley area?** To make a long story short for now, TVGMD and Mono County recently withdrew from the Owens Valley Groundwater Association (OVGA), which included the Tri-Valley in their Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). In order to develop our own GSP for protecting the Tri-Valley groundwater for generations to come, we have the responsibility to first determine how and where the groundwater flows and recharges. A groundwater flow model is a mathematical representation of groundwater flow through an aquifer, based on data from monitoring local wells and other studies. More next time!