



October 22, 2015

Via E-Mail and U.S. Mail

Mark Nordberg, GSA Project Manager
Senior Engineering Geologist
California Department of Water Resources
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RE: NOTICE OF ELECTION TO BE A GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Dear Mr. Nordberg:

Pursuant to Water Code Section 10723.8, the County of Butte (the County) hereby notifies the California Department of Water Resources of its election to become a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), and its intent to undertake sustainable groundwater management in all the portions of the Vina, West Butte, East Butte and North Yuba subbasins within the boundaries of Butte County.

On October 13, 2015, the Butte County Board of Supervisors held a public hearing in accordance with Water Code Section 10723(b). The public hearing (Exhibit A) was noticed in accordance with Government Code Section 6066. Notices were sent to approximately 200 individuals and posted on the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation (the Department) website. The following entities were sent hearing notices via e-mail or U.S. mail:

- Richvale Irrigation District
- Butte Water District
- Western Canal Water District
- Thermalito Water & Sewer District
- Sutter Extension Water District
- City of Chico
- Reclamation District 1004
- City of Oroville
- City of Biggs
- City of Gridley
- Glenn County
- Tehama County
- Colusa County
- Sutter County
- Yuba County
- Yuba Water Authority
- Cordua Irrigation District
- California Water Service Chico
- California Water Service Oroville

The boundaries of the subbasins that Butte County is electing to be a GSA is presented in Exhibit B. The other GSAs operating within these subbasins include:

- Richvale Irrigation District (East Butte)
- Biggs West Gridley Water District (East Butte)
- Butte Water District (East Butte)
- Western Canal Water District (West Butte and East Butte)
- Glenn County (West Butte)
- Colusa County (West Butte)
- Reclamation District 1004 (West Butte)
- Yuba County Water Agency (North Yuba)
- Cordua Irrigation District (North Yuba)

After holding a public hearing, the Butte County Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution electing to be a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Exhibit C). In taking the action to be a GSA, the Butte County Board of Supervisors did not adopt any new bylaws, ordinances or new authorities.

Butte County has developed a list of interested parties (Water Code Section 10723.8(a)(4)) and will continue to revise the list as necessary during the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) development process. Butte County will consider all beneficial uses of groundwater, groundwater users and those responsible for developing GSPs (Water Code Section 10723.2). Butte County will solicit feedback and engage in discussions with other interested parties during GSP development. The interested parties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Holders of overlying groundwater rights, including
 - 1) Agricultural users –The County is working with landowners and ranch managers directly, through the Butte County Farm Bureau, Cooperative Extension and the Butte County Water Advisory Committee.
 - 2) Domestic well owners – There are thousands of domestic well owners in Butte County. The County will engage domestic well owners through direct contact, civic organizations, social media and other approaches.
- b) Municipal well operators
Durham Irrigation District, City of Gridley and City of Biggs.
- c) Public water systems
Thermalito Water and Sewer District, California Water Service Chico and California Water Service Oroville.
- d) Local land use planning agencies
Butte County, Glenn County, Colusa County, Tehama County, Yuba County, City of Chico, City of Biggs, City of Gridley, and City of Oroville.

- e) Environmental users of groundwater
There are numerous environmental water users that take advantage of both surface and groundwater to provide habitat for migrating waterfowl and other species in Butte County.
- f) Surface water users where there is a hydrologic connection between surface and groundwater bodies
The County is acutely aware of the importance of the hydrologic connection between surface and groundwater bodies. In our area there are many surface water users in areas that are hydrologically connected to groundwater bodies. Some of the more significant surface water bodies include the Sacramento River, Feather River, Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Butte Creek, and Honcut Creek. The County will work with other GSAs, and all water users to manage ground and surface water in an integrated fashion to ensure protection of surface water rights and water resources.
- g) Federal government, including but not limited to, the military and managers of federal lands
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Agency manages many National Wildlife Refuge lands in Butte County.
- h) California Native American tribes
Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians (North Yuba subbasin), and the Mechoopda Indian Rancheria Tribe of Chico (West Butte subbasin).
- i) Disadvantaged communities, including but not limited to, those served by private domestic wells or small community water systems
City of Gridley, City of Biggs, City of Chico, City of Oroville, and the communities of Nord, Bangor and Thermalito.
- j) Entities listed in Section 10927 that are monitoring and reporting groundwater elevations in all or part of a groundwater basin managed by the GSA
Butte County, Glenn County, Colusa County, Tehama County, Yuba County Water Agency, and Sutter Extension Water District.

