



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

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

Department Name: Water Agency
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: 05/01/12
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, 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3436

SUBJECT: **Santa Barbara County 2011 Groundwater Report**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

- a) Receive and file the Santa Barbara County 2011 Groundwater Report and authorize distribution of the report and public information contained within the report; and
- b) Find that the Santa Barbara County 2011 Groundwater Report is exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, Section 15306 (Class 6) basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities, and direct the Clerk of the Board to file the attached CEQA Notice of Exemption (POST).

Summary Text:

The Santa Barbara County Groundwater Report updates information on groundwater conditions and includes recent water quality trends and water level measurements. The report satisfies one requirement of the *Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Conservation Element, Groundwater Resources Section*, which was adopted May 24, 1994, and amended November 8, 1994. *Conservation Element Goal 4, Policy 4.1, Action 4.1.1* states that:

The County Water Agency shall continue to monitor water levels from existing monitoring wells and, in coordination with the U.C. Cooperative Extension/Farm Advisor, shall request, on a voluntary basis, private and public water purveyors and major private groundwater users, including agricultural users, to provide periodic records of groundwater production. Unless deemed unnecessary by the Water Agency's Board of Directors for any year, the Agency shall compile an annual report on the status of pumping amounts, water levels, overdraft conditions,

and other relevant data, and shall submit this report to the Board of Supervisors for its acceptance and possible further action.

In 2006 the Board concurred with staff recommendation to change the report from annual to tri-annual as groundwater conditions generally do not change on a year to year basis. Groundwater conditions are best analyzed over a period of many years or climatic cycles due to the time it takes rainfall and surface water runoff to percolate into groundwater aquifers and the long term response of aquifers to multi-year wet and dry periods.

This report focuses on conditions of groundwater and the status of groundwater basins during the 2009 through 2011 calendar years.

Background:

The groundwater basins of Santa Barbara County are relied upon heavily as a source of water for both municipal and agricultural uses and provide a critical line of defense against periodic water shortages. Therefore the condition and reliability of the County's groundwater basins needs to be monitored and documented. The Santa Barbara County 2011 Groundwater Report documents recent climate and hydrologic trends, results of the Water Agency's groundwater monitoring program, current conditions of the groundwater basins, and ancillary information on supplemental water supplies relevant to groundwater usage.

The report documents that some of the groundwater basins within the County are in a state of slight to severe overdraft (more water extracted from the basin then replenished on a long term basis). Notable among these is the Cuyama Groundwater Basin with an overdraft of 28,525 acre-feet per year as determined by a 1992 study. The Water Agency is currently working with the United States Geological Survey on a Cuyama Groundwater Basin water availability study that will be complete in early 2013. The San Antonio Groundwater Basin was also determined to be in a state of overdraft of 9,540 acre-feet per year based on a 2003 study. Groundwater basins determined to be in a condition of slight overdraft are the Santa Maria and Santa Ynez Uplands Basins. Note that the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin is now adjudicated and thus is subject to increased monitoring and conservation measures. Basins of the South Coast have been determined to be essentially in balance and are managed through conjunctive use with other water sources. The Goleta Groundwater Basin has also been adjudicated.

The Santa Barbara County 2011 Report will be distributed to all local and regional water agencies and be made available to the public on the County Public Works Water Resources website.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

This program is an ongoing Water Agency program and staff time and program costs are budgeted annually. Costs were included in the 2011-2012 Adopted Budget under the Water Agency cost center of the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as identified on page D-352 in the budget book.

Special Instruction:

1. Direct the Clerk of the Board to file the attached CEQA Notice of Exemption (Post); and
2. Send a copy of the minute order of these actions to the Water Agency, Attn: Christina Lopez

Attachments:

Santa Barbara County 2011 Groundwater Report
CEQA Notice of Exemption

Authored by: Dennis Gibbs, Hydrologist, Sr., 739-8781