

**NOTICE AND AGENDA OF MEETING**

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
FOR THE EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA  
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER GROUNDWATER BASIN

REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD  
AT 6:30 P.M. THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2021

**TELECONFERENCE MEETING ONLY – NO PHYSICAL MEETING LOCATION**  
**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION DIAL-IN NUMBER: 1-267-866-0999**  
**MEETING ID / PASSCODE: 8092 56 2646**

**Public participants can view presentation materials and live video on their device**

**Website: [app.chime.aws](https://app.chime.aws) (or download *Amazon Chime* app),**  
**“Join a meeting without an account”**  
**Meeting ID: 8092 56 2646**

*You do NOT need to create an Amazon Chime account or login with email for meeting participation.*

**Public participant phones and microphones will be muted, and webcams disabled.**  
**Live Chat Text (online users only) will be enabled for questions.**

*If your device does not have a microphone or speakers, you can also call Phone Number & log in with Meeting ID listed above to listen while viewing the live presentation online.*

**Teleconference Meeting During Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency:** As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom’s Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting will occur solely via teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20. **Virtual meeting is in accordance with the latest SB County Health Office Order**

**Important Notice Regarding Public Participation in Teleconference Meeting:** Those who wish to provide public comment on an Agenda Item, or who otherwise are making a presentation to the GSA Committee, may participate in the meeting using the dial-in number and passcode above. Those wishing to submit written comments instead, please submit any and all comments and materials to the GSA via electronic mail at [bbuelow@syrwcd.com](mailto:bbuelow@syrwcd.com). All submittals of written comments must be received by the GSA no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 26, 2021, and should indicate **“May 27, 2021 GSA Meeting”** in the subject line. To the extent practicable, public comments and materials received in advance pursuant to this timeframe will be read into the public record during the meeting. Public comments and materials not read into the record will become part of the post-meeting materials available to the public and posted on the SGMA website.

**In the interest of clear reception and efficient administration of the meeting, all persons participating in this teleconference are respectfully requested to mute their phones after dialing-in and at all times unless speaking.**

**AGENDA ON NEXT PAGE**

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
FOR THE EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA  
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER GROUNDWATER BASIN

THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2021, 6:30 P.M.

**AGENDA OF REGULAR MEETING**

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. Introductions and review of SGMA in the Santa Ynez River Valley Basin
- III. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda
- IV. Public Comment (Any member of the public may address the Committee relating to any non-agenda matter within the Committee’s jurisdiction. The total time for all public participation shall not exceed fifteen minutes and the time allotted for each individual shall not exceed five minutes. No action will be taken by the Committee at this meeting on any public item.)
- V. Review and consider approval of meeting minutes of February 25, March 25, April 15, April 29, and May 13, 2021
- VI. Receive EMA GSA Financial update and consider approval of EMA Warrant List
- VII. Receive report from the EMA Citizens Advisory Group on the Draft Water Budget for EMA
- VIII. Receive presentation from GSI on the “Management Actions and Projects”
- IX. Next “Special” EMA GSA Meeting: **Thursday, June 24, 2021, 6:30 PM**
- X. Next “Regular” EMA GSA Meeting: **Thursday, August 26, 2021, 6:30 PM**
- XI. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments
- XII. Adjournment

[This agenda was posted 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting at 3669 Sagunto Street, Suite 101, Santa Ynez, California, and <https://www.santaynezwater.org> in accordance with Government Code Section 54954. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to review agenda materials or participate in this meeting, please contact the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District at (805) 693-1156. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the GSA to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.]

# **DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

## **Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin February 25, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Eastern Management Area (EMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20.

EMA GSA Committee Members Present: Meighan Diethofer (Acting as Alternate), Mark Infanti, Brad Joos, Brett Marymee

Alternate GSA Committee Member Present: Cynthia Allen

Member Agency Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Paeter Garcia, Amber Thompson, Matt van der Linden, Kevin Walsh, Matt Young

Others Present: Steve Anderson, Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions), Bryan Bondy, Mike Burchardi, Russell Chamberlin, Doug Circle, Elizabeth Farnum, Tim Gorham, Mary Heyden, Gay Infanti, Stewart Johnston, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Mike Matthews, Jim McCord (IRP Water), Kevin Merrill, Tim Nicely (GSI Water Solutions), Anita Regmi (DWR), Steve Slack (CDFW), Margot Smit, and four additional members of the public whose names were not registered.

### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

GSA Committee Member Brett Marymee called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. Three GSA Committee Members and one Acting Alternate were present. A quorum was met.

### **II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin**

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone/video attendees.

Mr. Buelow reviewed history of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requirements and what has been completed so far in the Santa Ynez River Basin including: the creation of the three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Basin (EMA, CMA, WMA), coordinating efforts between the eight agencies participating in the three GSAs, establishing a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) in each of the Management Areas of the Basin, and achieving certain milestones in developing the Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs). The GSPs are due in January 2022. Thus far,

the EMA GSA Committee has prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, a Data Management Plan, and a Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model including Groundwater Conditions. All documents are accessible on SantaYnezWater.org.

### **III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda**

No additions or deletions were made.

### **IV. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **V. Review and Consider Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the GSA Committee meetings on November 19, 2020; December 10, 2020; and January 21, 2021 were presented for GSA Committee approval.

GSA Committee Member Brad Joos made a MOTION to approve the minutes of November 19, 2020; December 10, 2020; and January 21, 2021 as presented. GSA Acting Alternate Committee Member Meighan Diethofer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

### **VI. Receive EMA GSA financial update and approve EMA Warrant Lists**

The GSA Committee reviewed the financial reports of FY 2020-21 Periods 4 through 6 (through December 31, 2020) and the warrant lists for October, November, and December 2020. Mr. Buelow noted that expenses were fully covered by the DWR Prop 1 Grant reimbursements received on behalf of the EMA GSA.

GSA Committee Member Brad Joos made a MOTION to approve the financial reports and the Warrant List for October, November, and December 2020 as presented (No. 1018-1022) totaling \$12,098.35. GSA Committee Member Mark Infanti seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

### **VII. Receive Report from the EMA Citizens Advisory Group on the Draft EMA HCM**

Tim Gorham reviewed the February 25, 2021 Memorandum summarizing EMA Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) meeting held on February 17, 2021 regarding the EMA Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model. Memo attached.

Discussion followed.

- Alternate Committee Member Meighan Diethofer asked what happens with data gaps and who will pay for extra studies. Mr. Buelow stated the GSA intends to pursue only “must have” studies for the SGMA GSP not “would like” studies.
- Committee Member Brad Joos pointed out that surface water and groundwater are continuously mixed-up by the public and stated that the GSA should really explain the differences between surface water and groundwater in this SGMA process. All agreed.

- Committee Member Brett Marymee noted that the CAG commented on oil/gas fields and asked what other entity should be tracking water quality there. Mr. Buelow explained that the SGMA statute does not require the GSA to remediate what has already happened but states the GSP implementation cannot make water quality worse and that County of Santa Barbara tracks oil field operations. Mr. Barry added that the USGS along with State and Federal agencies are conducting a study called California Oil and Gas Groundwater (COGG) Program to investigate impacts to groundwater in the vicinity of oil fields throughout the state.

### **VIII. Receive Presentation from GSI on the Draft Water Budget and Sustainable Management Criteria**

Ms. Amber Thompson (SYRWCD) presented a live demonstration on how to provide Public Comments to open GSP documents via SantaYnezWater.org. Discussion followed.

Mr. Tim Nicely and Mr. Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions) presented the Draft Water Budget for the EMA and a look toward developing Sustainable Management Criteria.

Public comment, GSA Committee Member discussion, and follow-up from the consultants and staff from the GSA member agencies occurred during and after the presentation.

- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked why 1982 was determined as the starting point for historical data rather than going back further in time. Mr. Nicely stated that 1982 was chosen in coordination with CMA and WMA, the period represents long-term average of hydrology in this area, is deemed a long enough period and is a period with good data. He confirmed that other basins are also using similar time periods thus it can be considered a norm for GSPs.
- Committee Member Brad Joos asked who provided the historical commercial, domestic, and agriculture pumping amounts and if amounts were metered amounts or estimations. He stated he would prefer to see accurate numbers from users not use numbers provided by the state. Mr. Nicely confirmed the data came from a variety of sources. For areas outside of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) boundary, land use surveys were used (compiled by DWR). For areas within the SYRWCD boundary, data was provided from self-reported groundwater production statements. He also confirmed that irrigation efficiency is accounted for in the numbers. Mr. Buelow added that most SYRWCD data comes from metered wells, calculated by electric usage or estimated with given factors plus all municipalities, river diverters and many producers within SYRWCD boundary use meters.
- Mrs. Gay Infanti asked how the variability in the imported water allocations are addressed. Mr. Nicely confirmed actual delivery amounts were used in the historical data for the Draft Water Budget and estimates will be used for the projected data in the Draft Water Budget.
- Mrs. Infanti asked if the Cachuma Project has an impact on the EMA sub-basin. Mr. Nicely said the Draft Water Budget shows no Cachuma Project water since 1998 but shows state water. Cachuma Project water is shown as an average for the period.

- Ms. Anita Regmi (DWR) commented and asked the following:
  - Ms. Regmi stated that annual report submissions are due to DWR on April 1<sup>st</sup> every year after the GSP adoption. Thus, a GSP adopted in December 2021 will have the first report due on April 1, 2022.
  - Ms. Regmi advised that well information and well data is expected to be submitted to DWR by January 2022.
  - Ms. Regmi asked for clarification on surface water vs. groundwater within the SYRWCD and water from wells in the river alluvium categorized as surface water. Mr. Buelow explained the State considers these wells as diverting river flow. Mr. Nicely added the river flow is already managed as surface water by the State Water Resources Control Board and does not fall under SGMA regulations even though water production in that area is reported to SYRWCD. Mr. Barry read the definition of groundwater from Water Code, Division 6, Section 10721, (g): “Groundwater” means water beneath the surface of the earth within the zone below the water table in which the soil is completely saturated with water but does not include water that flows in known and definite channels unless included pursuant to Section 10722.5”. Since the Santa Ynez River flows in known and definite channels, it is defined as surface water and is regulated as surface water.
  - Ms. Regmi also asked for clarification on the term Santa Ynez River alluvium. Mr. Buelow directed her to the Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model as it provides much of the information she requested.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked how upland groundwater pumping was determined. Mr. Nicely stated the data came from a variety of sources. For areas outside of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) boundary, land use surveys were used (compiled by DWR). For areas within the SYRWCD boundary, data was provided from self-reported groundwater production statements.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy requested clarification on Draft Groundwater Conditions Tech Memo hydrographs about the Paso Robles formation during late 1990s to early 2000 where the water levels are considerably higher than 1982 level. He asked why the water levels in storage chart is not reflective of that difference. Mr. Barry explained the change in storage levels since 1991 was coming back up and hydrographs show it took a long time to return to the 1982 water in storage levels. He clarified that the numbers used reflect an overall average change for all wells in the whole EMA.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee suggested that future water budget assumptions and percentage rates be documented in the presentation and supporting tech memorandum.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked about the basis for the large increase in pumping assumed in the future water budgets, particularly for agriculture and asked what method or assumption was used for projecting future land use. Committee Member Brett Marymee stated he has same concern about large increases in pumping with the model showing the magnitude of increased outflow in 2042 and again in 2072 but does not address any mitigation.

- Mr. Nicely advised that total acreage from land use category was projected forward. Discussion continued regarding magnitude of outflow.
- Mr. Barry added a list of required assumptions was followed. He noted the plan is required to project the future as if nothing changed with no plan in place and that mitigation will be addressed later in the SGMA GSP process.
- Mr. Barry proposed that consultants revisit the land use surveys, acreages, water usage to confirm future projections.
- Mr. van der Linden stated that over time water conservation measures have reduced municipal and agriculture demand thus levels should not trend upwards as much as imagined.
- Mr. Doug Circle shared that in the early 2000s large vineyard planting occurred in the area, but this is not a continuing trend and suggested increases in labor rates may make agriculture not be as viable as is estimated in the graphs.
- Mr. Steve Slack asked if the model accounted for an explosion of cannabis cultivation in area as there is a significant rise in permit requests in Santa Barbara County.
- Mr. Buelow reiterated that the Draft Water Budget presented at this meeting is only a preview of the technical section of the GSP that is pending and will be released in the next few weeks to months for public review and comment, the first of three opportunities for written comments to be addressed to the document.

#### **IX. Receive Update on Aerial Electro-Magnetic Survey of EMA**

Mr. Bill Buelow provided an update on the Aerial Electro-Magnetic Survey of the EMA conducted by SkyTEM. He reported that flights were successful, the survey has been completed and the raw data has been delivered to Ramboll for processing and interpretation. Ramboll will work with the Stetson team to integrate the final data into the existing Draft Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model. No Discussion followed.

#### **X. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments**

There were no Committee Member requests or comments.

#### **XI. Adjournment**

There being no further business, GSA Committee Member Marymee adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

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Brett Marymee, Chairman

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William J. Buelow, Secretary

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management  
Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin  
March 25, 2021**

A SPECIAL meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Eastern Management Area (EMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via video and teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20 and in accordance with Santa Barbara County Health Office Order 2021-12.2.

EMA GSA Committee Members Present: Meighan Dietenhofer (Acting as Alternate), Mark Infanti, Brad Joos, Brett Marymee

EMA GSA Alternate Committee Members Present: Cynthia Allen

Member Agency Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Paeter Garcia, Amber Thompson, Kevin Walsh, Matt Young

Others Present: Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions), Bryan Bondy, Mike Burchardi, Russell Chamberlin, Doug Circle, Elizabeth Farnum, Tim Gorham, Mary Heyden, Gay Infanti, Stewart Johnston, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Tim Nicely (GSI), Anita Regmi (DWR), Steve Slack (CDFW), plus 2 other members of the public whose names were not registered.

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

GSA Committee Member Marymee called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. Three GSA Committee Members were present, and GSA Committee Member Dietenhofer acted as Alternate for Supervisor Hartmann. A quorum was met.

**II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin**

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone attendees.

**III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda**

No additions or deletions were made.

**IV. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.



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### **V. Receive Presentation from GSI on “Draft Water Budget and Sustainable Management Criteria”**

Mr. Tim Nicely and Mr. Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions) presented “Future Water Budget Revision for the EMA GSA”.

Public comment, GSA Committee Member discussion, and follow-up from the consultants and staff followed the presentation.

- GSA Committee Member Brad Joos asked what the historical time period for estimates was used. Mr. Nicely clarified the historical time-period used is Water Year 1982 – Water Year 2018.
- Ms. Gay Infanti asked if, given the push by the State to build more housing, are these projections taking the state's housing allocations into consideration in projections for growth? Mr. Nicely confirmed that municipal projections are taken directly from water purveyors and supporting documentation.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked if the municipal and industrial estimates (slide 4) account for State laws requiring increased residential water conservation, i.e. "conservation as a way of life" legislation? Mr. Nicely responded he does believe so since the City of Solvang and SYRWCD, Improvement District No. 1 (ID1) provided the estimates.
- GSA Committee Member Brett Marymee asked for clarification on annual growth percentages (slide 4) indicating the 1% annual growth comes from Solvang only. Is ID No. 1 annual growth really 0%? He asked what the data sources for rural estimates are.
  - Mr. Barry clarified that ID No. 1 growth is negligible.
  - Mr. Paeter Garcia, GM for ID No.1, added that ID No.1 has been collaborating with GSI for Municipal and Industrial projections. He stated that retail water use is dramatically decreasing due to conservation, land use, water use practices, and is responsive to pricing. There has been an uptick in Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) applications but not sure if that will relate to an increase in population and water demand. Mr. Nicely further added that data for rural growth was calculated based on use by mutual water companies and projections from individual area census data, where use is allocated according to 60% as outdoor use and 40% as indoor use.
  - GSA Committee Member Mark Infanti advised that there are several ADUs authorized in Solvang and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) states that Solvang is to add 191 units. There are plans for a 30-unit and a 68-unit apartment complex to be built in Solvang over the next two years. Thus, there is a notable amount of growth projected in the City over next couple years.
  - Ms. Gay Infanti stated there are two approved multi-unit projects and another approximately 50 units in planning stages for Solvang. She noted that Solvang’s new housing allocation is substantially higher than in prior years.
- Mr. Doug Circle commented on slide 8 that given increases in labor costs that all agriculture will not likely increase as the slide indicates. Mr. Nicely acknowledged

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the opinion of zero net growth for agriculture. Mr. Buelow pointed out that this is only an estimate that will be revisited and can be adjusted every five years as changes are seen. Mr. Barry added that certain levels of uncertainty exist and are to be expected. He recommends a metering program to reduce the uncertainty.

