

**Meeting Notes from the
Central Basin Groundwater Storage Plan
Stakeholder Workshop
July 27, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Thank you to all those who participated in last week's stakeholder workshop. We received great input from the Cities of Norwalk, Cerritos, Lakewood and the Pico Water District, among others.

Key questions and comments made during the workshop have been summarized below by our staff. Should you have additional questions or comments, please contact Valerie Howard at valerieh@centralbasin.org. Thank you.

Summary of Questions and Comments

Q: Will there be a limitation placed on the amount of water stored in the Basin?

A: Possibly. Our goal is to use the EIR as a guide to determine the maximum storage capacity within the Basin (i.e. the safe yield) as to not harm the Basin. Until the EIR is complete, we don't know what the safe yield will be.

Q: What efforts are being taken to coordinate this plan with WRD (and other agencies)? Are the pumping rights of other agencies being considered?

A: Central Basin's plan will take into account all usage of the Basin in the EIR, including the pumping rights of other agencies. WRD is welcomed to come to the table and join in on these discussions, as are all the stakeholders. This is intended to be an inclusive process, and we welcome everyone's input in the development of a plan.

Q: Will this plan require court approval?

A: The issue of extraction rights will be brought to the Court (Judge Kendig). We will be asking her to provide direction to the Water Master on their position that water can be stored but not extracted in the Basin unless it is done under the extraction rights outlined in the Judgment. Other than that, Central Basin does not believe it is necessary to seek Court approval for the Groundwater Storage Plan, since the Court has specifically found that storage is not part of the Central Basin Judgment.

Q: Will there be underflow to the West Basin if the gradient becomes higher?

A: This is a great question, and it is something that will be looked at in the EIR.

Q: Is there going to be competition about who has the right to use the spreading grounds first?

A: The LA County Department of Public Works operates the spreading grounds and they dictate the use. With the high volume of water we have seen this year, we have had the opportunity to see how the spreading grounds can be utilized by various agencies for maximum use. The future management of the spreading grounds is something that must be considered in a groundwater storage plan.

Q: Will there be reserved amounts for the various pumpers so that one or two agencies will not be able to dominate the storage capacity?

A: This is a great question. The future needs of the pumpers will absolutely be considered under the plan. Although the EIR is not complete yet, Central Basin is already taking into account the supply needs of each pumper for a full year. The water will be stored by Central Basin on your behalf, so that you will have the opportunity to tap into that supply during capacity charge times or during an emergency.

Q: About 220,000 AF of water is extracted each year from the Central Groundwater Basin. Will the 300,000 AF of water Central Basin is proposing cut it? Will the amount the District plans on storing be enough for everyone?

A: To clarify, Central Basin does not supply the 200,000 AF a year. The 200,000 AF is largely provided by Mother Nature and by WRD. Our storage plan will help to ensure that, of the 65,000 AF that comes in each year, there will be enough water available for the pumpers to use during times of emergency, during capacity charge times or when MWD water is not available.

Q: Is the intent here for CB to drill wells to connect to the MWD pipeline system so that the water can be taken in a normal fashion?

A: This is a great comment. Once the EIR is complete, these program details will be developed.

Q: Does Central Basin plan on handling groundwater replenishment? Why is replenishment mentioned in the NOP?

A: WRD currently handles groundwater replenishment. This is not something Central Basin is interested in doing at this time. However, water stored under the Central Basin Groundwater Storage Plan could potentially be sold to WRD as a replenishment supply. In this way, a stored supply could be used for replenishment in the future.

Q: If this water is stored, will there be legal restrictions on the use of the water? Does it have to be kept in the basin, or could it be exported outside of the basin?

A: While all options will be considered in the final programmatic EIR, it is definitely not Central Basin's intent to sell water outside of the Basin. However, this would be a policy decision for the Board to determine.

Q: WRD has already proposed a groundwater plan. Is Central Basin working with WRD to see what they can use from that plan?

A: Central Basin and WRD are not working together on this plan and WRD's plan will not be used in the development of this plan. This is mainly due to the fact that WRD's plan has been rejected by two Superior Court Judges. Also, Central Basin had a number of concerns with the WRD plan that were never addressed.

Instead of following what others have done, Central Basin has chosen to develop a storage plan through an inclusive process that will take into account the feedback and input of stakeholders. Also, we are starting this process by conducting a full environmental assessment of the Basin that will assess its current condition and storage capacity. By doing an environmental programmatic EIR, we're able to get stakeholder input from the beginning. This has never been done before. WRD is welcomed to participate in this process and provide their input.

Q: How much will this plan cost?

Cost will be an important consideration for the Board. The economic effects of the various program options will be included in the EIR. It is our intent to develop a plan that will result in the economic benefit of making a more affordable water supply available to customers.

Q: How do you envision the management of the groundwater storage plan? Are you envisioning something similar to the Waldo Plan?

A: The management of the plan is yet to be developed. We will be seeking additional input on the management structure at an upcoming stakeholder meeting.

Q: How is this process different from the top-down approach used during the Waldo process?

A: The difference is that Central Basin is developing a plan with the input of all agencies that wish to be involved. There is no exclusion. From the beginning it has been our intent to be as inclusive as possible. This has been the reason for our continued stakeholder meetings. We value your input in this process.

Q: There is no doubt that we need storage. However, what if the pumpers do not approve of the final plan that emerges?

A: The adoption and implementation of the plan will be up to the Board. The position of the stakeholders will certainly be an important consideration for the Board, as we have been instructed to develop a plan with our stakeholders, and to ensure that the final product addresses your needs and concerns to the best of our ability.