Since the enactment of SGMA, Butte County has actively conducted outreach to groups with an interest in groundwater management (as listed in Water Code Section 10723.2) as well as civic organizations, municipalities, and the general public. The County will continue to work cooperatively with other GSAs, local agencies and interested parties concerning sustainable groundwater management. In an effort to work cooperatively with all interested parties, the County:

- Maintains a mailing list of approximately 200 interested parties. Interested parties receive agendas for the Butte County Water Commission, Technical

Advisory Committee and Water Advisory Committee meetings, notices of workshops, and the Department's monthly newsletter, *WaterSolutions*, which routinely includes SGMA implementation articles.

- Has a webpage dedicated to SGMA.
- Provides SGMA updates to the Butte County Board of Supervisors through the Water Commission.
- Administers the Butte County Groundwater Management Plan which includes the Basin Management Objectives (BMO) program. Understanding that public participation is a cornerstone of a good BMO program, Butte County utilizes a Water Advisory Committee comprised of 28 stakeholder seats representing 16 sub-inventory units within the County, five municipalities, four watersheds, and three at-large sectors (foothill/mountain, environmental and agricultural).
- Has made SGMA presentations to various groups throughout the region.
- Is a member of the Northern Sacramento Valley Integrated Regional Water Management (NSVIRWM) group, which provides regional updates and information on SGMA implementation at their Technical Advisory Committee's monthly meetings.
- Is conducting an assessment of stakeholder perspectives on GSA governance. The assessment will conduct a series of interviews with the GSA eligible agencies and other stakeholders including groundwater dependent groundwater and surface water users, municipalities, water purveyors and non-profit organizations. The project will produce an inclusive report giving voice to all of the stakeholders on GSA governance. The project will be completed by March of 2016. The report will provide the means to launch further discussions regarding GSA governance.

If the Department of Water Resources has any questions or requires any further information, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Paul Gosselin, Director