- Ms. Mary Heyden asked for "field crop" and "pasture" be defined. Mr. Nicely stated that "field crops" according to DWR include corn, wheat, poultry, misc. grain, and hay while "pasture" includes mixed pasture, alfalfa, sudan grass, and misc. grasses.
- GSA Alternate Committee Member Meighan Diethofer commented (slide 8) that she sees increases in land changing to vineyards and the Santa Barbara County Supervisor's office sees increases in land used and proposed for cannabis.

Consultants from GSI noted that the Draft Water Budget Section will be released for public comment soon. GSA Committee Members unanimously agreed with releasing the Draft Water Budget Technical Memo for public comment as soon as it is available.

Consultants and staff from the GSA member agencies will review the Draft Sustainable Management Criteria for an upcoming presentation. The consultants will also develop a draft list of possible Management Actions and Projects.

### **VI. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments**

The GSA Committee discussed changing the planned Special Meeting for April 22 to be split over two Special Meetings instead, April 15 and April 29 to review more documents and gather additional public input and comments. The GSA Committee Members unanimously agreed to the change for April Special Meetings.

GSA Committee Member Marymee requested more input from the community, especially large water users. He recommended another CAG meeting. Mr. Buelow responded that the Draft Water Budget Technical Memo will be released soon. Then, a meeting of the EMA CAG will be scheduled. GSA Committee Member Joos agreed with the need for additional input to help the GSP documents be as accurate as possible as first drafts.

Mr. Buelow encouraged all who have not done so already to sign up as an Interested Party to receive email notices, review the Draft Water Budget Technical Memo, and provide public comments via the SGMA portal for the Basin.

### **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, GSA Committee Member Marymee adjourned the meeting at 7:39 pm.

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Brett Marymee, Chairman

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William J. Buelow, Secretary

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin April 15, 2021**

A SPECIAL meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Eastern Management Area (EMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via video and teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20 and in accordance with Santa Barbara County Health Office Order 2021-12.2.

EMA GSA Committee Members Present: Joan Hartmann, Mark Infanti, Brad Joos, Brett Marymee

EMA GSA Alternate Committee Members Present: Cynthia Allen, Meighan Diethofer

Member Agency Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Paeter Garcia, Amber Thompson, Kevin Walsh, Matt van der Linden, Matt Young

Others Present: Steve Anderson, Joe Barget, Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions), Bryan Bondy, Mike Burchardi, Doug Circle, Sam Cohen, Elizabeth Farnum, Tim Gorham, Mary Heyden, Gay Infanti, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Austin M., Michael McAlpin (GSI), Kevin Merrill, Tim Nicely (GSI), Tony Nisich, Nate Page (GSI), Anita Regmi (DWR), plus 2 other members of the public whose names were not registered.

#### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

GSA Committee Member Marymee called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. All GSA Committee Members were present. A quorum was met.

#### **II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin**

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone attendees and provided a review of SGMA activities in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin.

#### **III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda**

No additions or deletions were made.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

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### **V. Receive Staff Memorandum regarding letter from the Santa Ynez Water Group**

Mr. Buelow presented a Staff Memorandum dated April 12, 2021 regarding a letter received from the Santa Ynez Water Group dated March 22, 2021. Discussion followed. Mr. Doug Circle encouraged the GSA to reach out now to DWR regarding a process to consolidate the current three GSAs to one GSA managing the three GSPs in the Basin. Supervisor Hartmann asked whether a cost/benefit analysis should be prepared regarding the different potential governance models. The GSA Committee Members unanimously supported the recommendations set forth in the April 12 Staff Memorandum.

### **VI. Receive Presentation from GSI on the Sustainable Management Criteria**

Mr. Jeff Barry and Mr. Nate Page (GSI Water Solutions) presented “Sustainability Management Criteria Summary for the Santa Ynez Basin - EMA GSA.” The presentation included a review of the process for setting Sustainable Management Criteria, Selection of “Representative Wells”, and summary of Sustainable Management Criteria for chronic decline in groundwater levels, chronic reduction of groundwater in storage, degradation of groundwater quality, depletion of interconnected surface water and impacts to GDEs, and subsidence.

Public comment, GSA Committee Member discussion, and follow-up from the consultants and staff from the GSA member agencies occurred during and after the presentation.

- Mr. Doug Circle asked for clarification on Slide 6 – map of representative monitoring wells and how the wells compare to those referenced in the Draft HCM document. Mr. Tim Nicely stated that Well No. 25K01 stopped use in 2021, and Well No. 22A03 was discontinued 2018, so the GSA cannot use those for future measuring/monitoring. Mr. Barry identified this as a data gap and advised that the GSA needs to work with landowners for more available wells.
- Mr. Doug Circle asked about Slide 7 and if the 10 ft. level referenced is below historical water levels. Mr. Barry explained why 10 ft. was used and stressed that the average balance is negative 1800 acre-feet per year now, so if the trend continues it will keep depleting groundwater in storage.
- Mr. Tim Gorham suggested that well data from Santa Ynez Rancho Estates MWC may be good to include as a representative sample for the Happy Canyon area. Mr. Barry replied that the area in itself is not a principal aquifer. Mr. Nicely added that as seen in the hydrographs, there is good representation in those areas.
- Mr. Kevin Merrill agreed with Mr. Circle’s comments and requests that the consultants revisit the proposed 10 ft. Minimum Threshold. He asked why 1969 is showing as a dry year when it was a year of large rain. Mr. Barry clarified there can be one or two years of wet in the “dry periods” since images are not exact for every year, but that time period averages as a dry period.

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- Ms. Anita Regmi asked about the current status of the Basin. Mr. Barry stated the Basin appears to be in a sustainable state now. Ms. Regmi asked if any significant and unreasonable levels have been defined. Mr. Barry reviewed Slide 7. Ms. Regmi asked if a study regarding impacts of proposed Minimum Thresholds and Minimum Objectives to all beneficial users, especially domestic well users, has been completed. Mr. Barry confirmed it will be done. He reiterated that this is just a summary of Sustainable Management Criteria and the Minimum Thresholds and Minimum Objective levels will be developed as part of this chapter. He indicated that undesirable results have not been defined yet because the Minimum Thresholds and Minimum Objectives are still being developed.
- Committee Member Brad Joos agreed with Mr. Circle that 10 ft level could be too shallow. He requested more information and stated that the charts provided do not show the bottom of the aquifer to show how much water is below the Minimum Threshold level. Mr. Barry advised that total volume is difficult to measure. The issue at hand is to make sure levels are in balance between output and input, and not to focus on the total volume existing in the Basin. The consultants intend to use the Groundwater Model to make sure the groundwater levels do not chronically decline and will pay attention to storage levels. Committee Member Joos requested aquifer depth be added for the test/monitor wells.
- Ms. Mary Heyden commented that the charts show the water table bouncing up and down. She asked why one well shows water going up while another is going down in the same time period (1960-80). Mr. Barry replied that aquifers behave differently in different parts of the Basin. The Groundwater Model takes this into account plus future pumping and climate change. Ms. Heyden agrees with Committee Member Joos in having aquifer depth added to the charts to give a better perspective. Mr. Barry confirmed that aquifer depth can be added to the hydrographs.
- Mr. van der Linden warned that if the Basin is pumped significantly below historical levels that we seriously risk permanent loss of storage, called non-elastic subsidence, if thresholds are set too low. Mr. Barry agreed this is a concern.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked for clarification on Slide 7 and why water levels being observed in 50% of representative wells is chosen as the threshold. Mr. Barry does not think there are enough wells to serve as monitoring wells. He suggested this item will be added to the proposed Management Actions in long term, and that the GSA will need to improve the monitoring program/network. This is a starting point and can be changed in future.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy stated that the Minimum Threshold should be set at a level where significant and unreasonable effects occur and the level should be adjusted to reflect that. He stated that significant and unreasonable effects have not been shown yet. He suggested setting a water level where, if reached, the Basin could not recover and thus would be considered an impact to all beneficial users. As an example, Mr. Bondy said that Well No. 08P01 is 237 feet deep, but the Minimum Threshold level looks to be lower than the well depth.

