

MEETING MINUTES

Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Western Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin September 27, 2023

A regular meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Western Management Area (WMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the Vandenberg Village Community Services District Board Room, 3745 Constellation Road, Lompoc, California.

WMA GSA Committee Members Present: Jeremy Ball, Chris Brooks, Myron Heavin, and Steve Jordan

WMA GSA Non-Voting Acting Alternate Committee Member Present (Video Conference):
Meighan Diethofer

WMA GSA Alternate Committee Members Present: Cynthia Allen, and Ron Stassi

Staff Present: Joe Barget, Bill Buelow, Amber Thompson, and Kristin Worthley

Others Present (in person): Doug Circle, Carol Redhead, and Charles Witt

Others Present (Video Conference): Matt Brady, Ken Domako (VSFB), John Fio (EKI), Anita Regmi (DWR), Matt Scudato, and Matt Young

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

WMA GSA Committee Chair Chris Brooks called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked Mr. Bill Buelow to call roll. Four Committee Members and one non-voting Acting Alternate Committee Member were present providing a quorum. In addition, two WMA GSA Alternate Committee Members were present.

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

No additions or deletions were made.

3. Public Comment

Mr. Doug Circle, on behalf of the Santa Ynez Water Group, made a public comment regarding agriculture landowner representation in future WMA GSA governance. He requested the opportunity to work with the WMA GSA Committee and that the topic be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

4. Review and Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2023

The minutes of the WMA GSA Committee meeting on August 23, 2023, were presented for GSA Committee approval. There was no discussion or public comment.

WMA GSA Committee Member Myron Heavin made a MOTION to approve the minutes of August 23, 2023, as presented. GSA Committee Member Jeremy Ball seconded the motion and it passed 4-0 by voice vote.

5. Review and Summary of Request(s) for WMA GSA Written Verification under Executive Order N-7-22 for well permits processed by County EHS in the WMA

a. APN 099-100-045: Willett Family Trust

Mr. Buelow presented GSI Water Solution's Review of Well Application in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin, Western Management Area (WMA) APN: 099-100-045 (WP#5581) Willett 2016 Family Trust, dated September 22, 2023. Discussion followed. There was no public comment.

WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan made a MOTION to issue a well verification for APN 099-100-045 (WP#5581) Willett 2016 Family Trust Committee Member Myron Heavin seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or public comment. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. Receive Update from Ad-Hoc Committee on WMA CAG Applications

Mr. Buelow read the September 27, 2023, memorandum from the WMA GSA Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) Ad-Hoc Committee regarding the selected Slate of Applicants for the WMA CAG. The Ad-Hoc Committee recommended the following applicants be appointed to the WMA CAG: Karen Kistler, Ken Domako, Charlie Witt, Rick Menard, Giovanni Cuadra, Gregory Gonzalas, and Victor Gallegos with Jeff Martine as an alternate. Discussion followed. WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan thanked Doug Circle and the Santa Ynez Water Group for encouraging some agricultural candidates to apply and he considers the recommended slate is a good cross section of representation. No public comment was received.

WMA GSA Committee Member Jeremy Ball made a MOTION to appoint the slate of applicants to be WMA CAG members and alternate, as recommended by the Ad-Hoc Committee. WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by voice vote.

7. Receive Staff Update on SGMA Governance

Mr. Buelow requested the meeting dates for each member agency governing body as to when they will consider ratifying the WMA JPA that was endorsed by the WMA GSA Committee on August 23, 2023. Representatives from each member agency reported out. Vandenberg Village CSD will consider the item on October 3rd, City of Lompoc on October 17th, Mission Hills CSD on October 18th, Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District on

December 6th, and the County of Santa Barbara in December 2023. Discussion followed. No public comment was received.

8. Consider Adoption of Draft Resolution No. WMA-2023-001 “A RESOLUTION REQUIRING LANDOWNERS IN THE WESTERN MANAGEMENT AREA OF THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY TO COMPLETE A WELL REGISTRATION FORM”

Mr. Buelow presented Resolution No. WMA-2023-001 “A RESOLUTION REQUIRING LANDOWNERS IN THE WESTERN MANAGEMENT AREA OF THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY TO COMPLETE A WELL REGISTRATION FORM”. He reported that staff has corrected some typographical errors found in the resolution since posting for committee and public review. He advised that this resolution is the first step needed to develop a Well Registration Policy.

Discussion followed and public comment was received. WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan recommended keeping only one database for use by both the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) and the WMA GSA. He also recommended that one agency do all the work and one invoice be created in future to include both SYRWCD and GSA charges. WMA GSA Committee Member Jeremy Ball recommended consideration of efficient methods and procedures for WMA GSA to be partners with well owners. Mr. Doug Circle recommended that the GSA have a person knowledgeable about wells, the basin and agriculture be available to landowners during the registration process similar to what Los Alamos did already. WMA GSA Committee Member Myron Heavin preferred that the same registration form be used by all three GSAs in the basin and requested if an electronic version could be developed that could be used to create a database.

