

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 8, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency was held at the Ventura River Water District Meeting Room, 409 Old Baldwin Road, Ojai, CA on Thursday, January 8, 2026. Chair Kaiser called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director Palmer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Executive Director Bondy called the roll.

Directors Present:

Pete Kaiser, Chair

Bruce Kuebler, Vice Chair

Jim Kentosh, Secretary (departed at 2:51 p.m. during Item 11b)

Emily Ayala, Director

Jennifer Tribo, Director

Jeff Palmer, Director

Vivon Sedgwick, Director

Justin Martinez, Alternate Director (replaced Director Kentosh at 2:51 p.m. during Item 11b)

Non-Voting Directors / Alternate Directors Present:

Earthea Nance, Alternate Director

Staff Present:

Bryan Bondy, Executive Director

Keth Lemieux, Agency Counsel

Maureen Tucker, Admin Assistant

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

Director Palmer moved agenda approval. Seconded by Director Kuebler.

Roll Call Vote: P. Kaiser- Y J. Tribo-Y B. Kuebler – Y J. Palmer-Y

J. Kentosh- Y V. Sedgwick – Y E. Ayala -Y

Directors Absent: none

Chair Tribo asked for nominees for Secretary.

Director Kaiser nominated Director Kentosh. Director Kentosh asked how much work is involved. Director Jenny Tribo said very little. Director Kuebler seconded the nomination.

Roll Call Vote: P. Kaiser- Y J. Tribo-Y B. Kuebler – Y J. Palmer-Y
J. Kentosh- Y V. Sedgwick – Y E. Ayala -Y

Directors Absent: none

b. 2026 Regular Board Meeting Schedule

The Board discussed keeping the current regular meeting schedule for calendar year 2026.

Director Kuebler moved adoption of the regular current meeting schedule for calendar year 2026 (i.e., second Thursdays of the month at 1 p.m.). Director Ayala seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: P. Kaiser- Y J. Tribo-Y B. Kuebler – Y J. Palmer-Y
J. Kentosh- Y V. Sedgwick – Y E. Ayala -Y

Directors Absent: none

11. GSP IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS

a. Review of Ordinance No. 4 Flowmeter Accuracy Testing Requirements

Executive Director Bondy explained that now that almost all of the wells have been registered and the Agency understands the distribution of groundwater pumping it is a good time to review the Agency's Ordinance provisions for flowmeter accuracy testing, particularly considering a recent accuracy testing exemption request by a small groundwater pumper.

Executive Director Bondy reminded the Board that wells pumping less than two acre-feet per year (AFY) of groundwater are exempt from the flowmeter installation and accuracy requirements. He explained that there are 22 wells that pump more than 2 AFY that are required to maintain a flowmeter and demonstrate accuracy.

Wells that pump more than 100 AFY are required to demonstrate flowmeter accuracy every three years. Six wells fall into this group and collectively account for 94% of the basin extractions.

Wells that pump between 2 and 100AFY are required to demonstrate flowmeter accuracy every five years. Sixteen wells fall in this group and collective account for the remaining 6% of basin extractions.

Within this group, eleven wells are pumping between 2 and 10 AFY and account for 1% of the basin extractions. A twelfth well pumps between 10-25 AFY and accounts for another 0.3% of

basin extractions. Given the small quantity of pumping and small impact on basin management, he recommends amending the Agency's Ordinance to remove the requirement for flowmeter accuracy testing for these wells. The idea is that flowmeters and reporting of extractions would still be required but that accuracy testing would only be required if something appears off.

The Board discussed the breakdown of wells and annual extraction volumes provided in the staff report and the pros and cons of continuing to require flowmeter accuracy testing on a five year frequency for wells that pump small quantities of groundwater.

Director Palmer asked about the cost for accuracy testing. Executive Director Bondy said the cost is approximately \$300. He does not want to burden small pumpers.

Director Kaiser asked about the allowable meters errors. Executive Director Bondy said the Ordinance requires +/-5%.

Director Ayala shared her experience having recently gone through the accuracy testing process.

Director Kentosh stated he agrees with Executive Director Bondy logic.

