

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
San Gorgonio Pass Regional Water Alliance
March 22, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.**

Meeting Attendees

Agency	Representative	
City of Banning	Art Vela	Present
City of Beaumont	Thaxton Van Belle Jeff Hart Jessica Voigt	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	Stan Houghton Sam Hughes	Present
Mission Springs Water District	Amber Duff	Present
Morongo Band of Mission Indians		Absent
Riverside County EDA / Flood Control	Jason Uhley	Present
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	Lance Eckhart Larry Smith Kevin Walton	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. on March 23, 2023. Roll call was conducted of the attendees and is reflected in the list of meeting participants above.

2. Public Comments

Dan Jagers advised that Lance Eckhart had announced that the drought is over.

3. Consent Calendar

- A. Approval of Alliance Meeting Minutes from January 25, 2023
The Consent Calendar was approved by the following vote:

MOVED: Slawson	SECONDED: Houghton
CONSENT CALENDAR APPROVED	VOTE 8-0
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	Absent
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	YES
South Mesa Water Company	Absent
Yucaipa Valley Water District	Abstain

4. Discussion Items

- A. Update regarding teleconference / in-person / hybrid meetings

Chair Slawson reported that Jason Uhley of Riverside County Flood Control has contacted County Counsel and confirm that the group is able to continue Zoom format meetings. He recommended continuing in this manner.

Mr. Jagers reminded about discussion at the last meeting regarding whether the SGPRWA was required to follow the Brown Act. County Counsel determined it did not because of the way it was declared by former Supervisor Marion Ashley. The group does post agendas and tries to be as transparent as possible, he added.

Ms. McIntire and Mr. Smith indicated support for continuing with Zoom meetings.

- B. Beaumont Basin Watermaster report

BBWM Chairperson Art Vela reported that the Watermaster Committee received a presentation from its administrator, Steve Stuart of Dudek, regarding a GIS-based data management system and is considering implementation.

C. San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency activities update

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

- Shared resources of case studies for regional water agencies and from the Water Education Foundation
 - Disadvantaged communities and smaller water systems have had difficulty navigating federal and state services that are set aside and designed for them as the process is cumbersome
 - Connecting support to the people in need has been an issue
 - Regional water systems are being asked to bridge the gap
 - Cal-Rural Water Association was hired to shepherd the agencies through the process with good results
 - Discussed increased support to High Valleys, Cabazon, and Cherry Valley Water Company
 - Working with Banning Heights Mutual Water Company as a proof of concept locally
 - Grant work has been successful
 - Supported by SGPWA Board and will ramp up the program
- Water conditions update
 - Drought is over (unofficially)
 - It has been a very wet water year and that is continuing
 - Snowpack is about 200 percent of normal - recordbreaking
 - Reservoirs are starting to spill but they are trying to hold onto water – a balancing act
 - Water stored last year is being lost
 - Hustling since February to import water locally
 - State Water Project allocation is 35 percent (artificially low) but will be much higher, waiting on snow surveys (expects to see a raise in the next couple of weeks)
 - There will be a lot of water parked at the San Luis Reservoir at the end of the year
 - The east branch of the SWP is typically down for inspection and maintenance in January, and delivery of water begins in February – will see if it can be shortened
 - Recharge facilities were opened February 1 and water was moved from San Luis Reservoir
 - SGPWA sold 400 af of water in November with a return of 800 af over a 10 year period, and received a call in February to return it; all was moved back and now there is \$600,000 to buy more water
 - Made a deal with the City of Yuba at \$175 per af for what is able to get into the ground before it spills
 - The SGPWA Board has moved quickly to make these deals when introduced; the agency is small and can be nimble
 - BCVWD ponds and SGPWA ponds are full and intended to stay full through the remainder of the year
 - “Recharge Rick” was removed from the facility over the weekend
- State Water Project Energy
 - DWR bills for electric annually, agency has little control over it

