



**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:** County Council  
**Department No.:** 013  
**For Agenda Of:** August 22, 2023  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Time:** N/A  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** 4/5<sup>ths</sup>

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** County Counsel Rachel Van Mullem, County Counsel (805) 568-2950  
Contact Info: Callie Kim, Deputy County Counsel (805) 568- 2950  
**SUBJECT:** **Agreement for Professional Legal Services with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo for Legal Counsel for Groundwater Basin Adjudication**

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**County Council Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

County Council recommends that the Board of Directors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to execute the attached Agreement for Professional Legal Services between the Santa Barbara County Water Agency and Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, from July 18, 2023 through July 18, 2025, for a total not to exceed amount of \$50,000; and
- b) Determine that the above action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15378(b)(4) in that it does not involve a commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant impact to the environment.

**Summary Text:**

The County is a party to an adjudication concerning the Cuyama Valley Groundwater Basin, *Bolthouse Land Company, LLC, et al. v. All Persons Claiming a Right to Extract or Store Groundwater in the Cuyama Valley Groundwater Basin* (No.3-013), et al., BCV-21-101927. County Council recommends retaining the firm Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo to provide legal counsel to the County on issues that may arise in the adjudication because the firm has substantial experience in working with public entities on water-related issues and has represented clients in other groundwater adjudications. The proposed contract will authorize Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo to provide legal advice to the County in connection with the Cuyama adjudication within the contract’s term and \$50,000 limit.

**Performance Measure:**

Not applicable.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted – Outside Counsel Designation: \$50,000 paid by Department 013, Fund 0001, Line Item 7650.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

The contract has a not-to-exceed amount of \$50,000. This cost will be paid from County Counsel's budget. No General Fund monies will be used to pay for work associated with this agreement.

**Key Contract Risks:**

County Counsel views this Agreement as low risk because the involved attorneys from Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo are highly experience and have worked successfully with other government agencies for many years.

**Staffing Impacts:**

Contracting with Outside Counsel will allow the Board of Supervisors to obtain the specialized legal services needed in these matters without hiring additional staff attorneys.

**Special Instructions:**

Please send an executed agreement to Tim Yu in the County Counsel Office.

**Attachments:**

Agreement for Professional Legal Services