

Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District

123 B Valley Road
Chalfant, CA. 93514

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carol Ann Mitchell, Chairperson

Phil West, Vice-Chairperson

Geri Bassett, Secretary

Andy Puhvel

Richard Moss

Greg Allen

Rhonda Duggan, Mono County District 2 Supervisor (Ex-Officio Member)

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Chalfant Community Center

123 Valley Road, Chalfant, CA. 93514



1. TVGMD Advisory Board
 - A. Advisory Board Report and Comment.
 - B. Discussion and approval of Fall Newsletter (Att. A)
 - C. Possible re-appointment of Gina Barsi to the Advisory Board ending November 2023.
2. Public Comment (on any matter within the jurisdiction of the District).
3. Board of Directors
 - A. Discussion of letter and possible change to Director West's position from a Director A to Director B position (Att. B) If accepted:
 - a. Appoint Director West to a 4-year term beginning November 30, 2022.
 - b. Direct the advertisement of a Director A position with possible appointment in January 2023.
 - B. Discussion and possible appointment of Andy Puhvel to a four year term on the Board of Directors ending November 30, 2026.
 - C. Discuss Mission Statement
4. Discussion and possible action to approve the September 28, 2022 minutes. (Attachment C)
5. Resolution No. 22-10 authorizing remote teleconference meetings from November 2, 2022 until December 2, 2022. (Att. D)
6. Report on Groundwater Model Grant.
7. Discussion and possible action on District maps and boundaries.
8. Brief Reports from Directors.
9. Review and possible action on insurance coverage for the District.

10. County Counsel report on finance options for the District.
11. Discussion for developing Strategic Plan for 2023-24. Consider appointing sub-committee of Board and Advisory Board members to prepare a draft for submission in January.
12. Public Comment (on any matter).
13. Adjournment to Wednesday, November 30, 2022, 6:30 p.m., at the Benton Community Center.

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Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District Newsletter

November 2022 - January 2023

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From Carol Ann Mitchell, Chairperson

CHANGES TO THE TVGMD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

After decades of service, the Board will say goodbye to Richard Moss and Marion Dunn as Directors of the District as they end their current terms of office in November.

Richard Moss is the owner of Cinnamon Ranch in Hammil Valley and joined the District in 1990 as a Director B (100 gallon per minute pumper). He sustained the District for many years as Chairman of the Board.

Marion Dunn has represented the Benton area as a domestic pumper since 1994. She served also as Chairman of the Board and will be most remembered for her many years as the Secretary-Treasurer of the District. At the September meeting Marion resigned and Andy Puhvel was appointed to serve out her term. Andy has served as a member of the TVGMD Advisory Board and states that his interest in serving on the Board is his concern about the rapidly declining groundwater level in his own well in Hammil Valley. He hopes to insure the sustainability of our aquifer for all the residents of the Tri-Valley communities for generations to come.

The Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District has been a

continue their legacy of selfless service to the Tri-Valley area .

Upcoming TVGMD Board Meetings

November 30, 2022, 6:30 PM, Benton Community Center
December 14th, 2022, 6:30 PM, Chalfant Community Center
January 25th, 2023, 6:30 PM, Benton Community Center

Meetings generally are the 4th Wednesday of each month,
alternating between Chalfant & Benton

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Need Advisory Board Members from Hammil and Benton

Our lives here in the Tri-Valley are depend on water. We all have a stake in assuring that our groundwater is being recharged and our water is clean. We have openings on the Advisory Board and would love to hear of your interest. The Advisory Board meets approximately once every two or three months and is charged with connecting with each of the communities, soliciting and listening to their concerns, and reporting to the Board of Directors. Send your letter of interest to secretary@tvgmd.org.

Update: Funding for Tri-Valley Groundwater Model

Mono County, at the request of the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) has applied for funding to develop a groundwater model for the Tri-Valley/Fish Slough area to more accurately assess how groundwater flows in this area and to quantify the amount of overdraft in the basin. This model, if funded, will allow Mono County and the TVGMD to develop strategies for sustainable groundwater management.