## DRAFT

- Mr. Barry presented information regarding possible degraded water quality standards.
- Mr. Kevin Merrill stated that the irrigated lands program regulates water quality. He stressed the need to be careful of salts and stated his concern that agriculture pumpers are not double regulated for water quality. He stated there is not a correlation between pumping and salt levels. Mr. Barry agreed this is important because it affects both agriculture and all beneficial users. He stated that the SGMA program cannot make water quality levels worse and should not draw salts from one aquifer to another.
- Ms. Mary Heyden asked if there are other reasons for concentrations of salts/nutrients other than pumping. Mr. Barry stated that many agriculture areas have problems with nitrate levels, but that does not appear to be a problem in the EMA. He noted that deeper water tends to have a lower quality and has more time for salts to buildup in groundwater from natural marine sediments in the vicinity.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy expressed concern that the Draft HCM does not establish a relationship between water quality and groundwater pumping but the SMC does. Mr. Barry agreed the Draft HCM does not show a relationship between quality and pumping but the GSP is still required to set thresholds. Mr. Bondy asked if it is possible to screen out that relationship.
- Mr. Barry and Mr. Page presented information on the SGMA standard regarding depletion of interconnected surface water.
- Committee Member Mark Infanti asked for clarification about an area in Solvang denoted by a circle and showing as “excluded from EMA” on the Map of Categorized Potential GDEs. Mr. Barry stated that a land survey provided by DWR shows that area as raised bedrock and is excluded from SGMA. The EMA GSA and consultants can therefore ignore the “excluded area” and will work with DWR when the next mapping is done.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy commented about the map of categorized potential GDEs and stated that the Paso Robles principal aquifer in the upper areas of the EMA should be removed. He requested that the consultants look more carefully at the red patches along Alamo Pintado Creek because those areas may not actually be potential GDEs associated with a Principal Aquifer. Mr. Barry stated the consultants will revisit those areas.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked about Potential GDEs after the 30-foot depth to groundwater screening. Mr. Barry identified this as a data gap that should become a proposed Management Action in the future.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy asked if the wastewater treatment plant located on the Chumash Reservation may be supporting some of these GDEs.

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- Committee Member Brad Joos agreed with the need for verification of shallow ecosystems. He further asked if natural springs have been identified. Mr. Barry confirmed they have been identified but just need to be verified.
- Committee Member Joos asked if any wells are located near the shallow ecosystems. Mr. Barry stated that issue is also being researched.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked the consultants to revisit Mr. Bondy's question regarding the wastewater treatment plant and potential GDEs. He asked if any reports already exist or is there a need to hire a biologist and do more research. Mr. Page confirmed he reviewed a few EIRs and compiled a list of sensitive animal species but none of the plant species are considered sensitive plant species. Possible invasive plant species exist but are unknown. Committee Member Marymee encouraged the consultants to look for more and better data sources. Mr. Barry responded that they may need further verification on these issues.
- Mr. Barry presented information on the SGMA standard regarding land subsidence.
- Mr. Kevin Merrill stated that satellites measure subsidence but cannot determine if it is due to pumping or tectonic activity.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy stated there is one continuous GPS monitoring station in the Basin which is good for separating tectonic signals from groundwater signals. He suggested the possible need for a second one. He asked what amount of subsidence has been documented and at what locations would subsidence be significant and unreasonable.
- Committee Member Brad Joos asked if there is any research into large wildfires impacting water sources. Mr. Barry stated it was not considered in this context and he has not read where it has been considered.

### **VII. Receive Draft Water Budget chapter of GSP and consider public comment period**

Mr. Buelow announced the Draft Water Budget was posted on the SantaYnezWater.org website and released for public comment for 21 days, April 6 through April 28, 2021. GSA Committee Member Brett Marymee stressed the importance for the public to review this document and provide comments using the portal. Mr. Buelow announced an EMA CAG meeting will be scheduled to discuss the document later as part of the public comment process.

### **VIII. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments**

GSA Committee Member Mark Infanti requested upcoming meeting dates. Mr. Buelow confirmed a Special Meeting is planned for April 29, 2021 and a Regular Meeting is scheduled for May 27, 2021.

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Mr. Buelow announced that SGMA Newsletter Issue No. 3 has been released. Member agencies of all three GSAs are distributing the Newsletter in utility bills, groundwater production mailings, and online.

**IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business, GSA Committee Member Marymee adjourned the meeting at 8:46 pm.

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Brett Marymee, Chairman

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William J. Buelow, Secretary

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## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin April 29, 2021**

A SPECIAL meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Eastern Management Area (EMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via video and teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20 and in accordance with Santa Barbara County Health Office Order 2021-12.2.

EMA GSA Committee Members Present: Joan Hartmann, Mark Infanti, Brad Joos,  
Brett Marymee

EMA GSA Alternate Committee Members Present: Cynthia Allen, Meighan Diethofer

Member Agency Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Paeter Garcia, Amber Thompson,  
Kevin Walsh, Matt van der Linden, Matt Young

Others Present: Steve Anderson, Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions), Russell Chamberlin, Elizabeth Farnum, Mary Heyden, Gay Infanti, Stewart Johnston, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Austin M., Michael McAlpin (GSI), Kevin Merrill, Tim Nicely (GSI), Steve Slack (CDFW)

#### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

GSA Committee Member Marymee called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. All GSA Committee Members were present. A quorum was met.

#### **II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin**

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone attendees and provided a review of SGMA activities in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin.

#### **III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda**

No additions or deletions were made.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

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### **V. Receive Staff Memorandum summary of conversation between SYRWCD and DWR Staff members regarding Santa Ynez River and River Alluvium and SGMA GSPs and GSAs**

Mr. Buelow presented Staff Memorandum dated April 19, 2021 regarding summary of telephone conversation with A. Regmi 04-15-2021. Discussion followed.

### **VI. Review revised EMA Sustainable Management Criteria for inclusion in Draft EMA Groundwater Sustainability Plan**

Mr. Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions) presented “Revised Sustainability Management Criteria Summary for the Santa Ynez Basin - EMA GSA.” The presentation included a review of revised Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) including a summary of water code and SGMA regulations, well impact evaluation, adjustments made based on feedback from the April 15, 2021 EMA GSA Committee meeting, and a request for the EMA GSA to provide direction on SMCs to be included in draft GSP.

Public comment, GSA Committee Member discussion, and follow-up from the consultants and staff from the GSA member agencies occurred during and after the presentation.

- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked for clarifications of line color on Slides 6 and 7. Mr. Barry explained the black line is the EMA GSA boundary, and the orange lines (Slide 6) and blue lines (Slide 7) are estimated groundwater surface elevation levels, with the lowest level at 500 feet above sea level and increased by 50-foot increments.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee, with regards to Slide 9, asked why one Municipal well is called out and why it is listed different from Agriculture or Domestic. Mr. Barry clarified that the well impact evaluation for the Paso Robles Formation shows that only one municipal well appears to be impacted if water levels fall 30-50 feet below the Spring 2018 groundwater levels. Municipal wells were separated from Agriculture and Domestic wells because Municipal wells serve a larger population. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Kevin Merrill expressed concern that the presentation preview slides were received late. He asked if there will be an opportunity to comment later. Mr. Barry assured everyone this presentation was an introduction to this topic. This analysis will be included in the Draft SMC Section to be released for public review and comment.
- Ms. Mary Heyden asked for clarification of whether there is a general groundwater level at which well screens are generally set. Mr. Barry explained that each well driller and landowner may decide individually where to set the well screen level for a particular well. Some wells are shallow because an adequate supply of water is found for what is needed and the cost is too high to drill a deeper well. Typically, domestic wells are shallow, some agriculture wells are shallow while others are deeper, and municipal wells are deep. Also, in some basins, older wells tend to be shallower while new or newly rehabbed wells tend to be drilled deeper than original well depth.

