

REVISED
MEETING MINUTES OF THE
San Gorgonio Pass Regional Water Alliance
May 28, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Attendees

Agency	Representative	
City of Banning	Art Vela	Present
City of Beaumont	David Fenn Thaxton Van Belle	Present
Banning Heights Mutual Water Company		Absent
Beaumont Basin Watermaster	Art Vela 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	Stan Houghton	Present
Mission Springs Water District		Absent
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	Anthony Mendoza John Covington	Present
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	Julianna Adams	Present
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	Larry Smith Lance Eckhart	Present
South Mesa Water Company		Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District	Joyce McIntire	Present

Members of the Public in Attendance: Steve Grasha, Desert Water Agency; Shah Nawaz, City of Banning

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

Chairman Daniel Slawson called to order the regular meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Regional Water Alliance at 5:01 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 26, 2025
The Consent Calendar was approved by the following vote:

MOVED: Slawson	SECONDED: None
CONSENT CALENDAR APPROVED	VOTE 9-0-1
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	ABSTAIN
Mission Springs Water District	Absent
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	YES
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	YES
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	YES
South Mesa Water Company	Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District	YES

4. Presentation by San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency General Manager Lance Eckhart:

- San Gorgonio Pass Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- Monitoring well progress
- Coordination with the Beaumont Basin Watermaster modeling effort

Lance Eckhart discussed:

1. Groundwater Coordination and Modeling:

- The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA) serves as the hub for the San Gorgonio Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), which includes East Banning, Cabazon, parts of Banning Heights Mutual Water Company, and extends toward Mission Springs Water District (Desert Hot Springs) and Indio.
- A key issue is understanding and quantifying the natural water underflow between basins, particularly how much groundwater migrates from the adjudicated Beaumont Basin eastward into neighboring basins like Cabazon and Indio.
- State-mandated modeling and sustainability planning has been supported by a \$1 million DWR grant.
- Accurate modeling is difficult but necessary. It uses historical data, USGS studies, and modern tools to estimate water flows and identify changes over time.

2. Collaborative Modeling Efforts:

- SGPWA is partnering with Desert Water Agency and using Provost & Pritchard (via Interra) to refine regional groundwater modeling.
- The goal is to sync modeling tools across agencies—including with Beaumont Basin Watermaster's consultant Tom Harder—to avoid data conflicts.
- A joint modeling effort is underway, funded through a cost-share agreement between the larger agencies to avoid burdening smaller GSA members.

3. Monitoring Wells Update:

- Four deep monitoring wells (MWP-1 to MWP-4) are being installed across the region to provide long-term data. These are funded by a DWR grant and installed by the USGS.
- The first well, MWP-1, is located in the adjudicated Beaumont Basin near residential areas. Despite noise and disruption, the community has been supportive.
- These wells are designed to last many decades and are critical to scientific management and model validation.

4. Regional Water Supply Portfolio:

- SGPWA has built a diversified and flexible water supply portfolio, including:
 - The Ventura lease (10,000 AF/year for 20 years)
 - Nickel water rights
 - Participation in Sites Reservoir (90,000 AF of storage)
 - Delta Conveyance Project (future high-capacity conveyance)
- Active water trading has enhanced the region's flexibility. For example, surplus water was sold during wet periods and repurchased at favorable rates during dry conditions.
- The region's nimbleness in transactions provides a competitive edge over larger, less agile contractors.
- Long-term modeling shows robust supply capacity extending through 2070, including provisions for climate change, conservation, and environmental constraints.

Dan Jagers emphasized the importance of maintaining balance in the Beaumont Basin and managing flows to downstream basins. He supported monitoring well installations to improve boundary understanding and praised the long-term planning efforts while reinforcing the need for regional coordination to prevent overdraft conditions. Jagers also noted the importance of Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) and their synchronization with regional planning efforts.

Larry Smith commended the field crews for their professionalism and the public outreach regarding drilling near residential areas. He noted the success of proactive communication with neighbors, which prevented complaints.

Art Vela confirmed that no complaints had been received regarding the drilling. He praised interagency collaboration for permitting and materials handling, which led to significant cost savings.

In response to John Covington, Mr. Eckhart confirmed modeling had begun and is expected to be completed within a year. Covington emphasized the importance of modeling for understanding inter-basin flows and preserving long-term supply security.

Covington also highlighted the value of coordination for upcoming 2025–2026 UWMPs and suggested a future meeting topic on planning across member agencies, and Chair Slawson concurred. Covington also raised concerns about land use planning in rapidly growing cities like Beaumont and Banning, and how UWMPs guide development. He called attention to the connection to the regional supply of both Yucaipa Valley Water District and Desert Water Agency.

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

A. City of Beaumont – Thaxton Van Belle reported:

- Capital projects include:
 - Lift station expansion
 - Seismic work on the sewer bridge
 - Improvements on Highland Springs and Potrero
- Will ask the City Council to join the Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (WIPPES) Act (federal level)
- Productive whiteboarding session with BCVWD and SGPWA to talk about concepts of recycled water
- Phase 1 of the Adaptive Management Plan draft is complete and there is push to get it finalized to establish direction
- AB 466, intended to protect water agencies from litigation related to Chromium 6, is moving forward. Agencies must submit a compliance plan.

B. City of Banning – Art Vela reported:

- Two well projects are in the equipping and site improvement phase
- Constructing two booster stations and reservoirs
- Kicked off progressive design-build for the wastewater treatment plant improvement and expansion project
- Working on major traffic projects

C. Banning Heights – Absent

D. Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District – Daniel Slawson and Dan Jagers highlighted:

- Wells are being installed
- Approved a 15 percent rate increase
- Work is being done on a heli-hydrant with some ARPA funding

E. Cabazon Water District – Taffy Brock reported:

- Both heli-hydrants are up and functioning

F. City of Calimesa – Absent

G. High Valleys Water District – Stan Houghton reported:

- Grant-funded pipelines are complete and a ribbon cutting ceremony was held

- Will begin on heli-hydrants
- A preliminary engineering report has been done through the California Rural Water Association (CRWA) with the help of SGPWA
- Additional grants are being pursued

H. Mission Springs Water District – Absent

I. Morongo Band of Mission Indians – John Covington reported:

- Capital improvement projects are underway, including enhancement of production for the Morongo Trust lands and construction of reservoirs
- The Environmental Protection Department is updating the water conservation plan

J. Riverside County EDA / Flood Control District – No report.

K. South Mesa Water Company – Absent

L. Yucaipa Valley Water District – Joyce McIntire reported:

- The pre-injection wells being drilled on the west side of Interstate 10 are at 1,200 feet and moving along very well

M. San Geronio Pass Water Agency – No report

N. Beaumont Basin Watermaster – Dan Jagers and Art Vela reported:

- The Watermaster meets next on June 11.
- At the May meeting, the Watermaster received an update on water loss and agreed on different scenarios for analysis
- The draft annual report is under review and it is hoped it will be finalized quickly.

6. **Suggested Presentations and Topics for Future Meetings**

- 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
- Preparation of 2025-2026 Urban Water Management Plans

7. **Future Meeting Dates**

Committee is dark in November

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

- July 23, 2025
- September 24, 2025

8. **Adjournment**

Chairman Daniel Slawson adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.