



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: 10/15/13  
Placement: Administrative  
Estimated Tme: N/A  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority

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**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: San Antonio Groundwater Basin Study, Third, Fourth and Fifth Supervisorial Districts**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** N/A

As to form: N/A

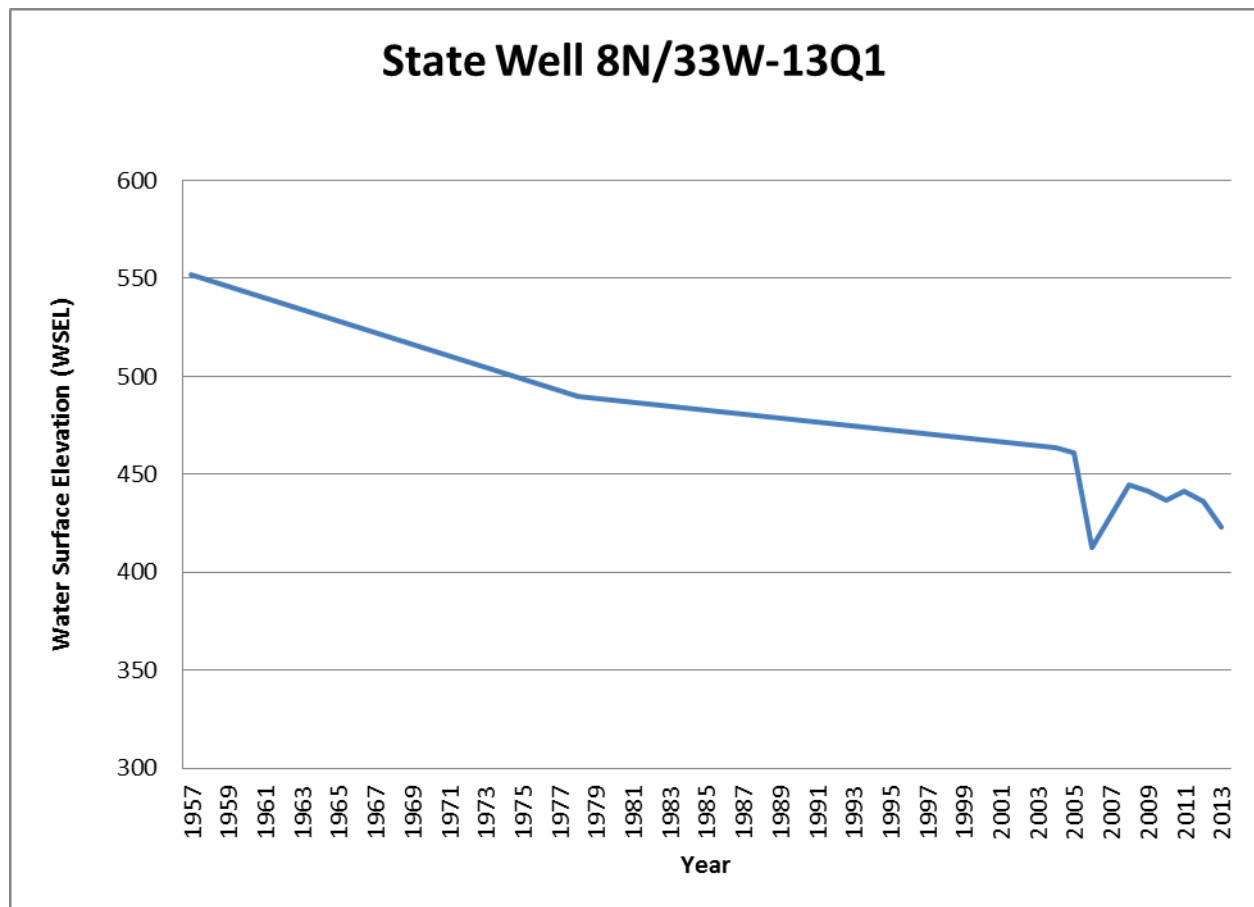
**Recommended Actions:**

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the Joint Funding Agreement #13WSCA600081610 with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to initiate a comprehensive five-year study (project period being October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2018) of the San Antonio Groundwater Basin in order to assess current and future water availability in the amount of \$778,928 for the first phase of the project in which \$673,950 to be funded by the County Water Agency and \$104,978 to be funded by the USGS; and
- b) Find that the San Antonio 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.

