

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 12, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency was held at the City of San Buenaventura City Hall, Santa Cruz Meeting Room, 501 Poli Street, Ventura, CA 93001, February 12, 2026. Chair Tribo called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL

Executive Director Bondy called the roll.

Directors Present:

Jenny Tribo, Chair
Bruce Kuebler, Vice Chair
Jim Kentosh, Secretary
Mike Flood, Alternate Director
Jeff Palmer, Director
Vivon Sedgwick, Director
Emily Ayala, Director

Non-Voting Directors / Alternate Directors Present:

Justin Martinez, Alternate Director

Staff Present:

Bryan Bondy, Executive Director
Keith Lemieux, Agency Counsel
Maureen Tucker, Admin Assistant

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Tribo asked for any proposed changes to the agenda. No changes were requested.

Director Palmer moved agenda approval. Seconded by Director Kuebler.

Vote: M. Flood - Y J. Tribo - Y B. Kuebler - Y J. Palmer - Y
 J. Kentosh - Y V. Sedgwick - Y E. Ayala – Y

Directors Absent: None

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

Chair Tribo asked for public comments on items not appearing on the agenda. No comments were offered.

REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a) Approve Minutes of January 8, 2026 Regular Board Meeting
- b) Approve Financial Report for January 2026
- c) Approve Fiscal Year 2025-2026 2nd Quarter Budget Report

Chair Tribo asked if any Director wanted to pull any items off the consent calendar for discussion. No requests were made.

Director Kuebler moved approval of the consent calendar items. Seconded by Director Ayala.

Vote: M. Flood - Y J. Tribo - Y B. Kuebler - Y J. Palmer - Y
 J. Kentosh - Y V. Sedgwick - Y E. Ayala – Y

Directors Absent: None

7. DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Tribo called for Director announcements. Director Kuebler reported that he attended a recent adjudication court hearing.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Bondy reviewed the written staff report concerning updates on Agency activities since the last meeting.

Director Palmer provided additional background information concerning the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project as it relates to the Live Oak Acres Levee improvement project, which will impact two groundwater monitoring wells used by UVRGA. The Live Oak Acres Levee improvement project is part of a federal grant to develop a management plan, which will take approximately two years. Following that, federal funding will be pursued. Construction of the levee improvements is many years away.

Director Kuebler asked if the Department of Water Resources has updated the climate change data they published for Groundwater Sustainability Plan development. Executive Director Bondy replied that he is not aware of any updates.

Directors Kuebler and Sedgwick mentioned that they attended the Feb. 4th Ventura River Watershed Resilience Plan meeting that dealt with adaptation strategies. Director Sedgwick commented that the tribal engagement has been meaningful and that she provided updated tribal contact information to Executive Director Bondy for the GSP periodic evaluation. Executive

Director Bondy thanked Director Sedgwick for the contact information and reported that the tribal council chair has joined the UVRGA interested parties list.

Director Flood asked if the February 26 workshop requires a Board quorum. Executive Director Bondy said yes. Director Flood said Casitas MWD may not be available on that day.

Director Sedgwick said she will not be attending the March regular board meeting.

Director Tribo inquired about the JPA amendment status. Executive Director Bondy said he has not received any updates.

No Public Comments.

9. AGENCY COUNSEL'S REPORT

Agency Counsel Lemieux provided updates on AB 1466 and AB 1413.

Director Ayala asked about the definition of a small pumper. Agency Counsel Lemieux said he believes the legislation proposes a cutoff of 5 acre-feet per year of groundwater extraction.

Agency Counsel Lemieux notified the Board that he received a phone call from Casitas Water Municipal District's legal counsel concerning an item on the meeting agenda and he was able to provide clarifications.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

No administrative items this meeting.

11. GSP IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS

a. PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Amendments to Groundwater Well Registration, Metering, and Extraction Reporting Ordinance (Ordinance No. 5)

Chair Tribo opened the public hearing at 1:20 p.m.

Executive Director Bondy summarized proposed Ordinance No. 5, which would repeal and replace the current Groundwater Well Registration, Metering, and Extraction Reporting Ordinance (Ordinance No. 4). The proposed changes are in line with the Board's discussion during its February meeting about modifying the frequency of flowmeter accuracy testing and adding flexibility to the ordinance to make exceptions. The draft ordinance was developed in consultation with Agency Counsel.

Executive Director Bondy summarized the proposed changes:

- Recitals: History of ordinance amendments updated to reflect the proposed amendment.
- Section 2.1 – Well Registration: Paragraph added to provide the Executive Director the discretion to wave well registration requirements on a case-by-case basis.

