

MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
123B Valley Road
Chalfant, California 93514

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Greg Allen, Chairperson
Don Moss, Vice-Chairperson
Geri Bassett, Secretary
Carol Ann Mitchell
Ed Parkinson
Josh Rhodes
Matt Doonan

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

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Benton Community Center
Hwy 120
Benton, CA 93512

Mission: The mission of the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District is to comply with the California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 and other applicable laws (government code, water code etc.) as the law pertains to the District.
Core Vision: To preserve the groundwater within the boundaries of the District (Chapter 844 of 1989 California Statutes).*

- 1. Advisory Board.**
 - A. Report.**
- 2. Public Comment.**
- 3. Discussion and possible approval of minutes from the September 24, 2025 meeting and the November 12, 2025 meeting. (See attachments # 3A and # 3B)**
- 4. Discussion and possible approval of the proposed 2026 meeting dates. (See attachment # 4)**
- 5. Board of Directors reports.**
- 6. Adjournment to Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 6:30 p.m. at the Chalfant Community Center.**

**DRAFT
MINUTES**

Item #3A

**MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
Regular Meeting of September 24, 2025 6:30 P.M.
Chalfant Community Center**

Chairperson Allen called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. on Wednesday, September 24, 2025. The meeting was held in person.

Roll Call:

Directors Present: Allen, Moss, Mitchell, Parkinson, Rhodes, and Bassett.

Directors Absent: Doonan, and Duggan (time conflict with other meeting).

Advisory Board (A.B.) present: none.

Mono County (M.C.) Personnel in attendance: County Council (C.C.) Chris Beck.

1. Advisory Board.

A. Report.

None.

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Discussion and possible approval of minutes from the June 4, 2025 meeting. (See attachment # 3)

A motion to approve the June 4, 2025 minutes as presented was made by Director Mitchell and seconded by Director Moss.

Vote - ayes – Directors Allen, Moss, Mitchell, Parkinson, Rhodes, and Bassett.

Nayes – none.

Absent – Directors Doonan.

4. OVGA GSP presentation – Holly Alpert.

Holly Alpert, the executive manager of the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority (OVGA) and the Director of the Inyo County Water Department, explained the status of the OVGA's Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), which was submitted to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in early 2022.

- DWR has determined that the GSP is incomplete because the OVGA no longer has jurisdiction over the entire groundwater basin because Mono County and Tri-Valley withdrew from OVGA. Therefore, now the GSP doesn't cover the entire groundwater basin and it no longer meets the DWR standards.
- DWR indicated to OVGA a possible way to address the incomplete status is to develop an agreement between Mono County, Tri-Valley, and the OVGA to jointly manage the basin. If OVGA develops such an agreement, OVGA could revise and resubmit the GSP. DWR would evaluate the new GSP once all three of those Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA's) had approved the GSP.
- In July, a letter was sent to the Mono County GSA and also the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) Board to review this information and request a response.

DRAFT

- The Mono County GSA responded that there is not an interest at this time of developing an agreement to jointly manage the basin.
- Chairman Allen invited Holly to come to the Board meeting tonight, present the same information, and have a discussion with the Board. The OVGA is looking for a response of some kind so that we can figure out how to move forward.

Holly's responses to questions from:

- Director Mitchell - If there is no agreement, the OVGA can still implement the GSP within the Inyo County portion of the groundwater basin. At this point, that's what the OVGA would intend to do. OVGA would presumably live with the incomplete status and just continue to implement the actions within the GSP within in the Inyo County portion of the basin.
- Director Bassett - Having the GSP change like that does not affect the grant money that was used to pay the consultant. The grant is done and closed, OVGA won't have to pay it back. The GSP is still submitted. It's just now in an incomplete status. And as a reminder, we're a low priority basin. The DWR has indicated to us, there's really no consequence for having a GSP in incomplete status.
- Brianda Hernandez (Bishop Paiute Tribe Environmental Management Office) - An incomplete GSP or not having an agreement with Mono County GSA or Tri-Valley would not impact the Fish Slough area because the GSP is only for the Owens Valley subbasin of the larger Owens Valley Basin, which does not include Fish Slough. A GSP has not been submitted for the Fish Slough subbasin.
- Lynnn Boulton (Bishop) - DWR has indicated to the OVGA that the OVGA still has authority to implement the actions within the GSP, within the Inyo County portion of the sub-basin, even if the GSP is incomplete. OVGA does not have jurisdiction over any of the Mono County portions.
Holly has not heard anything to indicate that DWR is planning on doing a reprioritization effort. She doesn't know what the chances are of Tri-Valley being re-rated as a high or medium priority sub-basin.
- Betsy McDonald (Chalfant) – The parts of Mono County that are left out of the GSP are the Tri-Valley and Fish Slough, which is a separate sub-basin.
Mono County indicated that the Mono County GSA Board is not interested in an agreement to jointly manage the basin; no reason was given. This response was from the Mono County Board of Supervisors.