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- Mr. van der Linden further described the setting of well screens in terms of a multi-layered cake, where cake is clay and frosting is water bearing layers. When a well is being drilled through the layers, well screens are generally placed in the “frosting”/water-bearing layers.
- Mr. van der Linden asked if Slides 6 and 7 measure static water level elevations since a cone of depression is created when pumping causes water level to drop even further than static level. Mr. Barry explained these slides are static water levels, so thresholds should not be set lower than where water levels could be when pumping.
- Committee Member Mark Infanti asked for clarifications about Slides 9 and 10 and what goal is being sought in these situations. Mr. Barry explained the need to establish reasonable Minimum Thresholds where static water level would be used as a benchmark for undesirable results. Minimum Thresholds can be set according to feet below the top of well screens and the max percent of wells that are impacted by different stages of lowered groundwater levels, thus the Committee needs to consider both factors.
  - Discussion followed.
  - Mr. Young added that this is the critical policy decision for the Committee to give guidance on what level the GSA is willing to let water levels drop and what is the amount of decline that could cause significant and unreasonable impacts in this Basin. The consultants need direction from Committee Members for this.
  - Committee Member Brad Joos said he will need to review data with staff before setting any levels. He considers this presentation as a preliminary informative session.
  - Committee Member Joan Hartmann asked for clarification on Slides 9 and 10, and what it means in the real world if 40% of agriculture wells are below the top of screen. Mr. Barry stated he would like to hear from agriculture users on how a 40% loss of wells would affect them. Mr. van der Linden pointed out there can be economic factors caused when water levels are too low in terms of needing to run well pumps longer hours to pump the same amount of water.
  - Discussion continued regarding Slides 9 and 10, elevation levels below top of well screens, impacts currently existing in EMA, what levels of additional impacts are tolerable before a call to action is needed, considerations about what Management Actions will happen when the Minimum Threshold is triggered, and if different types of users should have different Minimum Thresholds.
  - Mr. Barry pointed out that the Minimum Threshold is a regulatory standard that DWR is expecting to be set but the reality is the Minimum Threshold is a level providing an indication that there could be significant and unreasonable effects. If a Minimum Threshold is reached, then the GSA needs to begin implementation of a set Management Actions to bring water levels back to a sustainable condition

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within the next twenty years. Also, every five years, the levels can be reset based on new data.

- Mr. Garcia commented that data presented may not indicate where wells are screened and noted that it appears that impacts to wells already exist in the EMA.
  - First key question to be answered is what additional level of impacts are tolerable before there is a call to action. The additional impacts are spread between different constituencies and users of water.
  - Second key question is what action needs to be taken when that Minimum Threshold/undesirable result is identified or is triggered. Will the action be a soft start on more data collection or is it a moratorium on new pumping or instituting cutbacks?
  - Mr. Barry added that Minimum Thresholds can be set above where we do not want water levels to go. Other Basins have set triggers above that level to initiate a call to action before reaching the Minimum Threshold.
- Ms. Gay Infanti asked if lower water levels lead to lower water quality and given water quality requirements for potable water, should municipal wells be in their own category and have their own set of levels? Mr. Barry stated that setting separate levels per well category could be done but cautioned on possible lack of adequate monitoring network and data integrity. He cautioned that lower water levels can lead to lower water quality due to pulling from deeper portions of the aquifer, can cause potential economic impacts from running wells for longer hours, and can result in the need to dig deeper wells which could also lead to poorer water quality.
- Mr. Kevin Merrill stressed that once thresholds are set, it is hard to go back to change and could have a domino effect on the economy, cities, and agriculture. He cautioned the Committee Members should not rush into deciding levels.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked how the land subsidence Minimum Threshold of 1 inch per year in Slide 32 was determined. Mr. Barry stated that the value is based on the differential GPS monitoring station located in Santa Ynez which has been providing data since it was installed in 2015. Discussion followed about the lack of subsidence information.
- Mr. Steve Slack asked for clarification regarding the quantity of agricultural wells in Slide 9. Mr. Barry reported the quantity is 126 not 12, the number was cutoff in conversion to PDF.
- Mr. Steve Slack asked where more information can be found about Categorized Potential GDEs referenced in Slide 27. Mr. Barry advised the Potential GDEs are being evaluated and more information will be in the Draft Sustainable Management Criteria chapter of the GSP.

**VII. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments**

GSA Committee Members unanimously expressed the need to meet again on Revised Draft Sustainable Management Criteria before decisions are made. Discussion followed.

A majority of Committee Members requested another Special Meeting be scheduled for May 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. to revisit tonight's presentation and information. This will allow two weeks for each Committee Member to meet with agency staff, review information and return with questions or comments to set Minimum Threshold levels.

Committee Member Brad Joos requested specifics on what Committee Members need to provide to the consultants to move forward and set parameters properly.

Mr. Barry offered to provide hydrographs with Minimum Thresholds marked for specific representative wells of different users for the next meeting.

Committee Member Joan Hartmann asked if different formations could have different thresholds; whether different users could have different thresholds within the same formation; and whether water quality requirements for municipal wells is higher than for other users.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, GSA Committee Member Brett Marymee adjourned the meeting at 8:50 pm.

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Brett Marymee, Chairman

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William J. Buelow, Secretary

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## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management Area in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin May 13, 2021**

A SPECIAL meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Eastern Management Area (EMA) in the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin was held on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via video and teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20 and in accordance with the latest Santa Barbara County Health Office Order.

EMA GSA Committee Members Present: Joan Hartmann, Mark Infanti, Brad Joos,  
Brett Marymee

EMA GSA Alternate Committee Members Present: Cynthia Allen, Meighan Diethofer

Member Agency Staff Present: Bill Buelow, Paeter Garcia, Amber Thompson,  
Kevin Walsh, Matt van der Linden, Eric Tambini, Matt Young

Others Present: Steve Anderson, Jeff Barry (GSI Water Solutions), Bryan Bondy, Russell Chamberlin, Doug Circle, Elizabeth Farnum, Tim Gorham, Mary Heyden, Gay Infanti, CJ Jackson, Stewart Johnston, Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers), Kevin Merrill, Tim Nicely (GSI), Anita Regmi (DWR), Steve Slack (CDFW)

#### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

GSA Committee Member Marymee called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Mr. Buelow to call roll. All GSA Committee Members were present. A quorum was met.

#### **II. Introductions and Review of SGMA in Santa Ynez River Valley Basin**

Mr. Buelow announced names of phone attendees and stated today's meeting is a continuation of the April 29, 2021 meeting regarding Sustainable Management Criteria.

#### **III. Additions or Deletions, if any, to the Agenda**

No additions or deletions were made.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**V. Continued review of revised EMA Sustainable Management Criteria for inclusion in Draft EMA Groundwater Sustainability Plan**

Mr. Jeff Barry and Mr. Tim Nicely (GSI Water Solutions) presented “Revised Sustainability Management Criteria Summary for the Santa Ynez Basin - EMA GSA dated May 13, 2021”. The presentation continued the discussion from the April 29, 2021 EMA GSA Committee meeting and included a review of revised Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC) analysis approach, representativeness of wells, updated well impact analysis, considerations for setting Minimum Thresholds, relationship between Minimum Thresholds and Management Actions, adjustments/permanence of Minimum Thresholds, and potential Management Actions based on public input and feedback received based on the April 15, 2021 and April 29, 2021 EMA GSA Committee Meetings. Consultants requested that the EMA GSA Committee provide direction on SMCs to be included in draft GSP.

Public comment, GSA Committee Member discussion, and follow-up from the consultants and staff occurred during and after the presentation.

