

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT TO FORM A GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY  
AGENCY FOR A PORTION OF THE SAN GORGONIO PASS SUBBASIN AND TO  
COORDINATE WITH OTHER GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCIES**

This 2017 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is entered into by and among Cabazon Water District (CWD), City of Banning (Banning), Banning Heights Mutual Water Company (BHMWC), San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA), Mission Springs Water District (MSWD), and Desert Water Agency (DWA), which may be referred to herein individually as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties.”

Pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and as further set forth herein, the purposes of this MOA are to form a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for a portion of the San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin, as described in greater detail below (Basin), the members of which GSA shall be CWD, Banning, BHMWC, and SGPWA (herein, the SGP-GSA), and to establish that the SGP-GSA will coordinate and cooperate with other GSAs that already exist and will be formed in the Basin.

**WHEREAS**, on September 16, 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law Senate Bills 1168 and 1319, and Assembly Bill 1739, collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), codified in certain provisions of the California Government Code, commencing with Section 65350.5, and in Part 2.74 of Division 6 of the California Water Code, commencing with Section 10720; and

**WHEREAS**, SGMA went into effect on January 1, 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, various clarifying amendments to SGMA were signed into law in 2015, including Senate Bills 13 and 226, and Assembly Bills 617 and 939, allowing, among other things, mutual water companies and water corporations regulated by the Public Utilities Commission to participate in a GSA through a memorandum of agreement or other legal agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin (Basin), as further depicted in **Exhibit A** to this MOA, is identified by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118 as Subbasin No. 7-21.04 of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin, and is designated by DWR as medium priority, and therefore, except as provided by SGMA, the Basin is subject to the requirements of SGMA; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parties recognize and agree that a portion of the Basin ( the “Adjudicated Area”) is subject to the Beaumont Basin adjudication and Judgment in the case referred to as *San Timoteo Watershed Management Authority v. City of Banning, et al.*, Riverside County Superior Court Case No. RIC 389197, and that pursuant to SGMA Section 10720.8(a)(1), said portion of the Basin generally is not subject to the requirements of SGMA and will not be managed by the SGP-GSA; and

**WHEREAS**, SGMA Section 10720.7 requires the Basin, as a medium priority basin which is not designated by DWR as being subject to critical conditions of overdraft, to be managed by a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) or coordinated GSPs by January 31, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, SGMA Section 10727(b) authorizes (1) a single GSP covering the entire Basin developed and implemented by one GSA, (2) a single GSP covering the entire Basin developed and

implemented by multiple GSAs, or (3) multiple GSPs developed and implemented by multiple GSAs and coordinated pursuant to a single coordination agreement that covers the entire Basin; and

**WHEREAS**, SGMA Section 10735.2 requires the formation of a GSA or multiple GSAs for the Basin by June 30, 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, SGMA Section 10723.6(a) authorizes a combination of local agencies to form a GSA pursuant to a joint powers agreement, a memorandum of agreement, or other legal agreement, and SGMA Section 10723.6(b) authorizes a water corporation regulated by the Public Utilities Commission or a mutual water company to participate in a GSA through a memorandum of agreement or other legal agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, for purposes of forming the SGP-GSA, as further depicted in **Exhibit B** to this MOA, CWD, Banning, and SGPWA are local agencies as defined by SGMA, and BHMWC is a mutual water company, wherein each overlies at least a portion of the Basin and each has respective water supply, water management, and/or land use responsibilities within the Basin, and thus each is authorized by SGMA to become part of the SGP-GSA; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to SGMA Section 10723(c)(1)(C), DWA has been established as the exclusive GSA for a certain portion of the Basin (herein, the DWA-GSA), as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit C** to this MOA; and

**WHEREAS**, on or about September 28, 2016, MSWD filed an amended notice of intent to be a GSA for an approximately one-square mile area in the northeastern portion of the Basin that lies within the service areas of MSWD and SGPWA, which one-square mile area is further specified and depicted in **Exhibit D** to this MOA and is referred to herein as the “Verbenia Area”; and

**WHEREAS**, on or about January 10, 2017, SGPWA also filed a notice of intent to be a GSA for the Verbenia Area, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit D** to this MOA; and

**WHEREAS**, on or about January 13, 2017, DWR designated the Verbenia Area to be in overlap for purposes of the competing GSA notices filed by MSWD and SGPWA, and thus MSWD and SGPWA are working together to establish a separate GSA for the Verbenia Area (herein, the Verbenia-GSA); and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with the terms of this MOA, and in furtherance of the shared intent of the Parties to maximize funding opportunities for the Basin and avoid potential intervention in the Basin by the State Water Resources Control Board, the Parties agree that the SGP-GSA formed by this MOA will cover the entire Basin except (A) that portion of the Basin covered by the DWA-GSA wherein DWA is the exclusive GSA, (B) that portion of the Basin to be covered by the Verbenia-GSA to be established by MSWD and SGPWA, and (C) the Adjudicated Area portion of the Basin, and the Parties mutually desire and intend that the SGP-GSA, the DWA-GSA, and the Verbenia-GSA will cooperate and coordinate in subsequently preparing and implementing one or more GSPs for sustainable management of the Basin; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parties mutually desire and intend to work with local stakeholders and interested entities in the Basin that are not Parties to this MOA, including but not limited to the Morongo Band of Mission Indians (MBMI), the County of Riverside, High Valleys Water District,

