



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

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: PW/Water Agency
Department No.: 054
Agenda Date: February 24, 2026
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Water Agency
FROM: Department Director: Chris Sneddon, Public Works Director
Contact: Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director – Water Resources
SUBJECT: Cuyama Valley Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Appointments; 1st Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Adopt the Resolution to appoint Santa Barbara County Public Works Director Chris Sneddon as an Alternate Director of the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency; and
- b) Determine that this action is not subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as it is an administrative action that will not result in direct or indirect changes to the environment.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to request Board approval of a resolution to appoint a new Alternate Director to the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Cuyama GSA) Board of Directors. Currently, Water Agency Manager Matt Young serves as one of the Water Agency's directors, with Public Works Deputy Director – Water Resources Walter Rubalcava as alternate. Fifth District Chief of Staff Cory Bantilan serves as the second appointed director, with Fifth District Supervisor Steve Lavagnino as his alternate.

With the upcoming retirement of Public Works Deputy Director – Water Resources Walter Rubalcava in March, Public Works requests that Public Works Director Chris Sneddon be appointed as alternate director.

Appointment of this alternate is effectuated by the resolution included as Attachment A.

Discussion:

The Cuyama GSA Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA) allows the Santa Barbara County Water Agency (Water Agency) to appoint two directors and two alternates and specifies that they be either an elected official or management staff. The Counties of Ventura, Kern, and San Luis Obispo all have management staff appointed as directors or alternates on the Cuyama GSA Board.

Background:

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was signed into law by Governor Brown in 2014. SMGA provides a framework for the sustainable management of groundwater supplies by local agencies and provides tools, authority, and a timeline for local agencies during the 20-year implementation period. SGMA requires sustainable management of the County's basins that are designated as medium- or high-priority by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The Cuyama Valley Groundwater Basin is designated as a high-priority, critically overdrafted basin and is subject to SGMA.

The Water Agency signed the Cuyama JPA on May 9, 2017 to form a GSA for this basin with five other public agencies: Cuyama Basin Water District, the Cuyama Community Services District, and the Counties of San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Kern. The GSA is governed by an 11- member Board of Directors.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: N/A

Fiscal Analysis:

There are no fiscal impacts from these actions.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to email a copy of the resolution and the minute order to Christina Lopez at clopez@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Resolution to Appoint an Alternate Director to the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board of Directors

Contact Information:

Kadie McShirley
Senior Water Resources Sustainability Specialist
mcshirleyk@countyofsb.org