- The more water moved in a wet year the cost is kept down due to hydroelectric generation; in dry years it costs a lot more to move water
- In a dry year, the energy cost was approximately \$667 per af
- During a wet year, the energy cost was \$231 per af
- There is value in selling water or making exchanges
- Import strategy will be considered
- Brookside West facility (adjacent to BCVWD facility)
 - Closed on 60 acres (two parcels) for about 30 acres of recharge capacity and operational flexibility
 - Had it been built, it would be in use
 - A stormwater capture element may be added
 - There has been interest in recharging recycled water during the cold months when there is less demand
 - Will work with the school district for usable traffic area / parking
 - It is a very grant fundable project
- Capacity Constraint
 - It is difficult to harvest all the water available
 - Pearblossom Pumping Plant is a known chokepoint
 - Working to mitigate this but there are things outside of control
 - There are issues with a pump creating further constraints and there may be a slowdown
 - Mr. Jagers explained the proportionate share paid by agencies to participate in the SWP – this region owns only a small sliver and the available share is diminished
 - The area may not be able to import all the water available and some may be parked in San Luis Reservoir for carryover to 2024
 - A water bank outside the area may be needed and discussions are being held with Antelope Valley East Kern (a State Water Contractor)
 - The water bank will have to be constructed; there is a lot of storage available

D. Grant opportunities and funding

Jason Uhley of Riverside County Flood advised that he would forward the SAWPA list.

E. Ongoing drought restrictions and outreach activities

Mr. Jagers shared that BCVWD will probably be soon discussing the Water Shortage Contingency Plan after the governor releases his drought declaration. Numbers show a 75 percent level of production compared to last year and the year before, and March will likely be the same because it has been so wet. There is need to unwind the drought restrictions.

5. 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 – Jessica Voigt reported:
- Thanked Mr. Jagers for attending the City Council meeting and said his perspective was appreciated
 - Looking forward to bringing back an initiative to look at a blanket agreement
- D. Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District – Dan Jagers highlighted:
- Shared the SGPRWA Best Practices document
 - Daniel Slawson and Stan Houghton are co-chairs
 - BCVWD is providing meeting minutes, hosting the Zoom meeting, and keeping the website
 - Flood Control / County of Riverside has budget activities
 - Chair Slawson said he would enjoy continuing as chair. This will be addressed at the May meeting.
 - Water banking strategy would be to reduce the costs for the region by limiting the marginal areas where there is capacity in the East Branch and bank the water in the wet years. Money saved from reduced energy costs could be allocated to other projects
- E. Cabazon Water District – Taffy Brock reported:
- New isolation valve installations have been completed
 - Contract awarded to have reservoirs repaired and prevention done
- F. City of Calimesa – John Manley thanked the group for all the information presented.
- G. High Valleys Water District – Stan Houghton reported:
- Working with SGPWA and California Rural Water Association on potential grants
 - Moving forward to complete a grant with IRWM
 - Many roads need repair at this time
- H. Mission Springs Water District – Amber Duff reported:
- The Board recently toured the new Regional Water Reclamation Facility under construction. It is on schedule for completion on time in October
 - Looking forward to the next update from Mr. Eckhart regarding connecting MWSD
- I. Morongo Band of Mission Indians – Absent

- J. Riverside County EDA / Flood Control District – Jason Uhley reported:
- It has been a wet year (annual average is 16 inches)
 - Banning Bench is at 24 inches of rain for the year
 - Beaumont at 21 inches
 - Emergency work is still being done at Noble Creek
 - Grade control structure on Noble Road
 - Additional cleanup below Brookside
 - Will work with SGPWA to facilitate stormwater capture and coordinate improvements between properties
- K. South Mesa Water Company – No report
- L. Yucaipa Valley Water District – Joyce McIntire reported:
- 14-year Board member Lonni Granlund is leaving at the end of April. Notices will be released for applications to fill Division 4.

7. Suggested Presentations and Topics for Future Meetings

Alliance members expressed interest in the following meeting topics:

- Annual Business Meeting and election of officers – May 24 meeting
- Supply issues and how agencies are affected
- 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

- May 24, 2023
- July 26, 2023
- September 27, 2023

9. Adjournment

Daniel Slawson adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.