



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.: 054-04-07
For Agenda Of: 11/08/11
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 McGolpin, Public Works Director, 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3436

SUBJECT: Cuyama Groundwater Basin Study, First Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: No

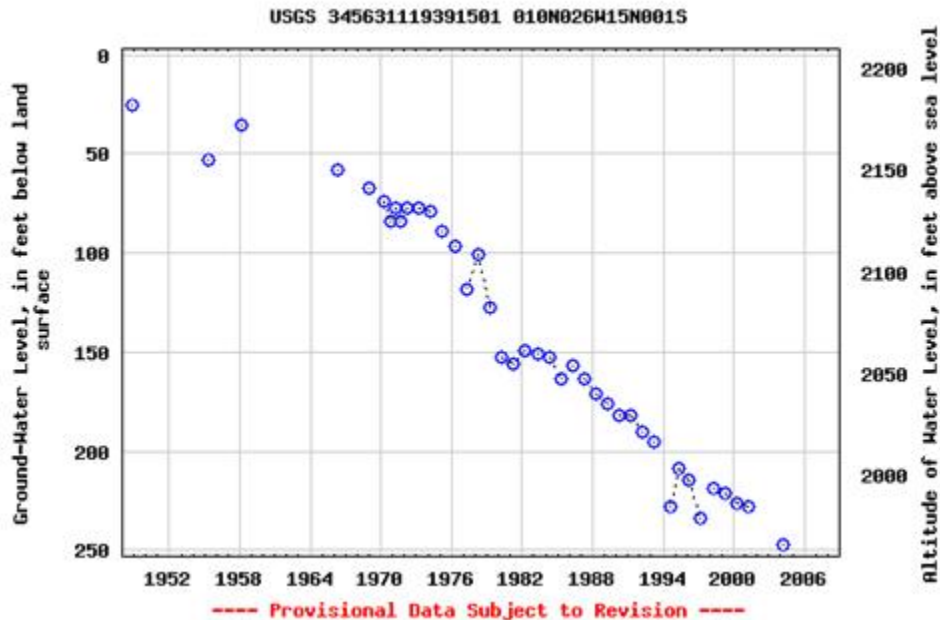
Recommended Actions:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the attached Joint Funding Agreement (No. 09W4CAD03910, Amendment 4) with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to continue and complete a comprehensive study of the Cuyama Groundwater Basin in order to assess current and future water availability in the amount of \$185,000 for fiscal year 2011 – 2012 (total project period being October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2012) in which \$137,000 to be funded by the County Water Agency and \$48,000 will be funded by the USGS; and
- b) Find that the Cuyama Groundwater Study is exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, Section 15262; Feasibility and Planning Studies and 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:

Due to concerns raised by constituents in the Cuyama Valley the Santa Barbara County Water Agency has been commissioned to produce a comprehensive report on current and future water availability on the Cuyama Groundwater basin. Portions of the Cuyama Basin have shown a steady downward trend in water levels over the past 30 years with water level declines of 150'-200' common in many areas (reference the graph on the next page). The Water Agency has elected in turn to conduct this study in cooperation with the USGS since they have the most expertise and highest level of credibility in water resources science investigations. This project is being conducted over a four year period. It began in the

summer of 2008 and will end in late 2012. Projects of these types take a long time due to the nature of data collection and analysis. Along with periodical updates a final report will be published. The USGS will cost share for some of the elements of the project. Total cost to the Water Agency over the four year study period is estimated to be \$1,400,700.



Monitoring Well Data from the Cuyama Groundwater Basin 1950 -2005

During the previous year the following accomplishments have been made in order to conduct the study and produce the final report:

1. Maintained and collected data from the monitoring network of 52 sites.
2. Installed continuous water level recorders in an additional three wells, to total 18 altogether.
3. Conducted water quality testing at 15 sites.
4. Continued work on a digital database and GIS system with digital stratigraphic logs attached to the sites.
5. Continued work on a computerized simulation to project trends based on differing climatic and cultural scenarios.
6. Finalized water distribution mapping to account for where water is produced and where it is delivered in the agricultural areas.

Background:

The Cuyama Groundwater Basin lies about 45 miles east of the City of Santa Maria in the northeastern corner of Santa Barbara County and extends southeast into Ventura County as well as north and east into San Luis Obispo and Kern Counties. The basin is comprised of unconsolidated sands and gravels that fill a 225 square-mile intermountain topographic depression named the Cuyama Valley.

Agricultural water use began in 1938 and has since progressively increased. Ground-water within the basin makes up 100 percent of water supply for Cuyama Valley agriculture, petroleum operations,

businesses, homes and farmsteads. Agriculture accounts for over 95 percent of the water use within the Valley. Water level declines since the 1940's in excess of 150-200 feet are not unusual in many parts of the basin. The last ground-water analysis of the basin by the Water Agency in 1992 indicated an overdraft of approximately 28,000 acre-feet per year. Due to concerns raised by constituents in the Valley, the Water Agency has been commissioned to complete a thorough and detailed analysis of current and future water availability for the basin.

Previously two Joint Funding Agreements were executed, one for the drilling and one for all other activities associated with the study. As the three dedicated “cluster” type observation wells are now drilled and in place, the second Joint Funding Agreement (No. 09W4CAD03920) is no longer needed.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes **Fiscal Analysis:**

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total 4-year Project Cost</u>
General Fund			
State			
USGS	\$ 48,000.00		\$ 370,800.00
Water Agency	\$ 137,000.00		\$ 1,400,700.00
Other:			
Total	\$ 185,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,771,500.00

Narrative:

The funding for this project is being split by the Water Agency and the USGS with the USGS providing a cost share of certain project costs. The Water Agency has \$137,000 budgeted for FY 2011-2012 for this project and the USGS has their matching funds budgeted so matching funds are secured. This is the final amendment to the initial contract and will culminate in the completion of the report and of this project. When complete the final report will be brought back to the Board to receive and file.

The project is included in the Adopted 2011-2012 Budget under the Water Agency cost center of the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as shown on page D-352.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to post the attached CEQA Notice of Exemption and to return all three originals of the agreement along with a copy of the minute order of these actions to the Water Agency office, Attn: Christina Lopez. The Water Agency will return the agreements to the USGS for their approval. An original will be returned to the Clerk of the Board after the agreement has been approved by the USGS.

Attachments:

- Joint Funding Agreement #09W4CAD03910, Amendment 4 (3 originals)
- Attachment A – Summary of Work
- Notice of CEQA Notice of Exemption

Authored by: Dennis Gibbs, Senior Hydrologist, Water Agency, 739-8781