- Section 3.1 Flowmeters: Flowmeter accuracy testing frequencies are changed to five years for wells pumping 25 to 100 acre-feet per year (AFY) and 10 years for wells pumping less than 25 AFY. Language was also added to provide the Board with the ability to extend these deadlines without amending the ordinance.
- Section 7 – Waivers: Section 7 was added to provide the Board with the flexibility to waive any provision of the ordinance on a case-by-case basis without amending the ordinance.

Executive Director Bondy explained that the purpose of this item is to conduct a public hearing and a first reading of the ordinance amendment in title only.

Chair Tribo called for public comments. No public comments were offered.

Chair Tribo closed the public hearing at 1:24 p.m.

Director Kuebler moved to read the Ordinance in title only “Groundwater Well Registration, Metering, and Extraction Reporting Ordinance (Ordinance No. 5)” and schedule a public hearing to consider adoption at the next UVRGA regular Board meeting. Seconded by Director Flood.

Vote: M. Flood - Y J. Tribo - Y B. Kuebler - Y J. Palmer - Y
 J. Kentosh - Y V. Sedgwick - Y E. Ayala – Y

Directors Absent: None

b. GSP Periodic Evaluation Update

Executive Director Bondy provided an update on the GSP periodic evaluation, including a summary of technical work completed and in progress, stakeholder outreach efforts, and next steps.

Director Kuebler asked about the scope of the model update and whether it is duplicative to the model calibration update work that was previously presented. Executive Director Bondy explained that the update referred to in the staff report is to add two years to the model, which is a separate from the model calibration update work.

Director Ayala asked if any feedback was received on the newsletter. Executive Director Bondy said he received a comment about the hydrology update on page two of the newsletter and that the commenter is hoping to see more updates like those that Ventura River Water District stopped making a few years ago.

No public comments.

c. Field Monitoring Programs Update

Executive Director Bondy and Kiernan Brtalik of Rincon provided presentations summarizing the water year 2024/2025 field monitoring programs results and three year review of the aquatic GDE monitoring program. The presentation slides were posted on the UVRGA website at <https://uvrgroundwater.org/public-meetings/>.

Director Kuebler asked how often Executive Director Bondy sees groundwater level data. Executive Director Bondy said the data are currently downloaded every six months.

Director Kuebler suggested showing bedrock depth on the groundwater level charts for reference.

Director Kuebler asked about the baseflow recession slope. Executive Director Bondy explained that the baseflow recession curve is controlled by several factors, including streamflow into the basin river; how full the basin gets in springtime; and groundwater extraction volumes. He said those conditions are different each year, so there is not a single curve that would be applicable each year.

Director Palmer asked how the biological data will be used. Executive Director Bondy explained that the data will be used to evaluate the relationship between groundwater conditions and impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystem status. Director Palmer expressed concerns about the difficulty of separating groundwater and non-groundwater factors. Director Ayala agreed with Director Palmer,

Director Palmer asked about the location of the Upper and Lower Foster Park stream gages in relation to Coyote Creek. Executive Director Bondy pointed out the location of the Coyote Creek on a map and noted that the creek is usually dry.

Director Flood asked about the frequency of these reports. Executive Director Bondy said the reports and this presentation are made annually.

Director Kuebler asked about the status of the City of Ventura stream gages. Chair Tribo said the gages were lost in the 2023 flood. They have replaced one gage and will be relying on the USGS gage instead of replacing the other gage. They are working with USGS to implement more frequent flow measurements to improve gage accuracy.

No public comments.

Director Tribo called for a 5 minute break at 2:45 p.m.

d. Indirect Depletion Modeling Approach

Director Tribo called the meeting back to order at 2:50 p.m.

Executive Director Bondy provided a summary of the “Actions to Address Indirect Depletions of Interconnected Surface Water (ISW)” GSP management action. He then presented a proposed three step approach to using the UVRGA numerical model to assess the relationship between timing and location of groundwater pumping and indirect depletion of interconnected surface water.

Step No. 1 consists of reviewing updated depletion estimates to identify specific indirect depletion event(s) for detailed analysis. This would be scheduled for the March meeting. Executive Director Bondy reviewed Attachment A to the staff report, a chart indirect depletion estimates from the adopted GSP, which are in the process of being updated.

Step No. 2 would consist of detailed modeling analysis of selected depletion event(s) to quantify the impact of location and timing of groundwater pumping on indirect depletion. Four groups of wells located upstream of the Foster Park Aquatic Habitat Area would be identified for the analysis: (1) Meiners Oaks Water District (MOWD) wells, (2) Ventura River Water District (VRWD) wells, (3) MOWD and VRWD wells and (4) Casitas MWD's Mira Monte well plus all non-de minimis private wells located upstream of the Foster Park Aquatic Habitat Area.

The model would be run multiple times for each group of wells for each selected depletion event. Each model run will progressively eliminate one month of pumping from the well group starting with the last month of the depletion event and going backward in time until no change in depletion quantity is observed.