Holly is to send Director Bassett the letter that OVGA received from DWR informing them that the GSP is considered incomplete. Director Bassett will forward it to the Board and Advisory Board.

5. Advisory Board membership

A. Resignation of Dennis Murphy. (See attachment #5A)

No action, information only.

B. Discussion and possible vote on appointment of Bill A. Cook III to the A.B. for a term of one year. (See Letter of Interest from Bill A. Cook III - attachment #5B)

Bill Cook attended the meeting and, in addition to his letter of interest, told the Board that:

- He has only lived here a short time, moved here about a little over two years ago; came from the Central Valley, where he lived there most of his life. He spent 10 years living in Humboldt County.
- He has been an active geologist working in groundwater for the past 20 years. He graduated and went to work at a water well drilling company, then went into private consulting, dealing with groundwater.

DRAFT

- He did construction work, geotechnical work, materials testing, concrete testing, nuclear density gauge testing.
- He worked with a lot of innovative technology over the years in Yosemite and throughout California and Nevada; with the San Francisco Bay Water Board; primarily interested in toxic cleanup control, cleaning up sites in the private and public sector, including a \$1,000,000 project to clean up a site in Benicia, California.
- He moved here because he fell in love with the place when he went up to Cerro Gordo as a senior in college.
- He currently works for Caltrans Local Assistance.
- He has a lot of scientific qualifications and interest; lives on the west side of Chalfant.
- He has been here long enough to get an idea of what issues we're dealing with.
- He attended the meeting on the groundwater model project update from the consultant. He can evaluate models quite well and can provide some good advice.

In response to Director Mitchell's question about his experience relating to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, he replied that in the private sector, he worked on projects that were intended to re-infiltrate excess storm water into basins where they would drop into the groundwater. In the public sector, using his contacts from the Water Board and the Department of Water Resources, he worked to a solution that works, a win-win for the commercial interests that want to do the work and the public interest that needs the work done in a sustainable way. In terms of actual groundwater management, no. His regulatory experience was with actual enforcement of the toxins and the like. Water can do a lot of strange things. And understanding what's going on beneath your feet is a little tricky. You can model away, but it has to be based upon some evidence, some data points.

A motion to appoint Mr. Cook to the TVGMD Advisory Board for a term of one year was made by Director Mitchell and seconded by Director Bassett.

Vote - ayes – Directors Allen, Moss, Mitchell, Parkinson, Rhodes, and Bassett.

Nayes – none.

Absent – Directors Doonan.

Director Bassett will send an updated Advisory Board list to the Board and A.B.

C. Recruitment status.

Director Bassett reported that all recruitment efforts directed during the June 4, 2025 Board meeting had been done. In addition to the letter of interest from Mr. Cook, one other letter had been received but then latter withdrawn.

The Board and M.C. are still working to update the Board and A.B. member lists on the M.C. Tri-Valley web page. Director Bassett to forward the relevant email to C.C. Beck for follow-up.

6. TV Groundwater Model Project - Discussion and possible vote on holding a special meeting on November 12, 2025 or November 19, 2025 for an update from contractor.

After some discussion, a motion to hold the special meeting for the Groundwater Model Project update on November 12, 2025 was made by Chairperson Allen and seconded by Director Rhodes. The meeting will be held in Chalfant, starting at 6:30 PM.

Vote - ayes – Directors Allen, Moss, Mitchell, Parkinson, Rhodes, and Bassett.

Nayes – none.

Absent – Directors Doonan.

DRAFT

Director Bassett will notify Tim Moore, etc. of the date decided on. She will also send the Nov. 12, 2025 meeting agenda to Betsy McDonald to send out to the newsletter email address group. She will also contact M.C. and try to find out why some people that have signed up on their website to receive the Tri-Valley related emails are not receiving them.