WMA GSA Committee Member Myron Heavin made a MOTION to adopt Resolution No. WMA-2023-001 “A RESOLUTION REQUIRING LANDOWNERS IN THE WESTERN MANAGEMENT AREA OF THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY TO COMPLETE A WELL REGISTRATION FORM”, as amended to correct typographical errors. WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by voice vote.

9. Receive Staff Update on SGMA Implementation Grant Award

Mr. Buelow reported that the Santa Ynez River Valley Basin was awarded \$5,534,000 from Department of Water Resources (DWR) SGM Grant Program’s SGMA Implementation, Round 2 and provided the DWR’s award list showing the SGMA implementation components and recommended awards. He reported that Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District will receive the DWR Grant Agreement and will execute it on behalf of the three GSAs. He advised that this grant does not have a matching funds requirement but does require the GSAs to spend money on implementation efforts and submit reimbursement requests to receive the grant funds and anticipates a retention of funds held by DWR as was the process for the last grant. The grant period is through July

2026. He thanked the City of Lompoc and their consultant, John Fio, EKI, for their tremendous involvement and help with the grant application to secure funding for 100% of the requested amount to benefit the basin.

Discussion followed. There was no public comment.

10. Discuss WMA Future Cost-Sharing Agreement and Funding of Future WMA Projects

Mr. Buelow presented the Staff Memorandum dated September 27, 2023, regarding Development of Cost Sharing for WMA Projects. WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan recommended a goal to be that the WMA GSA be fully self-funded and self-sufficient by raising funds through property tax and/or pump charges by July 1, 2024. Discussion followed.

By unanimous consensus, the WMA GSA Committee directed staff to develop a cost sharing agreement for future WMA GSA project expenses and report to the committee at a future meeting. WMA GSA Committee Member Jeremy Ball further requested the staff reaffirm the time sensitivity and necessity of seed money with a time phase budget or timeline.

11. Next WMA GSA Regular Meeting, Wednesday, October 25, 2023, 10:00 a.m. at Vandenberg Village Community Services District, Meeting Room, 3745 Constellation Rd., Lompoc

WMA GSA Committee Chair Chris Brooks announced the next WMA GSA regular meeting will be Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at the Vandenberg Village Community Services District Board Room, 3745 Constellation Road, Lompoc, California. Mr. Buelow advised that if there were no well verifications or other business, then the meeting may be cancelled with at least a week's notice.

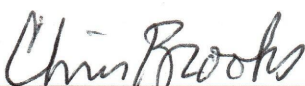
12. WMA GSA Committee reports and requests for future agenda items

WMA GSA Committee Member Myron Heavin requested that the water softener issue in Lompoc Valley be on a future agenda.

WMA GSA Committee Member Steve Jordan requested that WMA GSA future governance and considering addition of an agriculture representative for the WMA JPA be on a future agenda.

13. Adjournment

WMA GSA Committee Chair Chris Brooks adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m.



Chris Brooks, Chairman



William J. Buelow, Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. WMA-2023-001

A RESOLUTION REQUIRING LANDOWNERS IN THE WESTERN MANAGEMENT AREA OF THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY TO COMPLETE A WELL REGISTRATION FORM

WHEREAS, Western Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (“WMA GSA”), formed by Memorandum of Agreement dated January 11, 2017 (“WMA MOA”), is the exclusive GSA for the Western Management Area of the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (Bulletin 118 Basin No. 3-015) (“Basin”);

WHEREAS, in compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (“SGMA”), on January 5, 2022, the Agency adopted the WMA GSA’s Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“Plan”) that establishes the GSA’s groundwater management program and sustainability goal for the Basin;

WHEREAS, SGMA authorizes a local GSA to manage a groundwater basin in a sustainable manner pursuant to its groundwater sustainability plan;

WHEREAS, to assist in its management, Water Code Section 10725.2 authorizes GSAs such as the Agency to adopt rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions for the purpose of complying with SGMA and perform any act necessary or proper to carry out the purposes of SGMA;

WHEREAS, to effectively implement sustainable groundwater management with the Basin, the Agency desires to adopt a Resolution establishing rules and regulations in accordance with SGMA;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Water Code Section 10725.6, a GSA may require registration of any groundwater extraction facility, such as groundwater wells, within the Agency’s management area;

WHEREAS, the Plan identifies development of a groundwater extraction facility registration regulation as a Tier 1 Management Action;

WHEREAS, to sustainably manage the Basin, the Agency requires accurate data regarding the location and number of groundwater extraction facilities, including information on current groundwater wells and new groundwater wells; and

WHEREAS, to implement the Plan, the Agency finds it necessary and in the best interest of both the Agency and the Basin to adopt a Resolution requiring all landowners within the Basin to register any and all groundwater extraction facilities on their property.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE GOVERNING COMMITTEE HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Recitals Incorporated

The above recitals are supported by substantial evidence, incorporated herein by reference and each relied upon independently by the WMA GSA governing Committee in its adoption of this Resolution.

SECTION 2. WMA GSA Rules and Regulations

The WMA GSA governing Committee adopts the “Western Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency Rules and Regulations” (“WMA GSA Rules and Regulations”), attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, and finds the WMA GSA Rules and Regulations are consistent with the Plan and shall promote implementation of the Plan in accordance with SGMA.