overlying landowners, and others, and as further specified in this MOA, to carry out the policy, purposes, and requirements of SGMA in the Basin; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with SGMA Section 10720.3 and other applicable law, the Parties mutually understand and agree that nothing in SGMA and nothing in this MOA grants or confers any new or additional authority, discretion, or jurisdiction to any of the Parties over any Tribal lands or activities of the MBMI, and that any ongoing or continued participation by MBMI in relation to this MOA or the Parties' implementation of SGMA in the Basin is completely voluntary on the part of MBMI.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in consideration of the promises, terms, conditions, and covenants contained herein, it is mutually understood and agreed as follows:

**I. Incorporation of Recitals**

The Recitals stated above are incorporated herein by reference.

**II. Purposes**

The purposes of this MOA are as follows:

- A. To form the SGP-GSA for a portion of the Basin as specified herein and as depicted in **Exhibit B** to this MOA pursuant to applicable provisions and requirements of SGMA, including but not limited to SGMA Sections 10723 and 10723.6; and
- B. To establish initial terms for the SGP-GSA, the DWA-GSA, and the Verbenia-GSA to cooperate and coordinate with each other in preparing and implementing one or more GSPs for the Basin and carrying out the policy, purposes, and requirements of SGMA in the Basin.

**III. Approval of MOA and Formation of the SGP-GSA**

Approval of this MOA and formation of the SGP-GSA shall be accomplished as follows:

- A. CWD, Banning, and SGPWA each will hold its own noticed public hearing pursuant to SGMA Section 10723(b) and Government Code Section 6066 and at such hearing will consider approval of a Resolution by its governing board to enter this MOA and jointly form the SGP-GSA as specified in this MOA;
- B. BHMWC will conduct an official meeting in accordance with any articles of incorporation, bylaws, or other laws applicable to BHMWC and at such meeting will consider approval of a Resolution by its governing board to enter this MOA and jointly form the SGP-GSA as specified in this MOA;
- C. DWA and MSWD each will hold its own regular or special meeting and at such meeting will consider approval of a Resolution by its governing board to enter this MOA;

- D. Upon the foregoing approvals by CWD, Banning, BHMWC, and SGPWA, there shall be established the San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SGP-GSA), the members of which shall be CWD, Banning, BHMWC, and SGPWA as provided in this MOA.

#### IV. Definitions

The following terms, whether used in the singular or plural, and when used with initial capitalization, shall have the meanings specified herein. The Parties agree that any definitions set forth herein are intended to be consistent with SGMA, and in the event of any discrepancy between a defined term in this MOA and a defined term in SGMA, the terms of SGMA shall control.

- A. **Adjudicated Area** refers to that portion of the Basin that is subject to the Beaumont Basin adjudication and Judgment in the case referred to as *San Timoteo Watershed Management Authority v. City of Banning, et al.*, Riverside County Superior Court Case No. RIC 389197.
- B. **Basin** refers to the San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin, designated by the California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118 as Subbasin No. 7-21.04, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit A** to this MOA.
- C. **Banning** means the City of Banning.
- D. **BHMWC** means the Banning Heights Mutual Water Company.
- E. **CWD** means the Cabazon Water District.
- F. **DWA** means the Desert Water Agency.
- G. **DWR** means the California Department of Water Resources.
- H. **DWA-GSA** refers to the GSA that has been established for a certain portion of the Basin pursuant to SGMA Section 10723(c)(1)(C), wherein DWA has been designated as the exclusive GSA, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit C** to this MOA.
- I. **GSA** means Groundwater Sustainability Agency, as defined by SGMA.
- J. **GSP** means Groundwater Sustainability Plan, as defined by SGMA.
- K. **MBMI** means the Morongo Band of Mission Indians.
- L. **Memorandum of Agreement** or **MOA** refers to this Memorandum of Agreement.
- M. **MSWD** means the Mission Springs Water District.
- N. **Party** or **Parties** refers individually or collectively to Cabazon Water District, City of Banning, Banning Heights Mutual Water Company, Mission Springs Water District, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency, and Desert Water Agency, as signatories to this MOA.

- O. **SGMA** refers to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.
- P. **SGP-GSA** refers to the San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin GSA formed under this MOA, the members of which GSA are CWD, Banning, BHMWC, and SGPWA.
- Q. **SGPWA** means the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency.
- R. **Verbenia-GSA** refers to a GSA to be formed by MSWD and SGPWA for an approximately one-square mile area in the northeastern portion of the Basin that lies within the service areas of MSWD and SGPWA, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit D** to this MOA.