- Mr. Barry and Mr. Nicely presented information regarding SMC Analysis Approach, Representative Wells, Updated Well Impact Analysis.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee expressed concern regarding lack of well data in Los Olivos and Foxen Canyon areas of the EMA. He asked if there is enough representation to make a policy direction without more well data from those areas. Mr. Nicely stated the limitation of well data is common throughout state and DWR will be aware of that issue.
  - Mr. Young confirmed there is a lack of private well historical data in those areas but staff is actively working to find private wells to supply future data. He invited anyone with a private domestic or agriculture well in those areas to be part of the network for future monitoring.
  - Mr. Barry suggested expanding and improving the monitoring network over time to reevaluate thresholds over time.
  - Mr. van der Linden clarified that the City of Solvang has provided all municipal well data and believes data gaps are from private domestic and private agriculture wells. He could not verify if all data has been provided about ID No. 1 municipal wells.
  - Mr. C.J. Jackson asked about sensitivity of analysis if there was more well data to be provided since there is a data gap area. Mr. Barry explained that due to variability in conditions throughout the Basin, to see any potential changes, we need to add wells in the data gap area not just add more wells in general.
  - Mr. Young explained the well impact analysis on Slide 6 is based on 487 wells in the EMA GSA of which well construction is known. The 24 representative wells are only part of that 487.
  - Mr. Barry confirmed, based on all the data collected on representative wells, he is confident appropriate SMC levels can be set.

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- Mr. Nicely stated the well density data collected and provided for the EMA GSA is sufficient per DWR guidelines.
- Ms. Gay Infanti asked if Sedgwick Preserve, located in the data gap area of the EMA GSA, has been included as part of the well monitoring network. Mr. Nicely confirmed that one of the representative wells is located on Sedgwick Preserve.
- Ms. Gay Infanti expressed concerned about setting different thresholds for different water users. She pointed out that since domestic wells are typically shallow, many domestic wells may begin going dry before an impact is reached for deeper agriculture or municipal wells. She requested the Minimum Thresholds be set closer to the Spring 2018 groundwater elevation levels than levels marked on Slides 21 and 37. Mr. Barry explained the suggested levels attempt for a balance and reduction of possible impacts to all beneficial users, domestic, municipal and agriculture.
  - Mr. Kevin Merrill asked if there is any evidence of domestic or municipal wells going dry if water levels go down to 50 feet below Spring 2018 groundwater elevation. He expressed concern that setting a Minimum Threshold too close to Spring 2018 groundwater elevation levels may be setting the GSA up to fail as soon as the GSP is submitted. Mr. Barry pointed out that at 50 feet below Spring 2018 groundwater elevation levels, the graph indicates depletion of supply may be occur since almost 50% of domestic and 50% of agriculture wells will be affected. Discussion followed.
  - Mr. Young explained the process of determining Sustainable Management Criteria.
    - Currently consultants and staff are asking for public input and committee guidance on levels to create the Draft SMC chapter.
    - Draft SMC chapter will be released to the public and EMA CAG for full thorough review and comments.
    - Those comments will be addressed and incorporated into “Draft Final” SMC chapter of the Draft GSP.
    - Draft GSP with all “Draft Final” chapters included will be released to the public and EMA CAG for full thorough review and comments.
    - Those comments will be addressed and incorporated into the Final GSP before the plan is submitted to DWR by January 2022.
  - Mr. van der Linden suggested a conservative approach to setting limits by setting the level at smaller thresholds below Spring 2018 groundwater elevation now then reevaluate over the years and extend levels, if appropriate.
- Mr. Doug Circle offered the Santa Ynez Water Group to attain access to agriculture well data in data gap areas for the EMA GSA as they did for the CMA GSA.
- Mr. Doug Circle expressed concern that seems to be a lack of representation of agriculture interests by the Committee Members and feels the comments made by the agriculture community are not being heard even though the Santa Ynez Water Group has been attending all the EMA GSA and CAG meetings.



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- Committee Member Brad Joos stated that ID No. 1, a municipal water provider, has a diversity of users including domestic, commercial and agriculture with 50% of ID No. 1 produced water going toward Agriculture use. Thus, he believes ID No. 1 has a good knowledge of agriculture water needs and that ID No. 1's presence on the EMA GSA Committee represents all beneficial users.
- Mr. Bryan Bondy, speaking on behalf of the Santa Ynez Water Group landowners, offered alternative thoughts on bridging the gap between approaches discussed so far. The presentation suggested water levels below top of screen have significant and unreasonable effects. However, agriculture landowners believe water levels dropping below top of screen does not reflect a depletion of groundwater supply even though it could create problem with maintenance of said well. He suggested a focus on being able to produce the supply needed for beneficial use and determine location of wells that are truly at risk of having a supply issue. Then decide what, if any, solutions can be made to solve that problem in that area without restricting water use for other users in other areas. Discussion followed.
  - Mr. Barry responded the Committee needs to decide what is considered an undesirable result and develop the thresholds. He pointed out that different users have different definitions of undesirable. Even though SGMA identifies depletion of supply as a key undesirable effect, it is not the only undesirable effect, and the EMA GSA Committee needs to decide what is undesirable.
  - He added that undesirable is currently described in the Draft document as affecting 50% of wells for two consecutive years.
  - He clarified that DWR gives flexibility regarding water levels that drop below Minimum Thresholds during extended drought and SGMA states that Projects and Management Actions need to be initiated if groundwater levels do not recover after normal or above-normal rainfall returns.
  - Mr. Barry explained why groundwater levels dropping below top of screen, even for only a short time, would cause production issues and undesirable effects.
- Committee Member Brad Joos commented that hitting a Minimum Threshold does not mean a stop to all pumping, it just triggers a response. He provided the example of wildfire trigger points used by fire responders. They do not wait until homes are burning before moving in to fight a wildfire. Mr. Barry confirmed hitting a Minimum Threshold signifies a possible undesirable result and alerts that it may be time to consider alternatives.
- Committee Member Brad Joos stated that ID No. 1 has a long history with a balanced portfolio of using diverse water supplies including surface water, groundwater, and imported state water to meet needs while protecting all water sources.
- Committee Member Brad Joos stated that the single largest investment owned by most citizens in the area is their home and property. If property values drop

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dramatically due to loss of water supply, then the livelihood of each landowner in valley will be impacted not only livelihood of agriculture landowners.

- Mr. Barry and Mr. Nicely presented information regarding Potential Management Actions and Projects.
- Mr. Young emphasized that the presented list of potential Management Actions and Projects is only a potential list based on consultants' experiences and what has been seen in other basins around the state. It is not a direct proposal. It is just teeing up the discussion to be addressed over the next few meetings.
- Committee Member Joan Hartmann further emphasized the process and reminded everyone that information is being provided to create a Draft SMC chapter to be released for public review and comment.
  - Committee Member Hartman requested footnotes be added to the Draft SMC noting the differing opinions to show people the logic and reasoning behind the levels that were chosen. Mr. Nicely agreed footnotes could be added to the document for that purpose.
  - Committee Member Hartman asked if responses are made to comments received on the Draft documents. Mr. Nicely confirmed consultants directly address each individual comment with written responses. In addition, noting comments received that resulted in changes to the Draft document and registering comments with the responses in the communications portal log ultimately to be included in the GSP and will be public information.
- Mr. van der Linden explained high costs of well maintenance or repair for City of Solvang and increased concerns of potential capacity problems if groundwater levels drop below top of screen. He added that since 1998, the City of Solvang has paid over \$65 million for imports of State Water to provide needed water supply and reduce impact to groundwater basin in Santa Ynez Valley.
- Mr. Garcia explained when one of the available water supplies is under stress, the rate payers will pay the price and approaching a Minimum Threshold is not equivalent to a failure in this basin.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked for verification on basin coordination. Mr. Curtis Lawler stated Stetson who is working in the CMA and WMA is coordinating with the EMA so all three plans are coordinated. Mr. Nicely confirmed GSI and Stetson have been working closely with each other for coordination to benefit the entire Basin.
- Committee Member Brett Marymee asked for more information about cloud seeding program. Mr. Young explained Santa Barbara County Water Agency has a cloud seeding program done in partnership with other agencies but has not been able to

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perform cloud seeding over the last few years due declining interest by some of the partner agencies plus rules that are in place after wildfires occurred in the area.

