



Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau

Affiliated with the California Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation

November 15, 2021

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Attn: Honorable Bob Nelson, Chair
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93101

Re: Lack of agricultural representation in ongoing SGMA process

Dear Chairman Nelson and Members of the Board:

The Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau, a nonprofit California corporation representing 500 agricultural and associate members throughout Santa Barbara County, is concerned with the current SGMA process and the lack of representation from agricultural landowners within the Santa Ynez River Water Basin.

There is no exclusive agricultural representation on any of the three GSA governing boards. This is problematic, as the cost allocation will be a critical issue for landowners and agricultural water users as this process moves forward. The planning process has been controlled by the County, cities, and water districts, and it would appear that these entities have chosen to write a groundwater sustainability plan that is very conservative and is designed to specifically address City and District issues, while leaving the burden of sustainability on agricultural landowners.

As projects and management actions related to the groundwater sustainability plans outlined to date begin, it will be crucial that those costs be spread out between all water users and not fall disproportionately on agricultural landowners.

We are deeply concerned that the projects and management actions being considered by the GSA, focus almost exclusively on the interests of the cities and water districts with no consideration on the effects on the overlying groundwater rights of agricultural landowners.

The Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau Board of Directors understands the importance of maintaining a sustainable, Santa Ynez River Ground Water Basin for all water users. We understand the challenges in developing, workable, and fair Groundwater Sustainability Plans. To that end we would like to see all three GSA boards appoint an agricultural, voting board member from our County Farm Bureau as this process moves forward.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Bosio, president
Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau

Cc:

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