7. Board of Directors reports.

Director Rhodes reported that he is still working with Hughesnet to be able to use the newsletter email address group from Mailchimp on our TVGMD website.

Director Bassett reported that:

- Director Parkinson and she took a reading on the Benton monitoring well on 7/9/2025. The reading was 131.09 feet, down 7.6” from April 2025 and down 2.5” from July 2024.
- Director Mitchell and she took a reading on the Chalfant monitoring well on 7/11/2025. The reading was 71.08 feet, down 4.7” from April 2025 and up 6.96” from July 2024.
- The readings were entered into CASGEM on 7/11/2025.
- The Benton and Chalfant monitoring wells are both near the respective transfer stations.

Director Mitchell reported that she attended two drought resilience project meetings that were held via Zoom. They are a result of Senate Bill (possibly) 552. She encourages the Board to put the project information on a future agenda; they described some good projects and contain good information on Tri-Valley. This is just informational. She will send the report and related materials to Director Bassett for disbursement to the Board and A.B. The information will be reviewed by the Board before potentially putting it on the TVGMD website.

C.C. Beck read a report from Supervisor Duggan – there will be a M.C. BOS meeting at the Benton Community Center on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, starting at 6:00 PM. All Tri-Valley residents are encouraged to attend.

8. Adjournment to Wednesday, December 3, 2025, 6:30 p.m. at the Benton Community Center or Special meeting on Wednesday, November 12 or 19, 2025, 6:30 PM, at the Chalfant Community Center.

A motion to adjourn the meeting and notice a special meeting on November 12, 2025 was made by Director Parkinson and seconded by Director Mitchell.

Vote - ayes – Directors Allen, Moss, Mitchell, Parkinson, Rhodes, and Bassett.

Nays – none.

Absent – Directors Doonan.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

The next meeting is a Special Meeting, Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Chalfant Community Center.

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Benton Community Center.

Geri Bassett, Secretary, TVGMD

**DRAFT
MINUTES**

Item #3B

**MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
Special Meeting of November 12, 2025 6:30 P.M.
Chalfant Community Center**

Chairperson Allen called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M. on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. The meeting was held in person.

Roll Call:

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

Directors Absent: Parkinson, Rhodes, and Doonan.

Advisory Board (A.B.) present: none.

Mono County (M.C.) Personnel in attendance: none.

1. Advisory Board.

A. Report.

None.

2. Public Comment.

Betsy McDonald (Chalfant) asked if comments will be allowed later. Chairperson Allen replied that they will if they are action items.

Director Mitchell (Chalfant) asked to be put on the Dec. 3, 2025 agenda to discuss digitizing the District records that are stored at the Chalfant Community Center. People can help or she will do it herself. 2026 is the end of her term.

3. Update on the Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Model Project.

Gus Tolley, from DBS&A, the Groundwater Model Project consultant, gave a presentation/update on the project status. Tim Moore, the Inyo County Water Department hydrologist, was also present. Tim is under contract with Mono County as the Project Manager. The model is matching pretty well with the information they have; the model is off to a very strong start. See slides attached.

Comments/questions/answers included:

- Slide – page 6, bottom slide – residual is observed value minus what model is predicting; 0 is perfect. Most wells are plus or minus 20 feet from 0, which is good.
- Slide – page 8, CH-MW3 Model Results – red line on right side of graph indicates that model is off; responding to something (heavy precipitation year?); needs to be adjusted.
- Slide – page 9, SW3208 Model Results – red line to right of graph – model is overestimating recharge, possibly due to heavy precipitation years; needs to be adjusted. Flow at Northeast spring at Fish slough is currently zero. Particle tracking might help determine adjustment needed.
- The Owens River doesn't contribute much water to the Tri-Valley (T.V.). It is unknown how much water T.V. contributes to the Owens River.
- Data gaps – need more agricultural pumping data, historical land use and crop rotation information, information on which wells irrigate which fields, etc.
- Slide – page 13, top slide - Which scenarios are actually used will ultimately be up to Mono County. Consultant is open to other scenarios. Deciding on the scenarios is the next step.

DRAFT

Consultant is behind a little on the project. It was originally to be done in December 2025, but, is now predicted to be done in June 2026. Extending grant agreement isn't expected to be an issue.