Exhibit B

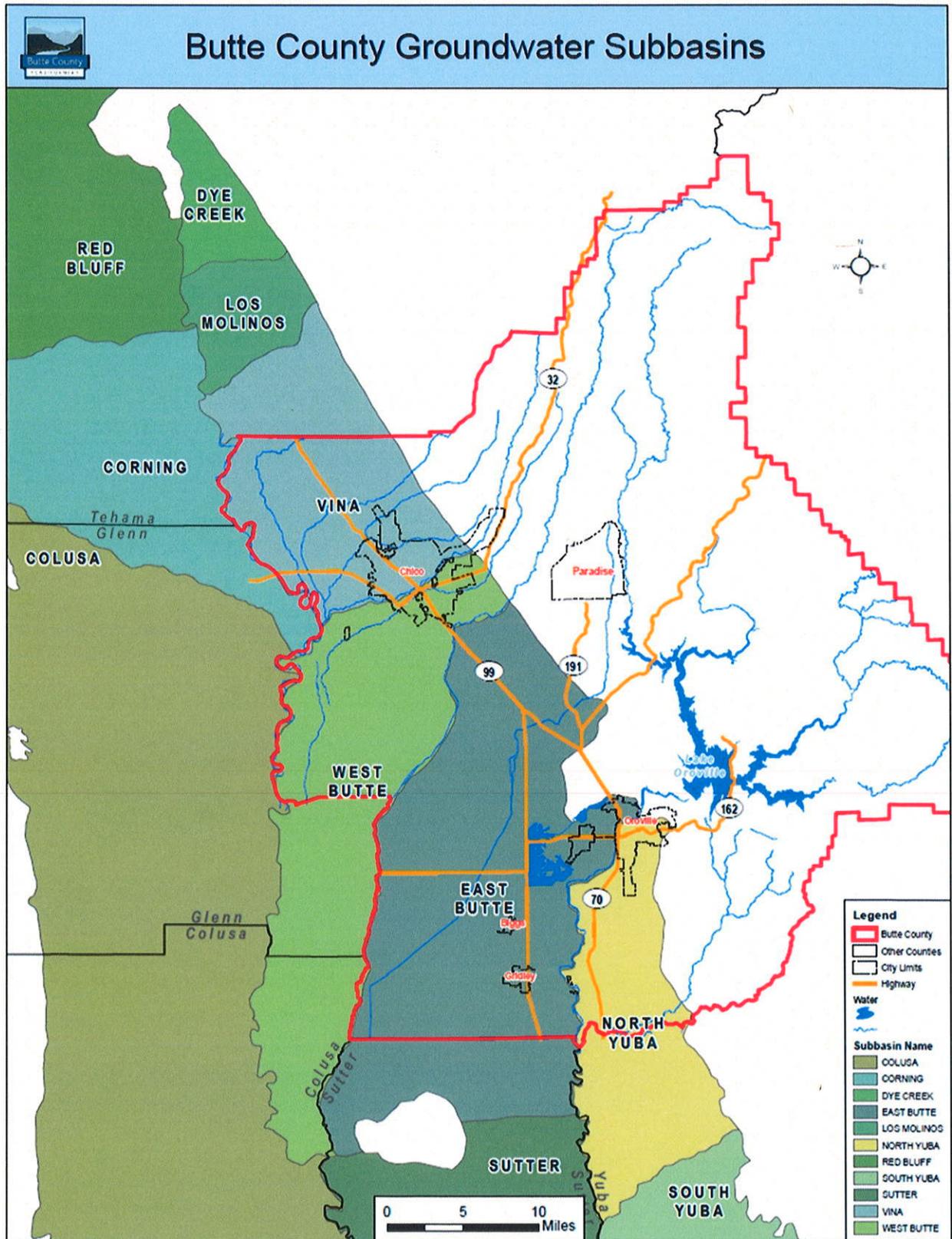


Exhibit C



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF BUTTE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Resolution No. 15-146

RESOLUTION ELECTING TO BE A GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY FOR THE PORTIONS OF THE VINA, WEST BUTTE, EAST BUTTE AND NORTH YUBA SUBBASINS WITHIN BUTTE COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 went into effect on January 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 enables the State Water Resources Control Board to intervene in groundwater basins unless a local public agency or combination of local public agencies form a Groundwater Sustainability Agency or Agencies (GSA) by June 30, 2017 (Water Code §10735); and

WHEREAS, retaining local jurisdiction over water management and land use is essential to sustainably manage groundwater and to the vitality of Butte County's economy, communities and environment, and

WHEREAS, any local public agency that has water supply, water management or land use responsibilities within a subbasin may elect to be a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Water Code §10721 and §10723(a)); and

WHEREAS, counties are presumed to be the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for areas within a basin that is not within the management area of another Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Water Code §10724); and

WHEREAS, Butte County is eligible and presumed to be a Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the portions of the Vina, West Butte, East Butte and North Yuba subbasins in Butte County; and

WHEREAS, other local public agencies in Butte County have elected to be a GSA and have notified the Department of Water Resources of its intent to undertake sustainable groundwater management; and

WHEREAS, within 90-days of an entity giving notice to the Department of Water Resources of the intent to form, or having formed, a GSA, that entity shall be presumed to be the exclusive GSA for that area unless another entity provides notice to the Department of Water Resources of their intent to form, or notice that the entity formed, a GSA (Water Code §10723.8); and

WHEREAS, establishing Butte County as a Groundwater Sustainability Agency will enable the County to work with other GSAs in the preparation and implementation of an effective and mutually beneficial Groundwater Sustainability Plan(s) for the sustainable groundwater management in Butte County; and

WHEREAS, Butte County intends to work cooperatively with other local public agencies to manage the aforementioned groundwater basins in a sustainable fashion; and

WHEREAS, adoption of this Resolution does not constitute a "Project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15378(a) and (b) of Title 14 of the California Code of

regulations because this Resolution does not result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment;
and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on this date and after publication of notice pursuant to Government Code section 6066 to consider the election to become a GSA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Butte hereby elects to become a Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the portions of the County that overlie the Vina (5-21.57), West Butte (5-21.58), East Butte (5-21.59) and North Yuba (5-21.60) subbasins as depicted by the Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118 (Update 2003).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that within thirty (30) days of this date, the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation is directed to provide notice of this election and intent to undertake sustainable groundwater management for the aforementioned subbasins to the Department of Water Resources in a manner required by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation shall continue discussions with other local public agencies in order to begin the process of developing a groundwater sustainability plan for the aforementioned subbasins that underlie Butte County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Butte County Board of Supervisors this 13th day of October, 2015 by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Connelly, Wahl, Kirk, Lambert and Chair Teeter

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

NOT VOTING: None



Doug Teeter, Chair
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Chief Administrative Officer
and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

by _____