SECTION 3. Amendment

This Resolution may be added to, amended, and/or repealed at any time by adoption of a subsequent resolution of the WMA GSA governing Committee.

SECTION 4. Effective Date

This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon approval of this resolution.

SECTION 5. Actions Against WMA GSA

Nothing contained in this Resolution shall constitute a waiver by the Agency or estop the Agency from asserting any defenses or immunities from liability as provided in law, including, but not limited to, those provided in Division 3.6 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

SECTION 6. Administrative Authorization

The Agency Plan Manager or other designee is hereby authorized and directed to take any such actions as may be necessary and appropriate to implement the intent of this Resolution.

SECTION 7. Severability

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Resolution. The Agency GSA governing Committee hereby declares that it would have passed and adopted this Resolution, and each and all provisions hereof, irrespective of the fact that one or more provisions may be declared invalid.

SECTION 8. California Environmental Quality Act

The WMA GSA governing Committee finds that adoption of this Resolution, including the WMA GSA Rules and Regulations, is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Sections 15307, 15308 and 15061 subdivision (b)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (“CEQA Guidelines”) because the Resolution will support implementation of the Plan by establishing rules and regulations to support groundwater management in order to prevent environmental degradation associated with groundwater overdraft and said rules and regulations will not have a significant effect on the environment.

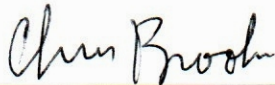
WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Resolution No. WMA-2023-001 was duly adopted and passed by the governing Committee of the Western Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency at a meeting held on September 27, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES: Chris Brooks, Jeremy Ball, Myron Heavin, Steve Jordan

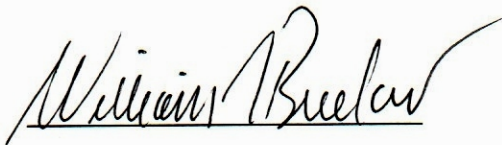
NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ATTEST:



Chris Brooks, Chair



William J. Buelow, Secretary

EXHIBIT A

Western Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency Rules and Regulations

Rules and Regulations

SECTION 1. Definitions

- A. For purposes of these Rules and Regulations, the following definitions apply:
1. “AF” means acre-foot.
 2. “APN” means the Santa Barbara County Assessor’s Parcel Number for a property.
 3. “Agency” or “WMA GSA” shall refer to the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Western Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin.
 4. “Groundwater Well” shall mean any method for extraction of groundwater within the Basin.
 5. “Property Owner” shall mean the fee title owner of land within the Agency’s boundaries.
 6. “Registration” shall mean submission of the groundwater well registration information as specified in Section 2 of these Rules and Regulations to the Agency.

SECTION 2. Groundwater Well Registration

The Property Owner of each Groundwater Well within the Basin shall provide the Agency with groundwater well registration information (to the extent known to the Property Owner at the time of registration) by filling out and submitting a registration form issued by the Agency and returned to the Agency’s PO Box or via email.

A. Existing Wells

All existing Groundwater Wells located within the boundaries of WMA GSA shall be registered with the Agency within sixty (60) days of receiving a registration form and no later than _____, whichever occurs sooner. The Property Owner of a Groundwater Well must provide, in full, the information requested on the Agency’s registration form, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Name and contact information of the Property Owner;
2. If appropriate, a certification that the Property Owner does not have a Groundwater Extraction Facility located on their property;
3. Type of Groundwater Well and water use;
4. Annual water use information;
5. Groundwater Well APN and Well Permit Number;

6. Physical address and geographic location of each Groundwater Well;
7. Date of construction;
8. Well depth, well diameter, casing perforation interval;
9. Activity status of the Groundwater Well;
10. List of APNs that the Groundwater Well serves;
11. Manufacturer/model and type of Groundwater Extraction Facility measuring device, such as a flow meter (for certain users);
12. Recording units of the measuring device (for certain users);
13. Manufacturer/model and type of pump;
14. Signature of the Property Owner.

B. New Wells

All new Groundwater Extraction Facilities located within the Boundaries of WMA GSA shall be registered with the Agency, via the same form described above in Section 2.A, no later than _____ or within sixty (60) days of well completion, whichever occurs later.

C. Changes to Registration

Any change to the information provided in the well registration form described above in Section 2.A, including but not limited to, a change to the Property Owner or Operator of a Groundwater Extraction Facility, must be reported within thirty (30) days of when the change takes effect.

D. Registration Confidentiality

The Agency shall keep the information contained in a Registration confidential to the extent permissible under applicable law.

Failure to comply with these Rules and Regulations may result in administrative and civil penalties, in accordance with Water Code Section 10732, as may be determined by the Board. Remedies identified in these Rules and Regulations are not intended to be exclusive. Any other remedy available to the Agency in law or equity may be employed at the discretion of the Board to address any circumstance related to the management of the Basin in accordance with SGMA, the Agency Plan, or other WMA GSA Rules and Regulations.