**Summary Text:**

The San Antonio Groundwater Basin has been identified as a high priority study area by Staff as groundwater serves as the sole source of water to meet the agricultural and municipal needs of the greater Los Alamos Valley, and augments State Water as Vandenberg Air Force Base's water supply. As such, Staff is recommending a comprehensive study in cooperation with the USGS since they have the most expertise and highest level of credibility in water resources science investigations. This study will be conducted over a five year period as was the Cuyama Groundwater Basin Study. Significant

changes in land use have occurred since the San Antonio Groundwater Basin was last comprehensively studied in the early 1980's. Specifically, much of the Uplands part of the Basin has been converted from livestock to grapes. Data has thus far been limited in the Uplands, but in areas there have been water level declines of over 50 feet since the early 1980's. This project is being conducted over a five-year period as projects of these types take a time due to the nature of data collection and analysis. Along with periodic updates, a final report will be published. The USGS has agreed to cost share for some of the elements of the project. Total cost to the Water Agency over the five year study period is estimated to be \$1,513,000, with a total project cost of \$2,452,313.



**Monitoring Well Data from the San Antonio Basin Uplands 1958-2013**

### **Background:**

The San Antonio Groundwater Basin lies about 15 miles south of the City of Santa Maria and 50 miles north of Santa Barbara in the central portion of Santa Barbara County. The surface water drainage of the watershed is about 154 square miles and the Groundwater Basin covers an area of about 128 square miles. The Valley is bounded on the north by the Casmalia Hills and Solomon Hills, on the south by the Purisima Hills and the Burton Mesa, and on the east and west by uplifted consolidated rocks. At the western end of the Groundwater Basin, about five miles east of the Pacific Ocean, consolidated rocks form a barrier to the seaward flow of water which creates upwelling of groundwater and the 660 acre marshland known as the Barka Slough. Land in the San Antonio Creek Valley is used primarily for agriculture. Historically, the Upland parts of the Valley have been used for dry farming or pastureland

and the flatlands along the streams for irrigated farming. Since 1980, however, large sections of formerly non-irrigated pastureland in the Upland parts of the Valley have been converted to irrigated vineyards. The western quarter of the Valley is owned by Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB), and it is anticipated that VAFB will be participating in the study with some level of funding and interaction.

Due to the fact that groundwater serves as the sole source of water for this basin, concerns raised by Valley constituents and water managers, and the importance of groundwater to both VAFB and Valley agriculture, the Water Agency proposes to work with the USGS and VAFB to complete a thorough and detailed analysis of current and future water availability for the basin.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes **Fiscal Analysis:**

<b><u>Funding Sources</u></b>	<b><u>Current FY Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Total 5-year Project Cost</u></b>
Federal USGS	\$ 104,978.00		\$ 405,825.00
Water Agency	\$ 50,000.00		\$ 1,513,314.00
VAFB (proposed)	\$ 150,113.00		\$ 533,174.00
Total	\$ 305,091.00	\$ -	\$ 2,452,313.00

**Narrative:**

The project is included in the Adopted 2013-2014 Budget under the Water Agency cost center of the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as shown on page D-178. No General Fund monies will be utilized for this project.

This current fiscal year costs are estimated at \$50,000 with the majority of this phase of the project costs occurring next fiscal year in the amount of \$623,950 which is included in the proposed FY 14-15 budget. This project will be conducted over a five-year period with a total estimated cost of \$1,513,000 to the Water Agency. The USGS is providing a cost share of specific project costs. The USGS will be the lead on the project and Water Agency staff will assist as needed.

VAFB's level of funding is unsecured at this time, thus the scope and detail of the project may change over time to reflect changes in funding. Staff anticipates returning to the Board annually with an update and amendment adjusting scope and cost for each fiscal year. The culmination of this project will be a detailed report and fact sheet on current and future water availability in the San Antonio Groundwater Basin under current and future cultural and climatic scenarios. When complete the final report will be brought back to the Board to receive and file.

**Special Instructions:**

Direct the Clerk of the Board to post the attached CEQA Notice of Exemption and to return an original of the agreement along with a copy of the NOE and minute order of these actions to the Water Agency office, Attn: Christina Lopez.

**Attachments:**

Contract Summary

Joint Funding Agreement #13WSCA600081610\_00 (2 originals)

Notice of CEQA Notice of Exemption

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