

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
REPORT OF CONVERSATION



***Siting, Transmission and
Environmental Protection
Division***

FILE: 11-AFC-2

PROJECT TITLE: Hidden Hills SEGS

Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Location: CEC	
NAME: Mike Monasmith, Project Manager	DATE: 2-3-1012	TIME: 08:45
WITH: Bill Christian, The Nature Conservancy		
SUBJECT: HHSEGS: Water Resources		

From: Bill Christian <wtchristian@earthlink.net>
To: Mike Monasmith <Mmonasmi@energy.ca.gov>
Date: 2/3/2012 8:45 AM
Subject: Hidden Hills
Attachments: Amargosa 11-11 meeting summary.pdf

DOCKET

11-AFC-2

DATE FEB 3 2012

RECD. FEB 3 2012

Hi Mike,

... I've attached a report of a December meeting on the Amargosa Basin written by Russell Scofield (the meeting was largely about water). In the presentation by Greg Helseth, note that he stated that there are ten proposed renewables projects in Amargosa Valley and six in Pahrump Valley, presumably all on, or partially on, public land in Nevada. Both the Amargosa Valley and Pahrump Valley are in the Amargosa flow system. I would think that the effects of these projects need to be considered in CEC's Hidden Hills cumulative impacts analysis (especially with respect to groundwater usage and effects on the Wild and Scenic River).

Cheers

Bill



Amargosa Basin Coordination Meeting
December 12 and 13, 2011
Meeting Notes

Monday, December 12- Lower Amargosa Study Breakout

BLM Management Plan for Amargosa WSR and related Data Needs- Chris Otahal, Barstow BLM's wildlife biologist and the lead for development of the Amargosa Wild and Scenic River (AWSR) Plan, provided a [presentation](#) outlining the planning goals for AWSR. A public comment on the preliminary environmental assessment is expected in February 2012 and a decision record is expected by June 30, 2012. The AWSR Plan will include an adaptive framework to include new information and science. Barstow BLM is primarily concerned with documenting flows and federal reserve water rights for AWAR. Another concern is how surrounding development might affect AWSR flows and riparian communities.

USGS Lower Amargosa Study- Wayne Belcher provided a [presentation](#) explaining the current conceptual model for the Lower Amargosa and the proposed BLM-USGS water study. The [presentation](#) shows a map of the current conceptual model on pages six and sixteen. The primary objective of the BLM-USGS study is to develop a conceptual understanding of the groundwater flow system that discharges to and supports flow in the Wild and Scenic Amargosa River. The study includes seven tasks:

1. Compilation and evaluation of existing data
2. Collection of new GW, SW, and QW data, including drilling and installation of wells in areas where water-level or water-quality data are sparse
3. Estimate evapotranspiration (ET) rates and groundwater discharge quantities for riparian vegetation areas
4. Evaluate geologic structures and bedrock units that likely influence groundwater flow directions and gradients
5. Evaluate regional groundwater flow paths
6. Determine possibly source-water areas
7. Summarizing and documenting results of these work tasks in three USGS reports.

BLM has provided FY 2012 funding for many items in Tasks 1, 2, and 4 however funding is not available for a number of basic data collection tasks. TNC and Nye County are providing partial funding for Task 3. USGS thinks the most urgent unfunded task is further geophysical investigation, which is budgeted at \$64k.

Amargosa Conservancy (AC) State of the Basin Report- Andy Zdon provided a [presentation](#) of the draft State of the Basin report. For future work, Andy is proposing to install thirteen shallow piezometers. Locations are yet to be determined but proposed locations include the southern end of the Amargosa Canyon, Chicago Valley, along the river between Shoshone and Tecopa, north of Shoshone, and south of Eagle Mountain Well. The estimated cost is \$265k. USGS indicated they could use the regional model to refine piezometer locations. There was also discussion of the need to merge the AC drilling effort with anything proposed by USGS.

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Future Coordinated Funding- There was considerable discussion on the use of mitigation funding to study the impacts of development upon source waters of AWSR. Unfunded tasks were prioritized for mitigation as follows:

1. USGS regional model runs to predict impacts from projects
2. Piezometer installation (\$265k) and the remaining unfunded items in USGS Tasks 2 (>\$55k) and 4 (\$65k)
3. Nested wells at project sites (\$500k or more)
4. Completion of the evapotranspiration study (\$300k)

Action Item- USGS will flesh out unfunded priorities.

