



Tim Carson <admin@midcountygroundwater.org>

Concerns re: New Cunnison Lane Well in Soquel Creek Water District and Water Optimization Models

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency <admin@midcountygroundwater.org>

Mon, Mar 18, 2024 at 1:21 PM

To: Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>

Cc: Jon Kennedy <jkennedy@midcountygroundwater.org>, "Peisch Amanda@DWR" <amanda.peisch@water.ca.gov>, "Sierra Ryan (MGA Point of Contact)" <basinpoc@midcountygroundwater.org>

Dear Ms. Steinbruner,

This email is to confirm receipt of your comments.

Reminder, as pointed out to you a couple times in January 2024 in response to your prior emails on other MGA matters, "sryan@midcountygroundwater.org" is a not a valid email address, it does not exist. The Basin Point of Contact (Sierra Ryan), may be emailed at "basinpoc@midcountygroundwater.org". Please note for future reference in your communications.

Regards,
Tim Carson



Tim Carson <admin@midcountygroundwater.org>

Concerns re: New Cunnison Lane Well in Soquel Creek Water District and Water Optimization Models

Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>

Sat, Mar 16, 2024 at 8:53 PM

To: MidCounty Groundwater Agency Board <comment@midcountygroundwater.org>, Sierra Ryan <sryan@midcountygroundwater.org>, Jon Kennedy <jkennedy@midcountygroundwater.org>

Cc: "Peisch Amanda@DWR" <amanda.peisch@water.ca.gov>, Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>

Dear MidCounty Groundwater Agency Board,

I respectfully request that your Board review the issues below that I have raised with the Soquel Creek Water District Board relative to the new Cunnison Lane Well project. I believe that this well project is funded by the \$7.6 million grant the MGA received in 2022 from DWR, so I felt it proper to include you.

Please discuss this matter at your Board's meeting this Thursday, March 21, where appropriate.

Please respond. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Becky Steinbruner

Dear Soquel Creek Water District Board,

Ms. Western sent me the link to the District's 2010 DRAFT Soquel Creek Water District Well Master Plan Environmental Impact Report in answer to my questions regarding the new Cunnison Lane Well, the contract for which is Consent Item 4.7 on your March 19, 2024 Board agenda.

In trying to find answers on my own to the questions I had asked for staff, I found some interesting information regarding anticipated significant and adverse impacts on neighboring private wells that begs public discussion.

Please pull Consent Item 4.7 to allow better public discussion on this matter.

1) The informational link Ms. Western sent is for the DRAFT EIR. Was the EIR ever finalized and certified by the Board?
<https://www.soquelcreekwater.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/143>

2) What studies and / or outreach has the District conducted to determine current private well status near the Cunnison Lane Well, and what pumping impacts have been determined significant, as stated in Mitigation 3-2a on page 3.3-39? Have the models been updated?

Page 3.3-32 and -33 discusses potential significant and adverse impacts the Cunnison Lane Well would have on multiple private wells in the immediate draw-down area:

This well would provide an estimated 538 gpm for Service Areas I and II. The well would be completed in Purisima Unit A.

*There are approximately 26 neighboring wells within 1,000 meters of the Cunnison Lane Well site, of which 23 have well construction information available. Since 61 percent of pumping occurs during the dry season, the well would produce 265 ac-ft during the dry season **The modeling results indicate that if the Cunnison Lane Well pumped 265 ac-ft during the dry season, changes in groundwater levels at the 23 identified neighboring private wells would range from -2.1 to -6.5 feet.***

The predicted changes in yield indicate that the lowered groundwater levels could produce a decrease in pump discharge at neighboring wells of up to 0.3 gpm. This predicted drawdown effect on well yield is marginal, and no significant impacts in well yield at "average" neighboring wells would result. However, the potential for adverse effects at shallower "non-average" private wells, or at private wells for which well log information is not available, is considered a potentially significant impact.

3) What will be the impact of the Cunnison Lane Well on known contamination plume migration, such as the MTBE contamination site nearby?

The DRAFT EIR states on page 3.3-43:

However, future pumping under the WMP could potentially alter groundwater gradients and the direction of groundwater flow and induce the migration of contaminants from nearby remediation sites towards nearby production wells, adversely affecting the beneficial uses of the groundwater resources if contamination is drawn into drinking water wells. The likelihood for contamination would reach any individual well is dependent upon several factors, including the presence of known groundwater contamination within ¼-mile of the proposed well sites, the type of aquifer (confined or unconfined), aquifer material (porous materials or fractured rock), pathways of contamination (i.e. presence of abandoned or improperly destroyed wells), static groundwater conditions (depth), and well operations.

Page 3.3-44 discusses the impacts relative to the Cunnison Lane Well:

Cunnison Lane Well Site

An active LUST cleanup facility, the Quik Stop at [5505 Soquel Drive](#) near Hardin Way, is located approximately 800 feet south of the Cunnison Lane Well site. Groundwater at this facility is contaminated by methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) and tert-butyl alcohol (TBA).

Groundwater remediation of the shallow aquifer is ongoing at this site. As part of the remediation requirements, the facility is required to submit quarterly monitoring reports to the RWQCB.

The results of the drawdown analysis performed by HydroMetrics for the Cunnison Lane Well indicate that future pumping at the Cunnison Lane Well, without consideration of the proposed redistribution of pumping, could lower groundwater levels and interfere with groundwater remediation at the Quik Stop facility, and possibly induce the migration of contaminated groundwater towards private and SqCWD production wells in the vicinity. However, with the redistribution of pumping proposed under the WMP, groundwater levels in the vicinity of the Cunnison Lane Well and Quik Stop remediation wells are not predicted to decline.

Although unlikely, this analysis conservatively considers the potential for future pumping from District wells in the vicinity of the Cunnison Lane Well to induce the migration of contaminants towards District or non-District wells a potentially significant impact. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-3 (Operating Restrictions for Cunnison Lane Well), which would restrict the District from operating the Cunnison Lane Well until all remediation activities at the Quik Stop facility are terminated, this impact would be reduced to less than significant. Because the identified impacts to groundwater quality in the vicinity of the Cunnison Lane Well are based on the potential for pumping to adversely affect the effectiveness of the remediation wells, this impact could not occur after the groundwater remedial pumping is terminated.

Because ongoing monitoring of contaminant levels in groundwater at the Quik Stop facility would likely continue after extraction and treatment activities have been completed, and because it can sometimes take years for environmental cases to be formally closed by the responsible agency, the development restrictions imposed by this mitigation measure shall not depend on case closure.

4) Has the District conducted any further testing for MTBE in the Quik Stop area or within 1000 meters of the new Cunnison Lane Well?

Please discuss these important concerns at your March 19, 2024 Board meeting regarding the Cunnison Lane Well contract.

Please respond. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Becky Steinbruner