



**BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

**Clerk of the Board of
Supervisors**
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite
407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:

Department Name: PW/Water Agency
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: February 13, 2024
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Water Agency

FROM: Department Scott D. McGolpin, Public Works Director, (805) 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director – Water Resources, (805) 568-3436
Info:

SUBJECT: Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin - Eastern Management Area Interim Cost Sharing Agreement, 3rd Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to Execute the “Interim Cost Sharing Agreement, Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin - Eastern Management Area” among the Santa Barbara County Water Agency, the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, City of Solvang, and the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 for the period of November 15, 2023 until a groundwater fee is implemented;
- b) Determine that this action is not subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as it is an administrative action that will not result in direct or indirect changes to the environment, and 15306 as information collection which does not result in serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to execute an Interim Cost Sharing Agreement for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Eastern Management Area. The Interim Cost Sharing Agreement provides a means for the member agencies of the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EMA GSA) to provide bridge funding to the GSA until a groundwater-based fee can be implemented. Funding will be used by the GSA to conduct activities that may include contracting for the following: preparing Annual Reports required by SGMA; technical studies

developing a groundwater-based fee, grant applications, GSA administrative activities, and implementing projects and management actions called for in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

All funds under this interim agreement will be ultimately reimbursed to the member agencies once grant funding and/or groundwater fee funds become available. Pursuant to the agreement, reimbursement will be made no later than December 2026.

Background:

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was signed into law by Governor Brown in 2014. SGMA provides a framework for the sustainable management of groundwater supplies by local agencies and provides tools, authority, and a timeline for local agencies during the 20-year implementation period. SGMA requires sustainable management of the County’s basins that are designated as medium- or high-priority by DWR. The Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin is designated as a medium-priority basin and is subject to SGMA. Public agencies in the Basin created three GSAs representing the three main areas of the Basin (Western, Central, and Eastern Management Area). In the EMA, the GSA includes the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, the Santa Ynez River Water District Improvement District No. 1, the City of Solvang, and the Water Agency. The Water Agency Board voted to sign a MOA to join the EMA GSA on April 11, 2017. Groundwater sustainability plans for each management area were submitted to the California Department of Water Resources for review in January of 2022.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

| <u>Funding Sources</u> | <u>Current FY Cost:</u> | <u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u> | <u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Water Agency funds | \$ 100,000.00 | | |
| State | | | |
| Federal | | | |
| Fees | | | |
| Other: | | | |
| Total | \$ 100,000.00 | \$ - | \$ - |

Fiscal Analysis:

This is an ongoing program for the Water Agency and costs and staff time are included every year in the annual budget.

The Water Agency’s cost sharing allocation of 25% or an estimated \$100,000 was included in the adopted FY 2023-24 Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as shown on page D-331 in the budget book. The cost allocation is split equally (25% each) among the four (4) member agencies.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to email a signed signature page of the Interim Cost Sharing Agreement and copy of the minute order to Christina Lopez at clopez@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A - Interim Cost Sharing Agreement, Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin - Eastern Management Area (includes Board Contract Summaries)

Authored by:

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