The grant funding comes from California Proposition 1 and is processed through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program of the California Department of Water Resources. The Mono County grant application for Round 2 was successfully submitted on August 19, 2022.

Did You Know?

agricultural production using pesticides.

- **Chalfant Valley**--102 pasture acres, 103 acres in alfalfa
- **Hammil Valley**--1778 acres in alfalfa, 524 acres grass hay, 4.5 acres garlic
- **Benton Valley**--163 acres alfalfa. There are additional acres in agricultural production in Benton not using pesticides that are not a part of this total.

Want to Learn A Little More About Local Water?

With each newsletter we'll try to include some resources for learning more about the groundwater in our area. This featured research article is from March of 2019, authors Andy Zdon, Nick Buckmaster, Keith Rainville and Steve Parmenter. [Identification of Source Water Mixing in the Fish Slough Spring Complex, Mono County, California, USA](#) The purpose of this research was to attempt to find the cause for spring flow decline in the Fish Slough spring complex over the years. They began with the question "what is the source of water discharging from Fish Slough springs?" There are some fascinating findings. Evidence from this research suggests that the The BLM and Northwest spring water likely comes from Adobe Valley, and the Northeast Spring water likely comes from Hammil Valley.

"At Fish Slough, 'we think it's just a matter of time before the springs run dry,' Mr. Parmenter said, citing groundwater pumping for agriculture that will only intensify as the West dries up" (*Saved By A Bucket But Can the Owens Pupfish Survive*, [NY Times Article 2021](#)). This is one crucial area where the proposed TVGMD Groundwater Model (see above) can answer some questions about local aquifers and effects of overdraft not only in the Tri-Valley area but in Fish Slough as well.

TVGMD wishes to thank the following people who made our new address, 123B Valley Road possible:



Advisory Board member and Big Trees owner **Gina Barsi** for donating a locking mailbox to this project.

Rick Mitchell for donating the wood post, metal sleeve, and concrete for the mailbox. Rick installed the mailbox which should last for years.

It was Secretary-Treasurer **Geri Bassett's** work with Mono County and the Post Office which cut through the red tape for the change.

Thanks everyone.



2022 STRATEGIC PLAN**Adopted February 23, 2022**

The plan is to revise and expand this strategic plan in early 2023. Input from community members welcome and encouraged.

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 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).

For meeting reminders, etc. email: secretary@tvqmd.org

TVGMD Board of Directors

DIRECTOR A—Resident Owners

- Carol Ann Mitchell term expires 11/30/2026
- Andy Puhvel (newly appointed) 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

Chalfant

Gina Barsi

Betsy McDonald

Amy Saladin

Benton

Edward Parkinson

Hammil

Dennis Murphy

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Ranch

The Quarter Circle 6W Ranch

To : Carol Ann Mitchell, Chairperson TVGMD
From : Phil West, Co-Chairperson TVGMD
Date : October 14th, 2022
Subject: Director "B" Vacancy

Chairperson Mitchell,

This memorandum is to advise you and fellow board members that I am willing to fill the vacant director "B" position on the TVGMD Board of Directors, should the board members desire that I fill the currently vacant position.