The output from the model runs would be processed to quantify the effect pumping from the different well groups with different lead times on indirect depletion in the Foster Park Aquatic Habitat Area.

Step No. 3 would include a proposal for further analysis, if needed.

Director Kuebler question the approach of looking backward. He wants to look forward in a predictive sense and is interested in developing a recession curve.

Director Kentosh expressed concerns about the impact of starting conditions.

Directors Kuebler and Kentosh want to know what fraction of pumping eliminated arrives at Foster Park when it is needed for fish.

Executive Director Bondy explained that the modeling of multiple depletion events could be used to address different starting conditions. He further explained that intent of this analysis is to provide model data from a backward looking analysis than can be used to help develop a forward looking approach to managing ISW depletions. The analysis will quantify, under the conditions modeled, the fraction of unpumped water that arrives at Foster Park.

Director Kentosh expressed concerns about the approach of turning off pumping cumulatively and expressed an interest in understanding the impact of turning off pumping at different times. Executive Director Bondy said the modeling work is all scripted and that it would be easy to run the model with individual months turned off.

Director Palmer asked about how the City of Ventura extraction protocols were accounted for. Executive Director Bondy said the GSP modeling approximated the protocols. The updated modeling will use the updated protocols provided by the City of Ventura.

Director Palmer asked what would happen if there was no groundwater pumping at all. Executive Director Bondy pointed out the results of the model scenario with no groundwater pumping on the chart.

Director Palmer asked how the model accounts for water use along San Antonio Creek. Executive Director Bondy explained that inflows from San Antonio Creek are an input to the model and that UVRGA has no jurisdiction on water use outside of the Upper Ventura River Basin.

Director Palmer expressed concerns about using the largest depletion event (identified as #6 on Attachment A of the staff report) for the detailed analysis because it occurs during a drought. He does not think that UVRGA could address this and is concerned about the impact on water uses and water costs. Executive Director Bondy explained UVRGA is not responsible for droughts and is only responsible for the depletion that is caused by pumping that exceeds the GSP thresholds. He added that the purpose of the modeling is to provide technical data to help make policy decisions. One outcome may be that certain threshold exceeding depletion events cannot be managed effectively. Director Palmer said he is still not in favor of modeling depletion event #6. Executive Director Bondy said that the Board will have another opportunity to provide direction before the analysis is performed. The updated depletion charts will be presented with recommended depletion events for the detailed modeling analysis.

Directors Kuebler and Kentosh said they are comfortable with moving forward.

Public Comments: None

e. Technical Review of Watershed Party Proposals to Ensure Consistency with GSP

Agency Counsel Lemieux recommended that Directors Sedgwick and Ayala leave the room for this discussion due to conflict of interest provisions. Directors Ayala and Sedgwick left meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Chair Tribo explained that she is requesting that Executive Director Bondy review proposed physical solution proposals to ensure consistency with the UVRGA GSP under mediation privilege. Chair Tribo clarified that the request is from the City of Ventura, not multiple entities as stated in the staff report.

Director Palmer asked whether this effort would produce anything reportable to the Court. Chair Tribo said the intent is that any reports to the Board by the Executive Director would be made in closed session. Director Palmer agreed.

Directors Kuebler and Kentosh asked whose proposal would be reviewed and how others' proposals get reviewed? Executive Director Bondy requested that the Board establish a single point of contact for him for this work. The Board agreed that Chair Tribo would be the point of contact and direct the Executive Director's review work.

Director Flood moved to approve, subject to mediation privilege, authorizing the Executive Director to perform technical review physical solution information in relation to the UVRGA GSP and report issues back in closed session. Seconded by Director Kuebler.

No Public Comments.

Vote: M. Flood - Y J. Tribo - Y B. Kuebler - Y J. Palmer - Y
J. Kentosh - Y

Directors Absent: V. Sedgwick and E. Ayala

Director Sedgwick returned to the meeting at 3:34 p.m. after the conclusion of the item.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following future items were identified during the meeting:

- Indirect depletion modeling update
- Annual report
- Second reading of ordinance amendment

CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

The Board went into closed session at 3:37 p.m. Conference with Legal Counsel; Anticipated Litigation (Gov. Code Section 54956.9(d)(4)).

The Board resumed open session at 3:49 p.m.

Agency Counsel stated that there was no reportable action taken during the closed session.

13. GSP IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS

a. Civil Penalty Accrual Rate for Remaining Unregistered Wells.

The board discussed increasing the civil penalty accrual rate for two remaining unregistered water wells. After discussion, the board decided to maintain the current civil penalty accrual rate.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

The next scheduled Board meeting is Thursday, March 12, 2026.

Action: _____

Motion: _____

P. Kaiser _ B. Kuebler_ J. Tribo_ J. Palmer _ E. Ayala _ V. Sedgwick_ J. Kentosh_