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# *Santa Ynez River*

## **WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

P.O. Box 719 - 3669 Sagunto Street, Suite 108  
Santa Ynez, California 93460  
Telephone: (805) 693-1156

**GENERAL**

**MANAGER:**

BRUCE A. WALES

**SECRETARY:**

BRUCE A. WALES

**CONSULTANTS:**

ERNEST A. CONANT  
General Counsel

STETSON ENGINEERS  
Engineer

July 11, 2016

Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Re: Request for County Participation  
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act  
Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin**

Dear Honorable Supervisors:

The Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (District) was formed in 1939 to protect the water rights and water supplies of the 80,000 residents and landowners and 33,000 acres of irrigated agriculture in the watershed. Our economy is driven by agriculture and tourism and these industries and our small towns and cities are dependent upon the water resources of the Santa Ynez River and surrounding groundwater basins, most of which are within the boundaries of the District.

In late 2014, the Board of Directors authorized staff to initiate activities relating to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). This was based on the District's working relationships in and knowledge of the watershed derived from 37 years of study and reporting, as well as the District's experience with AB 3030, the State's last initiative to encourage local entities to manage groundwater.

In early 2015, the District developed a plan to implement SGMA and circulated it for review and comment to the County Water Agency and all of the water purveyors in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin). After discussion at the staff level, the District developed and circulated for review and approval a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) describing the process for formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and development of

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Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). After outreach, the MOU was approved on May 23, 2016 by all of the city councils and boards in the Basin as well as the County Water Agency. The District has since moved on to hire staff and consultants and is developing legal agreements for each portion of the Basin, as shown by the draft Organization Chart in your Board package.

The District supports the recommendations in the County Water Agency staff report and welcomes the County Water Agency's participation in the Basin GSAs. In particular, we request the County's active support in the eastern portion of the Santa Ynez Upland, which is not within the District's boundaries. We would appreciate a continuation of the County Water Agency's current technical efforts with regard to the portions of the Basin not within the District's boundaries. Additionally, we request that the County designate an attorney from County Counsel to assist us with developing the required legal agreement to form the GSA in the Santa Ynez Upland portion of the Basin

Should you have any questions or comments, or require additional information please contact our General Manager, Bruce Wales at 805-693-1156.

Sincerely,

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Cynthia Allen  
President

BAW/bjb