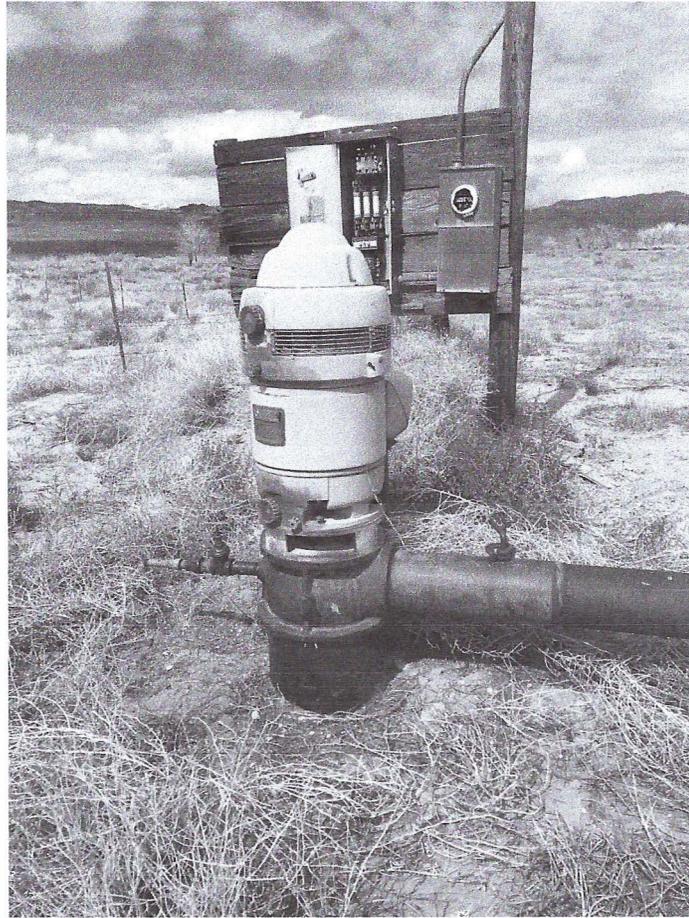
As most on the board members are aware, I have a background in farming from our family farm that was located in the Sacramento Delta area, and south of the City of Davis. That farm was in our family from the 1940's until the late 1990's.

The 350 acres of the farm varied in production of: Milo (a grain head used for livestock and poultry/bird feed), Safflower (a grain used for the production of Safflower oil), and in later years during the horrific drought in the late 1970's, production was changed to Giant Sunflowers, which are used for oil and for human consumption (sunflower seeds). Ultimately, with the death of my grandfather and years later my uncle, the farm was left to my mother and father. My mother being the daughter of my grandfather and the sister of my uncle.

In the late 1990's, we were unable to keep the farm due to a levee break and the inability to secure a permit from the CA Department of Fish and Game to close the breach. The lack of securing a permit to repair the levee was due to the *possible presence* of eggs of the delta smelt.

Our current property is a 40.71-acre parcel upon which our residence is located. At the south portion of our main property is an 18" case well with a 6" outlet pipe (photo on page 2). Although the well is currently not being used, it is evident that it was used to flood irrigate the property via ditches.

Even when our domestic well was installed for our home, the well driller that installed it did an open-flow test of the well prior to installing the household pump. He told us that the 6" case well was supplying 120gal/minute and he told me, "You could irrigate with this well!"



18" case well with 6" discharge

In summary:

- 1.) I have a background in farming and the utilization of irrigation for crops. Our water usage on the family farm was supplied by ditches from the slough systems in the Sacramento Delta and measured through water gates at the weirs and not via pumping from a well. Irrigation was completed by pumping the water from the ditches via diesel engine pumps into a sprinkler irrigation system similar to current day systems (prior to "wheel lines") and the pipes were hand moved each cycle, and the farm was not flood irrigation.
- 2.) I am willing to discuss any questions that the board members may have.
- 3.) Should the TVGMD Board of Directors desire, I am willing to fill the now vacant Director B position in the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District.

Thank you,

Phil West

"C"

MINUTES

MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT Regular Meeting of September 28, 2022 6:30 P.M. Chalfant Community Center

Chairperson Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:45 P.M. on September 30, 2022. Meeting was held in-person, except for Director Dunn, who attended via zoom due to health issues.

Roll Call:

Directors Present: Mitchell, Dunn, Allen, Duggan, and Bassett.

Directors Absent: West (excused due to family health issue), Moss (excused due to health issues).

Advisory board present: Dennis Murphy, Andy Puhvel, and Ed Parkinson

Mono County (M.C.) Personnel in attendance: Assistant County Counsel (A.C.C.) Chris Beck

1. Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) Advisory Board (A.B.)

A. Advisory Board Report and Comment.

A. Puhvel reported that the A.B. will be meeting at 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at the Chalfant Community Center.

B. Discussion and approval of Fall Newsletter.

Deferred to the October 22, 2022 meeting.

2. Public Comments (on any matter within the jurisdiction of the District).

None at this time.

3. Board of Directors

A. Resignation of Director Marion Dunn effective September 28, 2022 and possible Board action to accept.

Director Dunn's resignation was read and accepted. Resignation is effective at the end of this September 28, 2022 meeting.

