



County of San Diego

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Mark Nordberg, GSA Project Manager
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Delivery via E-Mail
(Mark.Nordberg@water.ca.gov)

GSA NOTIFICATION: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PAUMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Dear Mr. Nordberg:

Pursuant to California Water Code (Water Code) Section 10723.8, the County of San Diego (County) provided notice on August 25, 2016 to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) of the County's decision to become a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Pauma Valley Subbasin of the San Luis Rey Valley Groundwater Basin (SLR Basin [DWR Basin No. 9-7]) (Attachment 1). Since other local public agencies also provided notices to become GSAs for the Pauma Valley Subbasin, the County and these local agencies collaborated on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to eliminate any overlap in the areas proposed to be managed. This MOU (Attachment 2) was approved by Pauma Valley Community Services District on May 30, 2017; Yuima Municipal Water District (MWD) on June 5, 2017; and Upper San Luis Rey Resource Conservation District on June 8, 2017 ("partner agencies") and by the County Board of Supervisors on June 21, 2017. The MOU establishes the Pauma Valley GSA as a multi-agency GSA for the Pauma Valley Subbasin of the SLR Basin, which comprises the County and partner agencies.

In addition to eliminating the overlap, the MOU establishes a County Team and an Executive Team, which comprises representatives from local public agencies who will provide input and recommendations to the County Team on key issues throughout Plan development. In lieu of GSA involvement, Mootamai MWD, Pauma MWD and Valley Center MWD will withdraw their GSA notices prior to the June 30, 2017 GSA formation deadline and participate on the Executive Team. The MOU further identifies the terms under which each agency agrees to work collaboratively to prepare a single Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) that complies with the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) to sustainably manage groundwater in the

Pauma Valley Subbasin of the SLR Basin. The County and partner agencies intend to reconsider governance options during GSP development to jointly manage groundwater in the basin.

DWR identifies the SLR Basin as extending from the confluence of the San Luis Rey River and Paradise Creek continuing downstream through four valleys (Pauma, Pala, Bonsall, and Mission) and ending at the Pacific Ocean in the City of Oceanside¹. However, based on prior decisions by the State of California, the groundwater in the Mission, Bonsall, and Pala Subbasins of the SLR Basin has been determined to be a subterranean stream flowing through known and definite channels and under the jurisdiction of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). SGMA specifically excludes subterranean streams from its groundwater management requirements. Since the State Water Board has management authority in these areas, the MOU between the County and partner agencies applies to the Pauma Valley Subbasin that is subject to the groundwater management requirements of SGMA. The County hereby provides notice, pursuant to Water Code Section 10723.8, of its intent to withdraw from being the presumed GSA in the area downstream of Frey Creek as indicated on Attachment 1. If the State Water Board redesignates the downstream area as percolating groundwater or SGMA is expanded to allow GSAs groundwater management authority of subterranean streams, the County reserves the right to declare over this area and cooperate with overlying local public agencies to ensure continued SGMA compliance throughout the SLR Basin.

The Pauma Valley GSA intends to work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop a GSP for the entire SLR Basin that is acceptable to DWR, complies with SGMA, and respects federally-reserved tribal water rights. The County and partner agencies remain committed to considering the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater. To aid this effort, the County and partner agencies will develop a stakeholder engagement plan and provide an opportunity for interested parties to participate in the development and implementation of the GSP via regularly-scheduled public workshops, in accordance with Water Code Section 10727.8(a). Interested parties may sign up to receive information about GSP development at the County's SGMA webpage located at: <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/SGMA.html>.

By ensuring that all agencies that provided GSA notice to DWR are involved in development of the GSP via the Executive Team, the County and partner agencies concur that this agreement does not involve a material change from the information in the initial posted notices, yet eliminates the overlap as required by California Water Code Section 10723.8(c).

¹ *California's Groundwater: Bulletin 118 (Bulletin 118)*

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If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact the County Groundwater Geologist, Jim Bennett, at (858) 694-3820.

Sincerely,



MARK WARDLAW, Director
Planning & Development Services

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – San Luis Rey Valley Groundwater Basin Map

Attachment 2 – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PAUMA VALLEY
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

cc.

Jim Bennett, Groundwater Geologist, County of San Diego

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Lori Johnson, Mootamai Municipal Water District

Warren Lyall, Pauma Municipal Water District

Dick Nolan, Pauma Valley Community Services District

Gary Arant, Valley Center Municipal Water District

Ron Watkins, Yuima Municipal Water District

Jessie Hutchings, Upper San Luis Rey Resource Conservation District