

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
San Gorgonio Pass Regional Water Alliance
January 22, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.**

Meeting Attendees

Agency	Representative	
City of Banning	Art Vela Shah Nawaz	Present
City of Beaumont	David Fenn 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	Present
Cabazon Water District	Taffy Brock	Present
City of Calimesa		Absent
High Valleys Water District		Absent
Mission Springs Water District	Amber Duff	Present
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	John Covington	Present
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	Julianna Adams Jason Uhley	Present
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	Larry Smith Sara Wargo Lance Eckhart	Present
South Mesa Water Company		Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District		Absent

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

Chairman 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.

City of Banning: Primary Representative: LeRoy Miller / Alternate Richard Royce
City of Beaumont Primary Representative: David Fenn / Alternate Jessica Voight

2. Public Comments: None.

3. Consent Calendar

- A. Approval of Alliance Meeting Minutes from September 25, 2024
The Consent Calendar was approved by the following vote:

MOVED: Slawson	SECONDED: Vela
CONSENT CALENDAR APPROVED	VOTE 9-0-5
City of Banning	YES
City of Beaumont	YES
Banning Heights Mutual Water Company	Absent
Beaumont Basin Watermaster	YES
Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District	YES
Cabazon Water District	YES
City of Calimesa	Absent
High Valleys Water District	Absent
Mission Springs Water District	YES
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	YES
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	YES
San Geronio Pass Water Agency	YES
South Mesa Water Company	Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District	Absent

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

- A. City of Beaumont – Mayor David Fenn reported:
- Councilmembers Fenn and Julio Martinez were re-elected, and the Mayor is Mike Lara, and the Mayor Pro-Tem is Jessica Voight
 - The 2x2 Committee of Julio Martinez and Lloyd White is ongoing
- B. City of Banning – Art Vela reported:
- A draft study for Chromium VI has been completed and a report will be provided to this group at the next meeting
 - A grant application to the BOR for the wastewater treatment plant was accepted and an initial award of \$16.1 million was made; unfortunately, the President's Executive Order halting all funding has put this program on hold
 - Also on hold due to the Executive Order is grant funding for the Pennsylvania grade separation
 - Grant administrators are still trying to digest the impact of the Order
- C. Banning Heights – Absent

- D. Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District – Daniel Slawson and Dan Jagers highlighted:
- The election did not change the makeup of the Board. New officers for 2025 are Daniel Slawson, president, and Lona Williams, vice president
 - District is finishing a rate study
 - Working with the 3x2 Committee to find a path forward
 - Adopted FY 2025 budget
 - Replacement pipelines, along with well drilling is in progress
 - Must build a booster station
 - Working on unfunded mandates such as Chromium VI
 - Two co-owned wells with the City of Banning affected by Chromium VI, working on best approach to minimize costs to ratepayers
- E. Cabazon Water District – Taffy Brock reported:
- Chair Sarah Wargo resigned to join the SGPWA
 - New Chair is Terry Tincher, and Vice Chair Brock
- F. City of Calimesa – Absent
- G. High Valleys Water District – Absent
- H. Mission Springs Water District – Amber Duff reported:
- Thanked those who attended the ACWA Region 9 tour of the reclamation plant
 - Two weeks from completion of the conveyance line, closer to connection
 - Received last part of the grant for septic to sewer conversion
 - Marion Champion promoted to assistant general manager
 - Board member Russ Martin was reelected, two others were appointed in lieu of election
- I. Morongo Band of Mission Indians – John Covington reported:
- Trying to survive the public safety power shutoffs (PSPS) and deliver water to customers while being prepared for wildfire
 - Making changes to operations
 - Enhancing critical sites
 - Switching battery backups to solar
 - Kicking off capital improvement projects in February
 - Groundwater modeling in progress to better understand resources (about a 1.5 to 2 year project)
 - Fully engaged in Coachella Valley Salt and Nutrient Management Plan – will provide comments
- J. Riverside County EDA / Flood Control District – Julianna Adams reported:
- Efforts on Prop. 4 funding:
 - A meeting was held last week to discuss Riverside County priorities
 - Communicating to the Governor's office the prioritization of Riverside County's Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWM) programs

