

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
San Gorgonio Pass Regional Water Alliance
May 24, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.**

Meeting Attendees

Agency	Representative	
City of Banning	Art Vela Rick Minjares	Present
City of Beaumont	Thaxton Van Belle	Present
Banning Heights Mutual Water Company		Absent
Beaumont Basin Watermaster	Dan Jagers	Present
Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District	Daniel Slawson Dan Jagers Robert Rasha	Present
Cabazon Water District	Taffy Brock	Present
City of Calimesa	John Manley	Present
High Valleys Water District	Sam Hughes	Present
Mission Springs Water District	Amber Duff	Present
Morongo Band of Mission Indians		Absent
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	Jason Uhley Juliana Adams	Present
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	Lance Eckhart	Present
South Mesa Water Company		Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District	Joyce McIntire	Present

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

Daniel Slawson called to order the regular meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Regional Water Alliance at 5:00 p.m. Roll call was conducted of the attendees and is reflected in the list of meeting participants above.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Consent Calendar

- A. Approval of Alliance Meeting Minutes from March 22, 2023
The Consent Calendar was approved with correction by the following vote:

MOVED: Vela	SECONDED: Slawson
CONSENT CALENDAR APPROVED	VOTE 10-0
City of Banning	YES
City of Beaumont	YES
Banning Heights Mutual Water Company	Absent
Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District	YES
Cabazon Water District	YES
City of Calimesa	YES
High Valleys Water District	YES
Mission Springs Water District	YES
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	Absent
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	YES
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	YES
South Mesa Water Company	Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District	YES

4. Annual Business Meeting per the SGPRWA Best Practices

- A. The following officers were selected by unanimous vote for the term July 2023 to May 2024:

Officers	Term 2023-2024
Chairperson	Daniel Slawson
Vice Chairperson	Stan Houghton
Secretary	
Treasurer	

- B. Review current Memorandum of Understanding

Chair Daniel Slawson indicated he had no misgivings regarding the MOU. He read the first four sections and summarized Section 5: Mutual Understandings. He noted that some of the signatories are no longer involved.

Chair Slawson reminded that non-substantive changes were made a few years ago. It was later decided to meet every other month but the document was not changed.

Joyce McIntire asked if the signatory pages were going to be updated. Chair Slawson indicated that the MOU states the only reason to re-sign the document is in the event of substantial change. The list of persons is less important than the organizations on the list of signatories, he said, and noted that members who have not been attending are welcome to return any time. Dan Jagers noted the MOU was revised in June 2018 and these are the signatories at that time. He reiterated that no re-signing is necessary unless substantial changes are made.

Mr. Jagers pointed out that the current format and platform is good for general communication among groups and said he would not propose any changes. Jason Uhley agreed it is fine in its current form without change and noted the signatures are likely found elsewhere. It is serving its purpose and allowing what needs to occur.

No changes were proposed.

C. Review Best Practices

Chair Slawson pointed out the meeting details and noted changes in practice. He reviewed the document sections and noted there does not appear to be need to make changes.

No changes were proposed.

D. Review Budget

Chair Slawson advised that the group has a bank account but no money has been used in recent history.

Ms. Juliana Adams reported that reimbursement requests are expected from BCVWD for the updated website. She will provide an update on the balance of the account at the next meeting.

Mr. Jagers recalled that YVWD was previously hosting the website and paying a third party vendor. BCVWD picked up that responsibility and is covering the activity with in-house labor, and does not anticipate requesting reimbursement. There is a small annual charge for website hosting, he added. Mr. Rasha added it is less than \$150 per year. This may be requested later, but will be absorbed by BCVWD at the moment. Jagers added that after changing to Zoom meetings, BCVWD is also preparing meeting minutes. He said this is all considered community service.

Jagers noted that another solution may be discussed with the next chairperson when Mr. Slawson steps down, so that person has an opportunity to work with their staff to prepare minutes and agendas.

Jason Uhley recalled that the account was being carried by the Riverside County Economic Development Agency and it was trying to be switched to the Flood Control District.

5. Discussion Items

A. Beaumont Basin Watermaster report

Dan Jagers reported that the BBWM is in the process of preparing the 2022 Annual Report for consideration at the June 7 meeting. It has been considered to put together a Basin-wide dashboard with well levels and other data. This will work for the benefit of all to have the tools available in six to nine months, he said. A similar one was done for the Yucaipa Basin GSA.

B. San Geronio Pass Water Agency activities update

Mr. Lance Eckhart, SGPWA general manager, reported on the following:

- Working with small water systems including Cabazon, High Valleys, and the Cherry Valley Water Company and Cal Rural Water Association, a nonprofit that helps small systems get tuned up and in position for grants
- Assisted South Mesa and Banning Heights with grants

C. Current status of water supply / drought and related activities

Mr. Eckhart reported the following:

- Precipitation was a good year. Starting to see really wet and really dry in the same season (whiplash hydrology)
- There is a lot of water but there are capacity constraints. Need to build more projects
- Oroville and San Luis reservoirs are topped off
- No place to put excess water unless it can be recharged locally.
- Tremendous amount of snow remains in the Sierras
- There is water to bring down that does not count against Table A allocation
- First 100 percent year since 2006
- Worked with BGVWD to open up to East Branch deliveries and have been recharging
- Water transfer deals made with Central Coast and Yuba
- Taking Article 21 water and starting to move into Table A
- Entered 20 year lease with City of Ventura for their share of State Water Project water
- Portfolio = about 34,000 acre-feet, a huge change from last year
- Will be looking for places to put the water; goal is to import 20,000 af locally
- Actively pursuing expanding facilities. If more recharge ponds were available, would be using them
- Purchased 60-acre parcel on Brookside East to turn into sister facility on the other side of the wash to double recharge capacity
- It is a great year and shows the things on which to focus to invest in the future
- Looks like next year will be another big water year

- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD) had a valve go down which in turn shut down SGPWA ponds for a week; recharge rates dropped
- During shutdown, performed maintenance on ponds
- If anyone can take water, do so
- Record-breaking recharge for the region: about 8,000 af total
- Shared Banning Production Well hydrograph
- Goal is to keep recharge rates up and minimize downtime all year long (and all of 2024)
- Recent statement from Governor Newsom: the only way to achieve climate goals is to build-build-build faster. Sites Reservoir is teed up

Mr. Jagers touched on the relevance of the 34,000 af. BCVWD needs are about 11,000 af per year, Banning 1,000 af, and YVWD 13,850; put in perspective this year's water supply was more than double the opportunity if it can all be delivered (2.5 times the average year). It is a huge year for catching up from the last two years of drought.

Chair Vela added that he is interested to see historical data for the Banning Storage Unit which shows constant decline. Discussion with USGS revealed it has a 30 to 40 year recharge cycle. He said he is looking forward to seeing data on percolation and the groundwater level bounce back.

Jason Uhley touched on the La Nina weather and said central California / Sierras were pounded. He reminded about conditions in previous years. This year, El Nino is expected and the ocean is the warmest it has been on record; conditions are primed for a wet winter but it depends on where the jet stream sets up.

Mr. Jagers added that if it is dry next year, there may be an opportunity to carry over a significant amount of water if reservoirs are low. Even if it is a 40 percent year, it would potentially be a good year for this region.

D. Grant opportunities and funding

Art Vela highlighted the recent award of a Proposition 1 Round 2 grant related to integrated regional water management (IRWM) implementation. This includes three projects for three agencies:

- High Valleys water supply reliability and fire protection upgrade project (\$964,000)
- Cabazon Esperanza Street water line improvement phase 1 (\$343,700)
- City of Banning Lions Park recycled water conversion project (\$490,000)

The San Geronimo IRWM agencies have a good working relationship, Vela added. He reminded that the group recognized its lack of a plan and Riverside County Flood Control stepped up to fund a grant application to develop an IRWM plan and it was put together in record time. That plan makes it possible to be eligible for some of these funding sources.

Mr. Eckhart reported that the San Geronio Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) was successful in a \$2 million SGMA grant for 16 new mentoring wells. The County Line Road recharge project was not funded, but SGPWA is working with SBVMWD to repackage the grant for other funding sources. More opportunities are coming out from June/July to the end of the year, including a Bureau of Reclamation opportunity.

Mr. Uhley advised that he forwarded the current grant summary.

E. Legislative Report

Chair Slawson stated he liked the news regarding Governor Gavin Newsom's statement (above).

The group discussed the recent CARB Clean Fleets / zero emission vehicle regulation.

6. Comments and Updates by the Elected Official or Agency Representative

A. City of Banning – No report

B. Banning Heights Mutual Water Company – Absent

C. City of Beaumont – Thaxton Van Belle reported:

- The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority will be allowed to produce the ambient water quality report on a five year rotation instead of the current three year
- Being part of all the groups of mutual benefit would have saved a large undertaking of adding more groundwater monitoring wells

D. Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District – Dan Jagers highlighted:

- The MDP Line 16 storm drain / stormwater capture joint project with the Riverside County Flood Control District is winding down
- Mr. Uhley acknowledged interest in partnering on a ribbon cutting event
- The low TDS recharge should help Beaumont with their groundwater monitoring

E. Cabazon Water District – Taffy Brock reported:

- 270 meters have been changed out of the yearly goal of 300
- A break in occurred and a truck and tools were lost

F. City of Calimesa – No report

G. High Valleys Water District – No report

- H. Mission Springs Water District – Amber Duff reported:
 - Construction is moving along on the new Regional Water Reclamation Facility; conveyance lines are ready to go in; should be operational by the end of the year
- I. Morongo Band of Mission Indians – Absent
- J. Riverside County EDA / Flood Control District – Jason Uhley reported:
 - Account balance last statement shows \$13,000
 - Will work to get it transferred to the Flood Control District
 - Contracted with Weaver for three emergency projects
 - Recent storms created some sinkholes; they are under repair
 - Acknowledged Ms. McIntire's report of issues at Douglas and will look into the budget process for extending a storm drain
- K. San Geronio Pass Water Agency – Mr. Eckhart reported:
 - SGPWA will have a booth at the Cherry Festival, BCVWD is invited
- L. South Mesa Water Company – No report
- M. Yucaipa Valley Water District – Joyce McIntire reported:
 - Inland Solar Challenge May 19-21 at Yucaipa Lakes was a fabulous event

7. Suggested Presentations and Topics for Future Meetings

No new items were added to the existing list:

- Chromium 6
- Drought response actions and presentation from Lance Eckhart, SGPWA
- Briefing on San Geronio Pass Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- Update and Discussion Regarding Funding for the Sites Reservoir Project
- Discussion Regarding Funding for the Delta Conveyance Project
- Discussion Regarding Funding for the Regional Cabazon/Banning Backbone Project

8. Future Meeting Dates

- July 26, 2023
- September 27, 2023
- January 24, 2024
- March 27, 2024

9. Adjournment

Daniel Slawson adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.