- Committee Member Mark Infanti stated the City of Solvang's wastewater treatment plant recharges Santa Ynez River underflow and appears to currently benefit recharge to the CMA not EMA. Upgrades to the treatment plant are being planned, at a great cost, to add water treatment capability so treated water could be used at least for agricultural purposes. He asked about recharge possibilities for EMA aquifer. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Lawler stated he would like to see a Minimum Threshold set near the historic low since recharge has historically occurred using nature as a guide and to err on the side of caution.

### **EMA GSA Committee Members provided guidance and direction regarding setting Minimum Threshold levels.**

Committee Member Supervisor Joan Hartman, representing County of Santa Barbara, provided concepts to provide guidance in reaching a number.

- The process is adaptive so adjustments can be made over time.
- We can learn from other basins that are worse off than our area.
- We can have different Minimum Thresholds for different formations but should have a same level set for all user types.
- Minimum Threshold should be set to be protective of the most sensitive or most vulnerable users such as those with small domestic wells and small agriculture wells.
- An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. She would rather relax in the future as we learn more rather than be very lenient now and needing to be more stringent in the future in order to avoid going beyond recoverable levels.

Committee Member Councilman Mark Infanti, representing City of Solvang, commented.

- Add emphasis in the GSP document specifically the justification for setting the thresholds.
- Agreed on setting different Minimum Thresholds for the different formations.
- He recommended Careaga Sand formation Minimum Threshold be set at 12 ft below 2018 Spring groundwater elevation levels.
- He deferred recommendation for Paso Robles formation to ID No. 1 since that is where most of ID No. 1 wells are located.

Committee Member Trustee Brad Joos, representing Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 (ID No. 1), commented.

- Agreed with Committee Member Hartmann about an ounce of prevention and we should take one step at a time.
- Public health and safety are number one priority. So, municipal wells cannot run out of water since ID No. 1 provides water for homes, families, businesses, farms, ranches, churches, restaurants, schools and businesses in Santa Ynez, Ballard, Los

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Olivos, Chumash Reservation, and helps the City of Solvang. Personal impacts to many users happen if ID No. 1 is not able to supply water with their wells.

- He recommended Paso Robles formation Minimum Threshold be set at 15 ft below 2018 Spring groundwater elevation levels.
- DWR is watching. If decisions made start impacting the small producers, then the State may step in and take over.

Committee Member Director Brett Marymee representing Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, commented.

- He recapped recommendations expressed by both Municipal water purveyors represented on the EMA GSA Committee.
- Qualitative construct expressed by Committee Member Hartmann was good.
- Reminded all that the GSP is adaptable.

Committee Member Mark Infanti made a MOTION requesting staff to add a Minimum Threshold for the Careaga Sand formation at 12 feet below Spring 2018 groundwater water elevation levels and add a Minimum Threshold for the Paso Robles formation at 15 foot below Spring 2018 groundwater water elevation levels to the Draft Sustainable Management Criteria section of the EMA Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Motion was seconded by Committee Member Brad Joos and unanimously passed by Roll Call vote.

### **VI. EMA GSA Committee requests and comments**

Committee Member Director Brett Marymee stated the next EMA GSA Committee Meeting will in two weeks. A Regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 27, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via video/teleconference.

### **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, GSA Committee Member Marymee adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

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Brett Marymee, Chairman

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William J. Buelow, Secretary

SYRWCD EMA  
BALANCE SHEET  
MARCH 31, 2021

Assets

Current Assets

Mechanics Bank #5843	\$253,283.93
Other Current Assets	1,000.00

TOTAL Current Assets	-----	254,283.93
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TOTAL Assets		----- \$254,283.93 =====
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Liabilities AND Equity

TOTAL Liabilities	-----	.00
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Net Position

RETAINED EARNINGS - PRIOR	48,491.18
Retained Earnings-Current Year	205,792.75

TOTAL Net Position	-----	254,283.93
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TOTAL Liabilities AND Equity		----- \$254,283.93 =====
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SYRWCD EMA  
INCOME STATEMENT  
FOR THE 9 PERIODS ENDED MARCH 31, 2021

	QUARTER TO DATE		YEAR TO DATE	
	ACTUAL	PERCENT	ACTUAL	PERCENT
<b>Revenue:</b>				
Revenue				
Grant Revenue	\$218,823.81	100.0 %	232,206.89	100.0
TOTAL Revenue	218,823.81	100.0	232,206.89	100.0
TOTAL Revenue	218,823.81	100.0	232,206.89	100.0
Gross Profit	218,823.81	100.0	232,206.89	100.0
<b>Expenses:</b>				
Operating Expenses				
Outside Staff Support	487.50	.2	637.50	.3
Legal Services	.00	.0	3,274.50	1.4
TOTAL Operating Expenses	487.50	.2	3,912.00	1.7
Consultants				
General Consultant	.00	.0	22.50	.0
Basin Coordination	5,408.11	2.5	22,479.64	9.7
TOTAL Consultants	5,408.11	2.5	22,502.14	9.7
Non Operating Expenses				
Misc Expense	(56.27)	.0	.00	.0
TOTAL Non Operating Expenses	(56.27)	.0	.00	.0
TOTAL Expenses	5,839.34	2.7	26,414.14	11.4
Net Income from Operations	212,984.47	97.3	205,792.75	88.6
Earnings before Income Tax	212,984.47	97.3	205,792.75	88.6
Net Income (Loss)	\$212,984.47	97.3 %	205,792.75	88.6

**GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY FOR THE EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA (EMA)  
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN**

**JANUARY 2021 WARRANT LIST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PAYEE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
1023	01/13/21	Bartlett, Pringle & Wolf	Consulting - Grant Financial	\$ 187.50
1024	01/13/21	Stetson Engineers	November 2020 Engineering Service (Basin Coordination)	\$ 1,202.61
1025	01/13/21	Valley Bookkeeping	2020 4th Quarter Bookkeeping (Oct., Nov., Dec. 2020)	\$ 150.00
<b>MONTH TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 1,540.11</b>

**FEBRUARY 2021 WARRANT LIST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PAYEE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
1026	02/16/21	Stetson Engineers	December 2020 Engineering Service (Basin Coordination)	\$ 810.75
<b>MONTH TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 810.75</b>

**MARCH 2021 WARRANT LIST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PAYEE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
1027	03/31/21	Stetson Engineers	January 2021 Engineering Service (Basin Coordination)	\$ 3,394.75
1028	03/31/21	Valley Bookkeeping	2021 1st Quarter Bookkeeping (January, February, March 2021)	\$ 150.00
<b>MONTH TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 3,544.75</b>

**TOTAL THIS QUARTER: \$ 5,895.61**

**EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA  
CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP  
MEMORANDUM**

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DATE: May 11, 2021

TO: EMA GSA Committee

FROM: EMA Citizen Advisory Group  
Prepared by Mary Heyden

SUBJECT: Draft Water Budget for the EMA and April 29, 2021 Presentation on Draft SMCs

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**Eastern Management Area (EMA) Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) Members**

Gay Infanti, Sam Cohen, Mary Heyden, Elizabeth Farnum, Tim Gorham, Kevin Merrill

**Introduction**

The EMA GSA Committee requested staff for the GSA agencies to coordinate meetings of the EMA CAG. Through a coordinated effort, the CAG held a meeting on May 11, 2021 via teleconference due to COVID-19 restrictions. The EMA CAG reviewed the Draft Water Budget for the EMA prepared by the consultant GSI and the presentation by GSI dated April 29, 2021 on Draft SMCs for the EMA.

Below is a summary of the CAG's comments.