B. Letter of interest from Andy Puhvel in the Board of Directors A position vacated by Director Dunn effective September 28, 2022. Board to interview Mr. Puhvel and possible approval by the Board of Directors for appointment to serve September 28 - November 8, 2022 the remainder of the term for Director Dunn. Board to also consider appointment to a 4-year term from November 8, 2022 to November 8, 2026. Andy Puhvel's letter of interest was reviewed by the Board and was followed by questions from various Directors.

Questions/answers (some answers covered more than one question) were:

- a. Can you look at the whole Tri-Valley (TV), not just your property, when making decisions on Board matters?

Yes, I know that my property is in the middle of Hammil and is not necessarily indicative of the whole TV area. We need information from the groundwater model to determine what is really going on in regards to water coming in and water usage in the TV.

12. Set meetings for remainder of 2022. Adjournment to Wednesday, October 26, 2022, 6:30 p.m., at the Benton Community Center.

Director Mitchell will email the remaining Directors regarding November and December 2022 meeting dates.

The October 26, 2022 meeting will need to be held at the **Chalfant** Community Center due to schedule conflicts with the Benton Community Center.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Director Allen and seconded by Director Bassett.

Vote – all directors in attendance – “yes”. Meeting was adjourned at 7:37 P.M.

Next regular meeting will be held on the fourth Wednesday of October 2022:

**October 26, 2022
At 6:30 P.M. at the Chalfant Community Center**

Geri Bassett, Secretary, TVGMD

6. Board Reports: Completion of the change of District address and further discussion on proposed District map.

Director Mitchell reported that the new mail box is in place and labeled with the new TVGMD address of 123B Valley Rd. Director Bassett commented that we need the final confirmation of the 123B address from the Post Office. Once that is received, address change notifications will be sent out.

Director Mitchell reported that the District map was still in progress, with edits to the draft map presented at the July 13, 2022 meeting being worked on by Denver.

7. Brief Reports from Directors.

Director Mitchell reported that Director Bassett and she are attending the SGMA conference on November 9, 2022 via zoom. It will be viewed at the Chalfant Community Center. The time is 9 A.M. to noon. Anyone interested may attend. Please see information attached.

Supervisor Duggan reported that the cell phone tower installation is in progress, as is the closing of the Benton Crossing Road landfill.

Other reports were deferred to the October 26, 2022 meeting due to time constraints.

8. Review and possible action on insurance coverage for the District.

Deferred to the October 26, 2022 meeting; to be given in conjunction with the finance options presentation from A.C.C. Beck.

9. Discussion and possible action on plan for private well monitoring.

Deferred until a decision is made on insurance.

A.C.C. Beck commented that A.B. members could proceed with monitoring of their own wells as long as they have signed the Approval of Participation and Release of Liability waiver that was approved at the July 13, 2022 meeting.

10. Mid-year review of Strategic Plan for the TVGMD (Attachment C).

Deferred to October 26, 2022 meeting.

Director Mitchell noted that, in general, many of the goals have been accomplished.

11. Public comment (on any matter).

Discussion regarding the TVGMD boundary change to exclude the small portion of Fish Slough that is currently in the TVGMD jurisdiction. This would need to be done through Legislation. A.C.C. Beck to follow up with a legislative analyst.

Edie Trimmer, from the Bristlecone Chapter of the Native Plant Society (NPS), commented that it is not just the pup fish that are endangered at Fish Slough. There are plant species and the ecosystem itself that are a concern. Bristlecone NPS want the groundwater model to be done and hope that TVGMD respects what it shows that can be done to help Fish Slough recover. She also noted that there is concern that "environmental" organizations are just out to sue people/entities. She wanted the Board and attendees to know that NPS's main focus is to work with the parties involved to achieve a good solution for all concerned, not to bring about or threaten lawsuits.

- b. What is our Mission Statement, how does it interact with Fish Slough? As a Board, we need to be sustainable and not get involved with the potential legal matters involving Fish Slough, when Fish Slough is a very small piece of our jurisdiction and maybe shouldn't be our jurisdiction at all.