- Following fields can cause air quality issues.
- Data from growers could be kept largely confidential but since this grant is publicly funded, the model files have to be publicly accessible. Data would be needed within the next couple of months.
- More money would be needed to run the model using data from the new groundwater monitoring wells in Hammil Valley. Those wells were installed about a year ago. Need at least a couple of years of data to make it useful. Funding sources (grants, assessments, etc.) are unknown at this time. The process of looking for grants is always available, but that takes money also. Supervisor Duggan will look into the process for this.
- Model doesn't simulate any domestic well pumping.
- Money-wise, in relation to many models, this model has been "very kind to us".
- Groundwater pumping is one of the largest fluxes in the system. The existence and location of the synthetic wells is unknown, but the pumping/water usage definitely exists.
- Data from model will be publicly available at the end of the project.
- AEM data from DWR was used but was not overly helpful.
- Surface water diversion can be hard to track.
- There was discussion on how much authority under SGMA the TVGMD actually has to impose fees to raise funds for projects. Mono County County Counsel (M.C.C.C.) needs to be consulted.
- Model is responding well for how much time and money has been spent on it so far.
- Model documentation report – there will be a data gaps section and recommendations for future studies and areas that could be improved.
- 30-year horizon for projects is fairly common.
- All 3 scenarios can be looked at to see what happens at Fish Slough. But, a scenario can't be developed to show Fish Slough's NE spring coming back in a healthy way; models don't work like that.
- Model scenarios need to ultimately show how to keep both agriculture and Fish slough, Chalfant wells, etc. alive and healthy. Model will be a tool to help inform policy discussions.
- Sensitivity analysis could be done to see results; this wasn't included in the project scope.
- Cell connectivity data will be available at the end of the project.

4. Discussion and possible action on Board response to OVGA regarding GSP agreement.

OVGA is still in need of a response from T.V. about entering into an agreement with OVGA to jointly manage the basin. For the OVGA GSP to be complete, Mono County GSA would also need to enter into the agreement. Mono County had indicated that they are not interested in doing so. See attached letters item 4A, 4B, and 4C.

Chairperson Allen had feedback from some of the absent Board members that they were not interested in entering into the agreement. He asked for comments from the Board members present.

Director Mitchell indicated that she would like to discuss the issue with M.C.C.C. Beck to get his opinion on coordination agreements under SGMA, water code section 357.4, and potential problems that may arise if an agreement is reached but one of the entities does not fulfill their part of the agreement. She is also concerned about Inyo County's ability to get future grants under SGMA if their GSP is not approved.

DRAFT

Director Bassett feels that, regardless of what the funding potential is, right now the Board has no money to commit to anything. Until there is money to commit, or a grant that is being looked at to be written, she doesn't see how the Board can do an agreement. Also, M.C. has to be in on the agreement for the basin to be completely represented. In an ideal world, the Board would have the time and money to get involved in an agreement. Until the Board has that, she doesn't see how they can commit to it.

Director Moss doesn't see how the Board can commit to the agreement without the available resources.

Chairperson Allen will contact M.C.C.C. Beck regarding these issues and then contact Holly Alpert.

Holly explained again that the OVGA GSP is considered incomplete because the OVGA GSA no longer covers the entire basin. It has nothing to do with what the action plans in the GSP are or any specifics of the GSP. Tim Moore clarified that 2 of the 4 management actions in the GSP were for T.V.

There was discussion about where the M.C. response came from – the M.C. BOS or the M.C. GSA. Supervisor Duggan indicated that the letter from OVGA did not come from the M.C. BOS; they have never met as the GSA. She will get more information.

Betsy McDonald would like to see a public workshop about the pros and cons about the agreement. And an update on the status of Fish Slough; NE spring is dry.

Holly reminded people that the entire Owens Basin is low priority and, therefore, no GSP is required.

Item was tabled to a future meeting.

5. Adjournment to Wednesday, December 3, 2025, 6:30 p.m. at the Benton Community Center.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Director Mitchell and seconded by Director Moss. All in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 PM.

**The next regular meeting is Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
at the Benton Community Center.**

Geri Bassett, Secretary, TVGMD

Proposed Dates for TVGMD 2026 Regular Meetings Item #4

January 28 - Chalfant

March 25 - Benton

June 3 - Chalfant

September 23 – Benton

December 2 - Chalfant