

DATE: November 22, 2006

TO: Groundwater Advisory Committee

FROM: Todd Ambs

SUBJECT: Enhancement of GMA and GAA identification process

You previously approved the following items related to designation of additional GMAs.

- **After 10 years, the legislature shall establish a committee to evaluate the effectiveness of the statute (281.34) and identify other areas to be designated as a GMA. (41)**
- **Designation of GMAs should not be restricted to 150-foot drawdown in a confined aquifer or exclude unconfined aquifers. (43)**

The following provisions are intended to provide further detail concerning the process by which additional GMAs and GAAs would be identified. It is envisioned that the WGNHS, USGS and GCC would provide the scientific basis upon which future GMA and GAA designations would be made by the DNR.

- **Every seven years, the WGNHS in consultation with the USGS, will identify to the Groundwater Coordinating Council (GCC) any “regionally defined” areas of the state where groundwater quantity availability, coupled with water quality degradation, may warrant designation as a GMA or GAA.**
- **The GCC will conduct a review of the information provided by the WGNHS and, within six months, forward to the DNR recommendations concerning the need for designation of identified areas as potential GAAs or GMAs.**
- **Within six months of receipt of the GCC recommendations, the DNR shall submit a report to the Natural Resources Board that includes a thorough environmental, economic and social analysis of the GCC findings and, based on that analysis, recommendations for rule-making to formally designate additional GAAs and GMAs.**
- **In accordance with the recommendations of the Natural Resources Board and within one year from receiving direction from the Natural Resources Board, DNR will complete the rule promulgation process to establish the appropriate designations.**

This process is structured so that it would flow logically into the first GAC recommendation above. Specifically, the scientific evaluation and DNR rule-making would be completed using existing committees and processes before the Legislative Committee is formed. Following this approach would create a baseline of information for the Legislative Committee to assess.

I am suggesting that the GAC consider these enhancements to the GMA/GAA designation process and that these provisions be incorporated into the GAC report as recommendations pertaining to GMA and GAA designation.