I am not personally involved with the pup fish. The need to continue the Board is paramount and I wouldn't push for actions/decisions that could quite possibly end in lawsuits.

- c. What is your opinion of science?

I respect scientists; they work methodically through facts and data to present information.

- d. What is your leadership style?

I have led many groups. I look and listen and try to be responsive and listen to the opinion of others.

- e. As a Board member, your commitment is vital. You need to attend meetings, answer emails, do assigned projects, etc. Can you do that?

Yes, I have a good understanding of what the Board needs and can handle the commitment and time involvement for at least the 4-year term.

- f. How much community involvement will you have?

My involvement would be mostly at meetings. I don't see my neighbors too often.

Director – you need to get out into the community and talk to people.

A. Puhvel – ok.

Motion to appoint Andy Puhvel to serve the remainder of the term of Director Dunn (September 28, 2022 to November 8, 2022) was made by Director Bassett and seconded by Director Allen.

Vote – all directors in attendance – yes.

Possible appointment of Mr. Puhvel to a 4-year term from November 8, 2022 to November 8, 2026 will be deferred to the October 26, 2022 meeting.

C. Discussion and possible change to Director West's position from a Director A to a Director B position. If accepted:

a. **Appoint Director West to a 4-year term beginning November 8, 2022.**

b. **Direct the advertisement of a Director A (domestic) position with possible appointment in January 2023.**

Item deferred to the November 2022 meeting due to Director West not being present and most likely not being available for the October 26, 2022 meeting.

4. Discussion and possible action to approve the July 13, August 24, and September 2, 2022 minutes. (Attachment A)

A motion to approve the July 13, August 24, and September 2, 2022 meeting minutes as written was made by Director Allen and seconded by Director Bassett.

Vote – all directors in attendance – "yes".

5. Resolution No. 22-09 authorizing remote teleconference meetings from October 2, 2022 until November 2, 2022.

Motion to approve the Resolution 22-09 was made by Director Allen and seconded by Director Bassett.

Vote – all directors in attendance – "yes".

" D "

RESOLUTION 22-10

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS
FOR THE PERIOD OF NOVEMBER 2, 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 2, 2022
PURSUANT TO AB 361**

Comment [A1]: Delete all red text prior to adopting

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which Proclamation remains in effect; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20, modifying the teleconferencing rules set forth in the California Open Meeting law, Government Code section 54950 et seq. (the "Brown Act"), subject to compliance with certain requirements; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2021, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-08-21, providing that the modifications would remain in place through September 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed AB 361, providing that a legislative body subject to the Brown Act may continue to meet under modified teleconferencing rules if the meeting occurs during a proclaimed state of emergency and state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, the Local Health Officer and the Director of Mono County Public Health have recommended that measures be implemented to promote social distancing, including the holding of virtual meetings of legislative bodies within the County of Mono, a copy of that recommendation is attached as an exhibit and incorporated herein; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of public health and safety, and in response to the local recommendation for measures to promote social distancing, the MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (the "Legislative Body") deems it necessary to invoke the provisions of AB 361 related to teleconferencing;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE LEGISLATIVE BODY FINDS AND RESOLVES that:

SECTION ONE: The recitals set forth above are true and correct and are adopted as findings of the Legislative Body.

SECTION TWO: The Legislative Body has considered the circumstances of the State of Emergency and determines that, as a result of the existence of a state of emergency related to COVID-19, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.

SECTION THREE: State or local officials have recommended measures to promote social distancing, including the holding of virtual meetings for legislative bodies within the County of Mono that are subject to the Brown Act.

SECTION FOUR: Meetings of the Legislative Body may be held virtually in accordance with the procedures set forth in AB 361 from November 2, 2022 until December 2, 2022.

1 **SECTION FIVE:** Staff is directed to return to the Legislative Body no later than thirty
2 (30) days after the adoption of this resolution, or at the next meeting of the Legislative Body, if
3 later, for the Legislative Body to consider whether to make the findings required to meet under
the modified teleconference procedures of AB 361.

