



**BOARD OF  
SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER**

**Clerk of the Board of  
Supervisors**  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite  
407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**

**Department Name:** PW/Water Agency  
**Department No.:** 054  
**For Agenda Of:** July 16, 2024  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Tme:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Directors, Water Agency

**FROM:** Department Christ Sneddon, Public Works Director, (805) 568-3010  
Director(s)  
Contact Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director – Water Resources, (805) 568-3436  
Info:

**SUBJECT:** Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin - Eastern Management Area Joint Powers Agreement, 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Risk Management

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the “Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement, Santa Ynez River Valley Basin Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency” among the Santa Barbara County Water Agency, the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, City of Solvang, and the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1;
- b) Approve and adopt the Resolution to appoint Third District Supervisor Joan Hartmann as the Santa Barbara County Water Agency’s representative on the Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board of Directors for the Santa Ynez River Valley Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency, with Third District Representative Meighan Dietenhofer as an alternate; and
- c) Determine that these actions are not subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as they are administrative actions that will not result in direct or indirect changes to the environment.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to approve and authorize the Chair to execute the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Santa Ynez River Valley Basin Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability

Agency” (JPA - Attachment A). This agreement will supersede the existing Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) for the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EMA GSA). This item is also on the agenda to request appointment of Santa Barbara County Water Agency (Water Agency) representatives to the GSA Board of Directors for the Eastern Management Area of the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin.

The EMA GSA includes the Water Agency, the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, City of Solvang, and the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1. The EMA GSA Committee unanimously endorsed the JPA at a September 27, 2023 meeting. The EMA is the last of the three management areas to form a JPA. Your Board approved JPAs for the Central Management Area and Western Management Area at the November 28, 2023 Board meeting. Conversion from MOA to JPA governance structure, will facilitate implementation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the basin, enable better stakeholder engagement, and help protect member agencies from legal liability.

The JPA provides for an equally weighted voting structure, with four member directors (one from each member agency), and one agricultural stakeholder director. Adding an agricultural director will give the agricultural community the opportunity for more input on GSA activities, and improve implementation of potential management actions in the future. The JPA also commits each of the four member agencies to provide \$50,000 in startup funding. These funds under this interim agreement will be ultimately reimbursed to the member agencies once grant funding and/or groundwater fee funds become available. Pursuant to the agreement, reimbursement will be made no later than December 2026.

**Background:**

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was signed into law by Governor Brown in 2014. SGMA 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 Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin is designated as a medium-priority basin and is subject to SGMA. Public agencies in the Basin created three GSAs representing the three main areas of the Basin (Western, Central, and Eastern Management Area). The Water Agency Board voted to sign a MOA to join the EMA GSA on April 11, 2017. Groundwater sustainability plans for each management area were submitted to DWR for review in January 2022 and approved in January 2024.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

<b><u>Funding Sources</u></b>	<b><u>Current FY Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u></b>
Water Agency funds	\$ 50,000.00		
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 50,000.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

**Fiscal Analysis:**

This is an ongoing program for the Water Agency and costs and staff time are included every year in the annual budget.

The Water Agency's cost sharing allocation of \$50,000 was included in the adopted FY 2024-25 Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as shown on page D-334 in the budget book.

**Special Instructions:**

Direct the Clerk of the Board to email a signed signature page of the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement, a copy of the resolution, and copy of the minute order to Christina Lopez at [clopez@countyofsb.org](mailto:clopez@countyofsb.org).

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A - Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Santa Ynez River Valley Basin Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency
  
- Attachment B - Resolution to Appoint a Director and Alternate to the Santa Ynez River Valley Basin Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board of Directors

**Authored by:**

Matt Young, Water Agency Manager, (805) 568-3546