**CAG Comments on the Draft Water Budget for the EMA:**

- Members of the CAG ask about the current total groundwater storage in the Basin. A bigger picture of the total storage capacity could be used to assess if the EMA is currently at critical groundwater levels.
- Members of the CAG opined that the future forecast of the EMA water budget is too optimistic, and the historical levels are no longer relevant due to climate change and drought issues effecting the amount of water coming into the Basin. Some members would like to develop water reserves in the Basin to carry through in times of drought.
- The CAG asked about the margin of error that can be expected in the current water budget calculations. Quantitatively, what is the confidence in the data? Is there a possibility that the historical 1800 AFY deficit may be overestimated? Some members of CAG estimate



that the Basin has been relatively sustainable for many years, with cycles of rain, normal and dry years. The Basin is robust and rebounds quickly. The future water budget already includes climate change data.

- All members of CAG agreed that one group of groundwater pumpers should not negatively impact the other “groups”, especially domestic pumpers.
- Members of the CAG discussed the possibilities of future recycled water with both the Solvang WWTP and proposed Los Olivos WWTP. A robust conversation ensued.
- Some CAG members discussed current “data gaps” and whether Minimum Thresholds should be less restrictive and more flexible.
- The CAG discussed how to move forward if some members do not feel comfortable with the draft water budget?
- It was also mentioned that the colors in Figure 3.48 (for example) were difficult to differentiate from each other. Would it be possible to incorporate percentage numbers to the list next to the graph?

Various additional comments were provided from members of the public that were in attendance, including a consultant representing the Santa Ynez Water Group. Below are several examples of the comments provided.

- Bryan Bondy, a hydrologist hired by the Santa Ynez Water Group had technical comments on the Water Budget.
  - Error or uncertainty is reasonably expected. SGMA requires to minimize uncertainty where possible.
  - The graphs of the groundwater storage and the groundwater levels in the 1980’s appear to be inconsistent. This could throw off the estimated historical deficit of the Basin’s inflows and outflows. The areas of uncertainty need to be clearly explained to the decision makers, as important decisions will be made on these numbers.
  - Will the NOAA letter to the EMA GSA be published on the Santa Ynez Water website? The last comments posted are from 2019.
- Steve Slack, from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, is concerned the GDE’s will not be addressed, as subterranean streams are not regulated by SGMA.

### **CAG Comments on the April 29, 2021 Presentation on Draft SMCs**

- The CAG discussed if there are any differences between the original and the revised documents.

- A CAG member asked if their comments regarding the different criteria needed for the two aquifers, the Careaga Sand and the Paso Robles formation, had been addressed? Solvang wells are already at the suggested Minimum Thresholds.
- Some CAG members discussed the need to have data supporting proposed Minimum Thresholds. The CAG suggested creating a chart of the representative wells and the depth of their top of screens. Especially if this is the criterion upon which the GSA will base the groundwater level MT.
- Bryan Bondy made a request to GSI to create a graph in cross-section view plotting the top and bottom of EMA well-screens with the historical low groundwater level. Mr. Bondy then asked, what the lowest water-level is before there are significant and undesirable results. Lows will happen episodically in drought conditions, and then there will be a rebound of groundwater levels in normal and wet times.
- The EMA Staff, Bill Buelow, Matt Young, Paeter Garcia and Matt van der Linden had no further comments.

[https://syvnews.com/opinion/columnists/kevin-merrill-its-the-people-that-make-farming-ranching-special/article\\_99ab27ec-9af2-5316-9d0f-3fb68a1acf02.html](https://syvnews.com/opinion/columnists/kevin-merrill-its-the-people-that-make-farming-ranching-special/article_99ab27ec-9af2-5316-9d0f-3fb68a1acf02.html)

EDITOR'S PICK

On the Farm

## Kevin Merrill: It's the people that make farming, ranching special

May 18, 2021

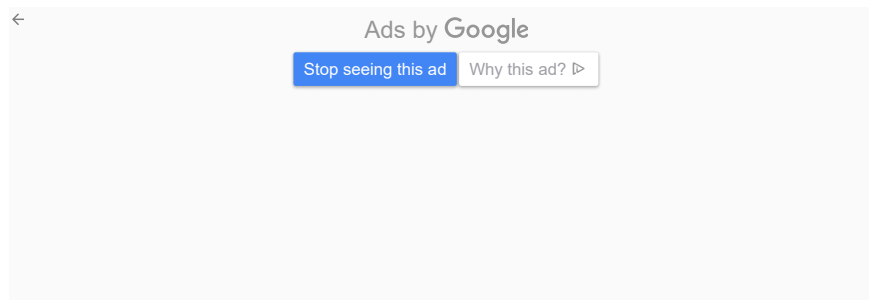


Kevin Merrill

The warm days we experienced during the last week of April have given way to May gloom. A light drizzle fell over the area Saturday and the skies remained gray all day.

It reminded me of our trips to Santa Maria when I was growing up. It seemed like the weather was always overcast, cold and windy every time we went north from the Valley to go shopping in Santa Maria. That was just the norm for Santa Maria, even when I was going to Allan Hancock College in the late 1970s, so much for climate change.

Even though our daytime temperatures have cooled down a bit, our vines are growing well, and our small clusters have started to bloom. Now we need Mother Nature's cooperation to provide temperate days to get us to the end of bloom in early June.



I'm spending quite a bit of my time these days on water, specifically SGMA, or the State Groundwater Management Act. Basically, the State gave folks in groundwater basins they believe are in some state of overdraft, time to come up with a plan to get them out of being in overdraft and become sustainable over the next 40 years.

To say the least this is a very complicated and expensive endeavor, made even more challenging by a relatively short period of time to get the first groundwater sustainability plans in place by 2022.

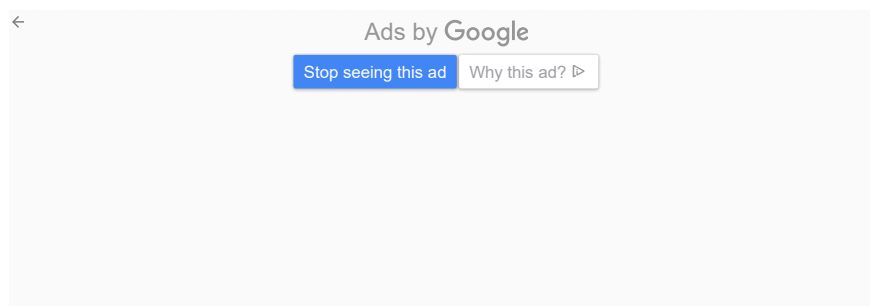
The two areas I am working in are the eastern portion of the Santa Ynez River Water basin and I am more heavily involved in the San Antonio Water Basin in the Los Alamos Valley. To make things tougher, all of our meetings since the outbreak of COVID-19 are held via Zoom or conference call.

If you live in either the Los Alamos Valley or within the Santa Ynez River water basin I urge you to find out more information by googling SGMA or the Santa Barbara County water agencies website.

The groundwater sustainability plans will have far reaching consequences for landowners and urban residents as well. The more input we have the better as everyone's goal should be to keep an equitable, sustainable water supply for all users.

If you grew up around a farm or ranch you know that water is the lifeblood of the operation, whether you're pumping water from a small well for livestock to drink or larger wells used to supply water to irrigate crops over the late spring and summer months.

I remember my grandfather Sam was always nervous that something could go wrong with our well on our ranch near Ballard. I can still hear him telling us that if we had to pull the pump and fix the well it would break us up in business.



Thankfully, we did not have to pull the pump, but I do remember meeting various pump repair folks coming out to the ranch for minor repairs when I was very young. I was reminded of that the other day when I called Kenny Fisher to come out to the vineyard for a well repair.

Kenny is the third generation Fisher that I have had the pleasure of working with over the years. His grandfather Dave used to come out when I was a small boy, he just recently retired. Dave could remember everything about the wells he worked on for us, when they were drilled, pump size , you name it. His son Scott was a close second and now Kenny is taking over for them.

It makes me realize that I am not that young boy back on the ranch along Alamo Pintado Road either, but hopefully I'm not going anywhere soon. It also reminds me that it is the people involved in farming and ranching that make it special and help keep us going through good times and bad.

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Kevin Merrill of Mesa Vineyard Management is a board member of the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau and a director on the Santa Barbara County Fair Board. He can be reached at kmerrill@mesavineyard.com