

RESOLUTION NO. 21

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MONTECITO GROUNDWATER BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY ESTABLISHING A POLICY SUPPORTING NEW WELL CONSTRUCTION IN THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL ZONE THAT ADVANCES EFFECTIVE BASIN MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, the Montecito Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (“Agency”) is organized and existing under and pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (“SGMA”) and was declared by the California Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) as the exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Montecito Groundwater Basin (“Basin”) in late 2018; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Agency is to *ensure a reliable and sustainable groundwater supply for the community through effective basin management pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act*; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to SGMA, the Agency is required to develop and implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“GSP”) for the Basin [Water Code §10727]; and

WHEREAS, the Agency developed a GSP through a collaborative, knowledge-based process informed by the best available data, science and information, and considered the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater; and

WHEREAS, on May 19, 2023, following a public review and hearing process, the Agency’s Board of Directors adopted a GSP for the Basin, which was subsequently approved by DWR on February 27, 2025 [Water Code §10727.8]; and

WHEREAS, the Agency’s adopted GSP incorporates a description of the Basin, a water budget, Sustainability Indicators (“SI”) and associated Sustainable Management Criteria (“SMC”), and specific projects and management actions to achieve its Sustainability Goal to prevent undesirable results and optimize long-term use of the groundwater basin for the benefit of all stakeholders [Water Code §10727.2 and Water Code §10727.4]; and

WHEREAS, the GSP identifies Data Gaps, which inhibit the Agency’s ability to fully understand Basin conditions and effectively manage the Basin; and

WHEREAS, collaboration with stakeholders, including public and private well owners, provides the Agency a cost-effective way to acquire new data for the Basin; and

WHEREAS, existing groundwater wells, public or private, are limited in certain areas of the Basin where Data Gaps exist, and the installation of new wells by the Agency is often cost prohibitive; and

WHEREAS, while SGMA provides the Agency with certain powers and authorities for groundwater management for the Basin, well permitting authority resides with the County of Santa

Barbara (“County”), in coordination with the California Coastal Commission (“CCC”) for new groundwater wells located in the coastal zone; and

WHEREAS, the shared interest in sustainable Basin management between the Agency, County and CCC creates an opportunity for effective collaboration for the long-term benefit of the Basin; and

WHEREAS, the Agency wishes to establish a policy supporting certain actions taken by stakeholders that would benefit the Agency and stakeholders, and advance effective Basin management (“Policy”).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Montecito Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency as follows:

1. The Agency supports the permitting and installation of new or modified public or private groundwater wells located within the California Coastal Zone portion of the Basin under the following conditions:
 - a. The proposed well will be located in an area of the Basin that has been identified by the Agency as an area containing Data Gaps (GSP Section 3.5.7.2).
 - b. The well permit applicant obtains all required approvals including those of the County and/or CCC.
 - c. The well owner participates in the Agency’s Well Registry Program and keeps all contact information up to date and provides all available information about the well and its construction to the Agency.
 - d. The well owner installs, at their cost, certain equipment specified by the Agency for monitoring purposes.
 - e. The well owner grants the Agency access to the well for monitoring purposes. Such access shall be documented in an agreement between the well owner and the Agency, which shall grant the Agency a permanent easement to the property on which the well is situated to access the well for monitoring purposes; shall bind assigns and successors of well owner; and shall be recorded with the County of Santa Barbara.
 - f. The Agency has determined, in accordance with the GSP and/or SGMA, that the proposed well and its planned use will not have a negative impact on the long-term sustainability of the Basin.
2. Nothing contained in this Policy limits, precludes, or prohibits the Agency from regulating any specific well as authorized by, and in accordance with, the GSP for the Basin, SGMA, and/or other applicable law.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Montecito Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency this 16th day of September 2025 by the following roll call vote:

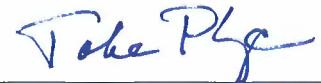
AYES: Coates, Goebel, Plough, Wicks

NOES:

ABSENT: Hayman

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED:



Tobe Plough, Board President

ATTEST:



Nicholas Turner, Board Secretary