Director Martinez asked if meter tampering is possible. Executive Director Bondy said that the reported pumping appears reasonable based on the information he has about the properties.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that the Board will consider amending the Agency's Ordinance to make the calibration frequency five years for wells pumping 25 to 100 AFY and 10 years for wells pumping less than 25 AFY. The Board also asked staff to add flexibility to extending deadlines or make exemptions to limit the frequency of ordinance amendments.

b. GSP Periodic Evaluation Update

Executive Director Bondy provided the Board an update on the GSP periodic evaluation. Work began in late 2025. Work on the GSP periodic evaluation is ongoing.

Executive Director Bondy provide walked the Board through updated projections of future groundwater pumping for the basin. The updated projects are based on input provided by the public agency pumpers, which pump the vast majority of the groundwater. Private well pumping was updated based on information obtained from well registrations and pumping reported to the Agency pursuant to the Agency's Ordinance. Overall, future pumping is projected to be 6% less compared to the projections included in the GSP. Chair Tribo and Vice Chair Kuebler question the City of Ventura and Ventura River Water District values. Executive Director Bondy will revisit the numbers with them after the meeting.

Executive Director Bondy recommended scheduling a workshop for the GSP evaluation in February. He suggested scheduling it for the 4th Thursday because the Board has used that date in the past for special meetings. After checking schedules, the Board concurred.

Executive Director Bondy explained that the City of Ventura's recent request for the UVRGA numerical model files calls into question whether or how far/quicky UVRGA should proceed with the remaining work contemplated in the GSP for ISW indirect depletions. Given the numerical model files request, it seems plausible that the City and/or other parties may be performing modeling and other analysis that could be duplicative of the work contemplated in the GSP for ISW indirect depletions. Ideally, UVRGA would participate in any technical analysis or

development of any approaches that are intended to address ISW indirect depletions under the SGMA, but this has not happened to date.

Barring clarification from the adjudication parties concerning their intentions, he recommends UVRGA complete the indirect depletion estimates updated but hold off initiating the process to develop projects or management actions, pending more information from the adjudication process. Updating the indirect depletion estimates will help with addressing Department of Water Resources recommended corrective actions for the GSP. In contrast, the remaining tasks contemplated may involve work that is already being completed or is planned to be completed by the adjudication parties, which could result in unnecessary expenditures by UVRGA and other potential issues. If the adjudication parties are indeed working on or planning to work on potential projects or management actions that are intended address indirect depletions of ISW under SGMA, it would be more efficient for UVRGA to analyze/review the adjudication parties proposal(s) prior to solidify agreement or presenting to the Court. The Board discussed whether to postpone or slow down work.

Director Kentosh said he supports slowing down or postponing for six months or a year. He left at 2:51 p.m. Alternate Director Martinez filled in for Director Kentosh for the remainder of the meeting.

It was noted that process to develop projects or management actions would begin with additional modeling to develop a quantitative understanding of the relationships between the quantity, timing, and location of groundwater pumping and indirect depletion of interconnected surface water. There was general consensus that this modeling work should move forward. The Board discussed having an item on the next meeting agenda to review the approach to this modeling work.

c. Stakeholder Engagement Plan Review and Update

Executive Director Bondy provided a summary of the Stakeholder Engagement Plant (SEP) to the Board. The SEP includes a requirement to review and update every five years or as needed. The SEP was last updated in 2022. Executive Director Bondy identified several updates that would be appropriate to make for the GSP evaluation process.

The Board discussed the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and requested small changes. Executive Director will work with Director Sedgwick on language to add concerning recreation and environmental beneficial uses.

Director Sedgwick will provide the Executive Director with a new contact for the tribe.

Director Sedgwick moved adoption of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan update with the forthcoming language to be added concerning recreation and environmental beneficial uses. Director Kuebler seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: P. Kaiser – Y B. Kuebler – Y J. Martinez – Y V. Sedgwick – Y
J. Tribo – Y J. Palmer – Y E. Ayala – Y

Directors Absent: none

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Indirect depletion modeling approach.
- b. Annual data presentation.
- c. First reading of ordinance amendment.

CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

The Board went into closed session at 3:06 p.m. Conference with Legal Counsel; Anticipated Litigation (Gov. Code Section 54956.9(d)(4)).

The Board went back into open session at 3:34 p.m.

Agency Counsel reported that there was no reportable action taken in closed session.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

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

Action: _____

Motion: _____

P. Kaiser _ B. Kuebler _ J. Tribo _ J. Palmer _ E. Ayala _ V. Sedgwick _ J. Kentosh _