Las Vegas BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision- Susan Farkas, BLM Planning Lead, said that BLM would finalize internal review of alternatives in January and provide cooperating agencies with a three-week review starting mid-February. A cooperator meeting is scheduled for March 13. The RMP is being delayed because of visual resource inventories. The Programmatic Solar PEIS will be consistent with the RMP revision. The utility corridor south of Ash Meadows will be removed.

Renewable Energy- Greg Helseth, BLM Energy Project Manager, provided an update on solar projects in the Amargosa region. Currently, there are ten projects in the Amargosa Valley and six projects in the Pahrump Valley. BLM has a new [renewable energy website](#) with a [map](#). Nevada has met its renewable energy goals so now all generation is intended for export to California.

There was significant discussion of the Bright Source Hidden Hills project proposed for the southern Pahrump Valley on private land in California. Bright Source would lease land that has 1,000 acre feet of water and construct a 750- foot power tower. The project is estimated to use 140 acre feet per year for operation. A public land right of way is needed for a 230 kV transmission line that would connect to a new substation at Highway 160. A thirty-six inch natural gas line would connect with Kern River pipeline in Goodsprings. There are concerns that the project will have impacts on Amargosa Wild and Scenic River and Stump Springs.

Action Item- Sarah Peterson and Karl Stein will draft an adaptive management strategy for Bright Source discussion.

Action Item- Greg Helseth will schedule a meeting with Bright Source to discuss water mitigation for the Hidden Hills project.

Nevada National Security Site EIS- Mike West and Linda Cohn provided a [slide presentation](#) on the status of the Nevada National Security Site (former Nevada Test Site) Site-wide EIS. Public comment for the draft closed December 2 and a Record of Decision is expected by late summer.

Southern Amargosa Embedded Model (SAMM)- Kyle Richards provided an [update](#) of SAMM. USGS expects to have a cooperator meeting in January or February to review the model with a calibrated model in early CY 2012. SAMM will be published as a Scientific Investigation Report.

Action Item- USGS will schedule a cooperators meeting for SAMM

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Attached (four power point presentations referenced above):

- http://www.dmg.gov/summit/20111212_PRS_Amrgsa_Rvr_ACEC_Implntn_Pln_Othal.pdf
- http://www.dmg.gov/summit/20111213_PRS_Hydrlgc_Chrcrtztn_Cncptlztzn_Wtr_Rsrcs_Belcher.pdf
- http://www.dmg.gov/summit/20111213_PRS_State_of_the_Basin_2012_SGI_Envrnmntl.pdf
- http://www.dmg.gov/summit/20111213_PRS_Sts_DVRFS_Mdl_Rvsns_Lnkd_SAMM_Embddd_Mdl_Richards.pdf

Bureau of Land Management

Amargosa River ACEC Implementation Plan
and
Amargosa River WSR Comprehensive River
Management Plan

Chris Otahal
Wildlife Biologist
BLM – Barstow Field Office

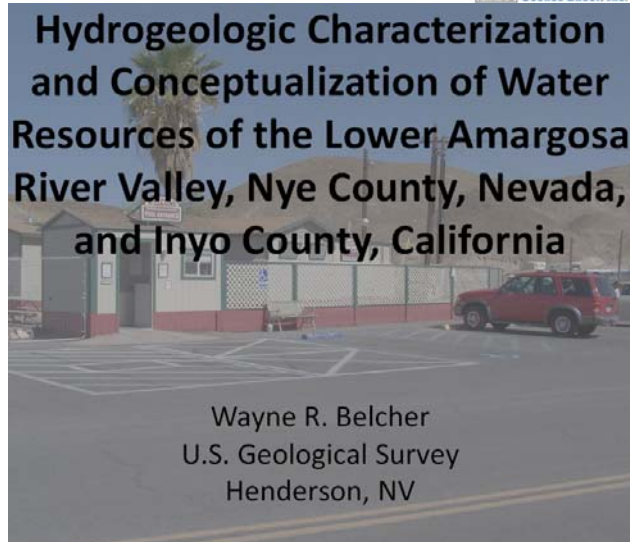
State of the Basin - 2012

The Status of the DVRFS Model Revisions and Linked SAMM Embedded Model

Kyle Richards
Hydrologist, USGS
Dec. 13, 2011

Figure

SGI THE SOURCE GROUP, INC.



cc: Mike Conway, CEC lead hydrologist Paul Marshall, CEC Water Senior Dick Ratliff, Staff Counsel	Prepared by: Mike Monasmith, Project Manager
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