



Cuyama Basin Water District Formation

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CHANGE OF ORGANIZATION ITEM NO. 2

Goal Of This Presentation

- Explain why we fully support the Staff Report Option #1.
- The proposed District will be the best solution for landowners to work together on many issues, including specifically, compliance with SGMA.

How We Got Here

- Product of close collaboration between petitioners and all four counties over the course of 1 ½ years.
- Counties sponsored a public informational meeting in New Cuyama in October 2015.
- Multiple conversations with Community Service District (“CSD”) on approach.
- Representatives at all Cuyama Community Association meetings to discuss and answer questions.
- Public meeting invited all landowners within District boundaries in July 2016.

Reasons In Support Of Staff Recommendation

Solution is consistent with SGMA goals of inclusive, local collaboration and representation:

- Local Government – all four counties
- Urban Residents/Community – CSD will represent their interests
- Landowners – proposed District will provide a public agency for local landowner representation

Reasons In Support Of Staff Recommendation

It's Timely – Impending SGMA Deadlines:

- Sustainability Plans due January 31, 2020
- Must designate Sustainability Agency by June 30, 2017
- No time to wait



Reasons In Support Of Staff Recommendation

Giving landowners a voice won't undermine SGMA:

- Landowners naturally want to participate in something that impacts them
- But, all GSAs must meet state-defined rules and regulations, including definition of “sustainability”
- If a GSA, including the proposed District, lacks the will to make the Cuyama Basin sustainable, the State will intervene
- No GSA can go rogue – the State has ultimate approval

Reasons In Support Of Staff Recommendation

Robust collaboration between the Counties, the Community/CSD and the proposed District is advantageous:

- SGMA compliance will be expensive
 - Sustainability Plan
 - Implementation
 - Enforcement
- Prop 218 – Constitutional requirement that assessments be fair and proportional to cost of service
- Proposed District will help streamline revenue generation to develop/ implement the Sustainability Plan

Alternatives Don't Achieve SGMA Goals

- SGMA was premised on local collaboration by those most impacted
- Alternatives don't deliver on that promise:
 - State prepares a Sustainability Plan with no local representation at all by Counties, Community/CSD, or landowners
 - Counties act solo as the GSA and would have to fund the Sustainability Plans, implement, and enforce themselves
- The Staff Recommendation:
 - To approve a vehicle for collaboration by local government/urban residents/landowners in support of SGMA compliance

Overwhelming Support by Landowners

Landowners in the proposed District overwhelmingly support this:

- Even on short notice, over 70% representative owners signed the petition
- Irrigators and non-irrigators
- Large and small
- More landowners have contacted the Petitioners expressing support

Overwhelming Support by Landowners

Landowners naturally want to have some representation:

- Will bear the main funding burden
- Have a long-term interest in restoring balance to the Cuyama Basin
- Will need to reduce groundwater pumping
- Can use the District for other long-term purposes besides SGMA compliance

Response to Recent Criticism

- **Hearing Notice** – followed the law
- **District Excludes New Cuyama** – Urban residents are represented by the CSD, which was consulted on District boundaries
- **District Could Undermine the CSD** – GSA will include the CSD
- **Federal Land Question** – excluded from the proposed District because there is no irrigation and federal government is not subject to SGMA
- **USGS Study** – The counties will represent all landowners outside the proposed District

Questions