- \$100 million was appropriated to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for IRWM programs, and Riv Co is advocating for the San Gorgonio IRWM.
 - Advocating for the \$150 million for subvention funding
- K. South Mesa Water Company – Absent
- L. Yucaipa Valley Water District – Absent
- M. San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency – Lance Eckhart reported :
- Spoke to Chief Operating Officer of Riverside County Juan Perez about fire preparedness
 - Heli-hydrants are in progress, possible funding from Riverside County
 - Fire protection issues in consideration of PSPS (generators, cost sharing)
 - Smaller disadvantaged communities are off the radar and continue to be weak spots for attention and resources
 - Meeting with Riverside officials – call scheduled on January 29 – other general managers encouraged to join and share cautionary tales, such as
 - Difficulty of permitting and using generators – legislation may be a fix
 - Short-term, there will likely be money funneled toward hardening for emergency preparedness
 - Addressing the electrification of emergency vehicles (trucks) as it does not make sense
 - Looking to other groups to raise a common voice, or find someone to sponsor a bill

Dan Jagers advised there would be a parallel but different meeting through Eastern Municipal Water District. He added that with the PSPS, unless there is independent power or solar, it would be challenging to charge electric vehicles. His intent is to work toward making districts exempt. Jason Uhley requested the invitation be forwarded to him.

Mr. Eckhart continued, and presented SGPWA accomplishments and initiatives in 2024

- Recharged more than 18,000 acre-feet; the ponds have slowed a bit but this is a respectable amount of water
- Such a wet year, water was at risk so 6,000 af was transferred to West Side Water District (agriculture) at \$500 per af
- Described the buying and selling of water in a more material way as part of normal operations
- Equipment was installed
- Expanded District boundaries to coincide with development
- Welcomed new Director Wargo and new Board Clerk Maricela Cabalo
- Described the ebb and flow of the long-term, robust water portfolio, saying supply is not expected to be an issue moving forward
- The cloud seeding program with the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority was put on hold, as it was undesirable to cause rain after the fires. Will resume after vegetation grows back
- ARPA funding of about \$3 million for the County Line Recharge Project using abandoned mains. Must be done by December 2026

- Backbone pipeline from Brookside to Beaumont Avenue to get imported water to Cabazon is expensive, alternatives are being examined
- Exploring use of recharge basin to move water north to Yucaipa as a backup supply, or to the west and east to avoid the Chromium VI areas
- Sites Reservoir is moving forward well. Land has been purchased.
- Gap funding is being provided to other agencies while they are waiting for grant reimbursements. Has accelerated local projects
- USGS will install wells in the Banning – Cabazon area with a \$2 million grant
- First in the state to approve planning funding for the Delta Conveyance project; Metropolitan followed suit
- Prospective will be presented at the next meeting

Mr. Fenn asked about the Sites Reservoir and Mr. Eckhart confirmed that 2033 is the anticipated start filling date. Mr. Eckhart provided the locations of the heli hydrants. Mr. Uhley advised that Flood Control is still interested in partnering, and if the budget allows, the heli hydrants will be the next priority.

- N. Beaumont Basin Watermaster – Dan Jaggers and Art Vela reported:
- The most recent meeting was canceled
 - Redetermination of the Safe Yield was approved at 7,100 af per year

6. Suggested Presentations and Topics for Future Meetings

- 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
- PFAS
- Lead and Copper Rule
- City of Banning Chromium 6 compliance study (March 26) (Will be presented to Banning City Council on February 11)

7. Future Meeting Dates

Committee is dark in November

Meeting time is 4th Wednesday of odd months at 5 p.m.

- March 26, 2025
- May 28, 2025
- July 23, 2025
- September 24, 2025

8. Adjournment

Chairman Daniel Slawson adjourned the meeting at 5:53 p.m.