4 **PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED** this 26th day of October, 2022, by the
5 following vote, to wit:

6 **AYES:**

7 **NOES:**

8 **ABSENT:**

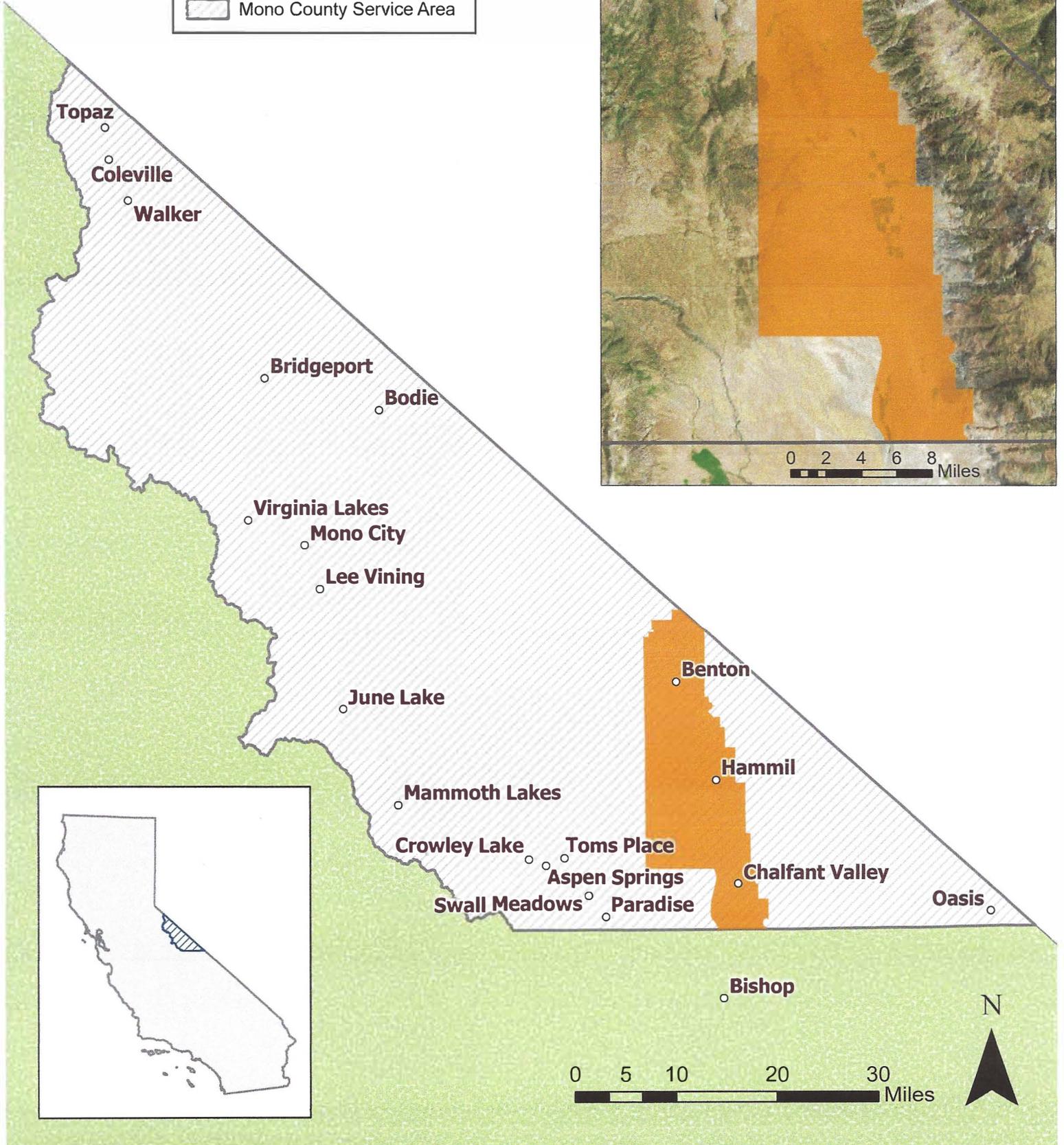
9 **ABSTAIN:**

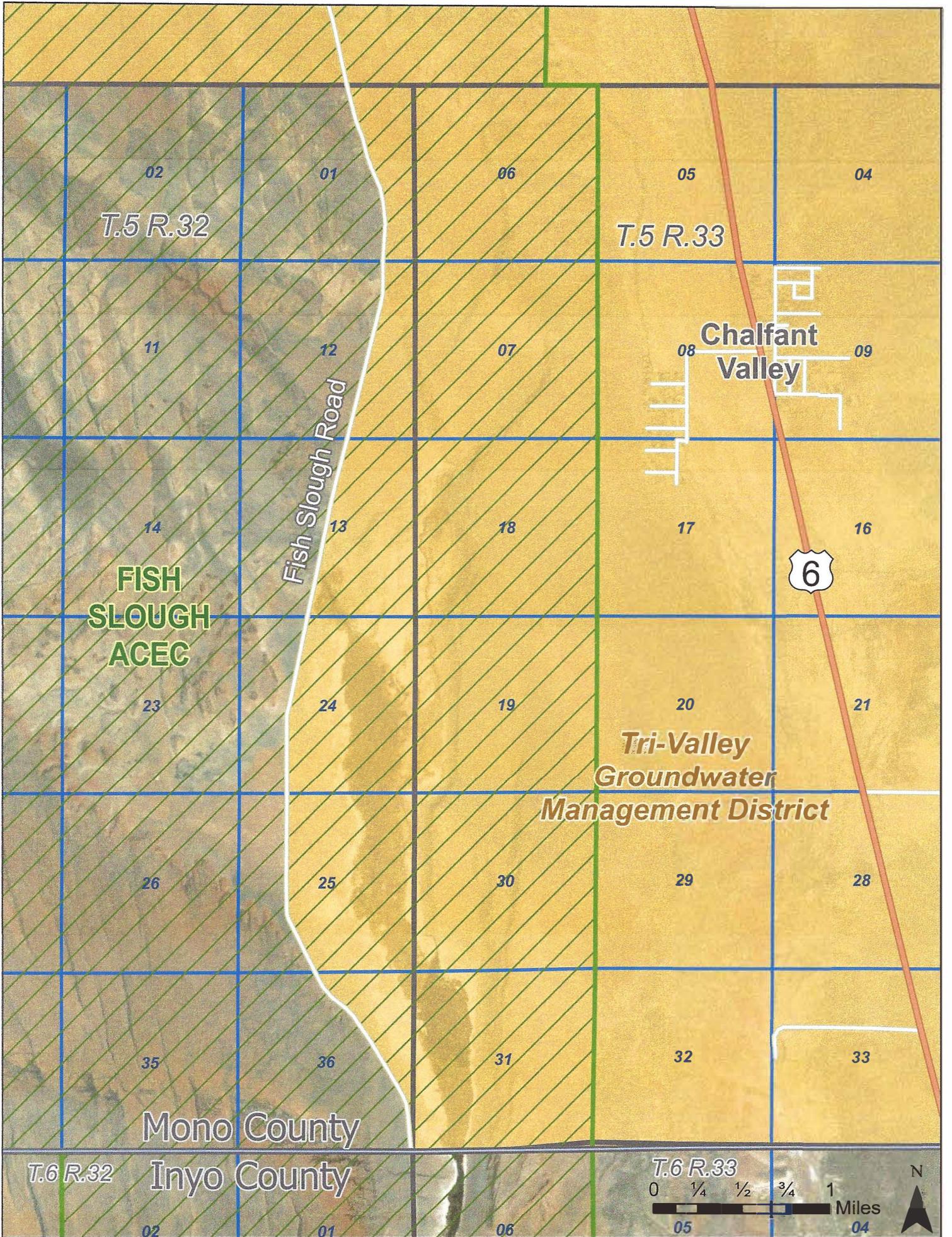
Carol Ann Mitchell, Chair

Mono County Service Area and GSA

Legend

- Tri Valley GSA
- Mono County Service Area





T.5 R.32

T.5 R.33

Chalfant Valley

FISH SLOUGH ACEC

Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District

Mono County
Inyo County

T.6 R.33