## V. **Boundaries of GSAs**

- A. The boundaries of the SGP-GSA shall be the entire Basin except (A) that portion of the Basin covered by the DWA-GSA wherein DWA is the exclusive GSA, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit C** to this MOA, (B) that portion of the Basin to be covered by the Verbenia-GSA to be established by MSWD and SGPWA, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit B** to this MOA, and (C) that portion of the Basin constituting the Adjudicated Area.
- B. The boundaries of DWA-GSA are that portion of the Basin within which DWA is the exclusive GSA pursuant to SGMA Section 10723(c)(1)(C), as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit C** to this MOA.
- C. The boundaries of the Verbenia-GSA are the approximately one-square mile area in the northeastern portion of the Basin that lies within the service areas of MSWD and SGPWA, as further specified and depicted in **Exhibit D** to this MOA.
- D. The Parties understand and agree that pursuant to SGMA Section 10720.8, the portion of the Basin which is subject to the Beaumont Basin adjudication and Judgment in the case referred to as *San Timoteo Watershed Management Authority v. City of Banning, et al.*, Riverside County Superior Court Case No. RIC 389197, generally is not subject to the requirements of SGMA.
- E. The Parties understand and agree in accordance with SGMA Section 10720.3 and other applicable law that nothing in SGMA and nothing in this MOA grants or confers any new or additional authority, discretion, or jurisdiction to any of the Parties over any Tribal lands or activities of the MBMI, and that any ongoing or continued participation by MBMI in relation to this MOA or the Parties' implementation of SGMA in the Basin is completely voluntary on the part of MBMI.

## VI. **Coordination and Cooperation**

- A. Continued Cooperation. The Parties to this MOA will continue to meet, confer, coordinate, and collaborate to discuss and develop technical, managerial, financial, and other criteria and procedures for the preparation, governance, and implementation of a GSP or coordinated GSPs in the Basin and to carry out the policy, purposes, and requirements of SGMA in the Basin.

- B. Points of Contact. Each Party shall designate a principal contact person for that Party, who may be changed from time to time at the sole discretion of the designating Party. The principal contact person for each Party shall be responsible for coordinating with the principal contact persons for the other Parties in scheduling meetings and other activities under this MOA.
- C. Management Areas. The Parties acknowledge that SGMA, and provisions of the SGMA regulations promulgated by DWR, including but not limited to Section 354.20 (23 C.C.R. § 354.20), authorize the establishment of management areas for the development and implementation of sustainable groundwater management within the Basin, and accordingly the Parties acknowledge and agree that the establishment of management areas within the Basin is a governance alternative that the Parties may explore.

## **VII. Roles and Responsibilities**

- A. The Parties agree to jointly establish their roles and responsibilities for implementing a GSP or coordinated GSPs for the Basin in accordance with SGMA.
- B. The Parties agree to work in good faith and coordinate all activities to carry out the purposes of this MOA in implementing the policy, purposes, and requirements of SGMA in the Basin.
- C. CWD, Banning, BHMWC, and SGPWA, as members of the SGP-GSA, shall coordinate with each other to cause all applicable noticing and submission of required information to DWR regarding formation of the SGP-GSA.
- D. SGPWA shall continue to undertake ongoing CASGEM reporting activities in the Basin as provided by terms outside of this MOA.
- E. As provided in this MOA, the Parties will continue to meet, confer, coordinate, and collaborate to discuss and develop governance, management, technical, financial, and other matters, including respective roles and responsibilities for activities such as, but not limited to, the following:
  - i. Modeling;
  - ii. Metering;
  - iii. Monitoring;
  - iv. Hiring consultants;
  - v. Developing and maintaining list of interested persons under SGMA Section 10723.4;
  - vi. Budgeting; and
  - vii. Other initial tasks as determined by the Parties.

## VIII. Funding and Budgeting

The Parties agree to cooperate and coordinate in pursuing state and/or federal grant and loan funding opportunities that may apply to carrying out SGMA in the Basin. The Parties shall mutually develop reasonable budgets and cost sharing agreements or arrangements for work to be undertaken in carrying out SGMA in the Basin.

## IX. Stakeholder Access

- A. The Parties agree to work together in ensuring public outreach and involvement of the public and other interested stakeholders throughout the SGMA process, including but not limited to all beneficial uses and users of groundwater as provided in SGMA Section 10723.2.
- B. The Parties acknowledge, agree, and desire that the preparation, adoption, and implementation of one or more GSPs for the Basin, and the ongoing process of ensuring compliance with the requirements of SGMA in the Basin, will involve close coordination and cooperation with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians.

## X. Term, Termination, and Withdrawal

- A. Term. This MOA shall continue and remain in effect unless and until terminated by the unanimous written consent of the Parties, or as otherwise provided in this MOA or as authorized by law.
- B. Withdrawal. Any Party may decide, in its sole discretion, to withdraw from this MOA by providing ninety (90) days written notice to the other Parties. A Party that withdraws from this MOA shall remain obligated to pay its share of costs and expenses incurred or accrued under this MOA and any related cost sharing agreement or arrangement up to the date the Party provides its notice of withdrawal as provided herein. Withdrawal by a Party shall not cause or require the termination of this MOA or the existence of the SGP-GSA with respect to the non-withdrawing Parties.
  - 1. In the event of withdrawal by BHMWC from this MOA and the SGP-GSA, CWD, Banning, and SGPWA, as the local agency parties to the SGP-GSA, shall meet and confer regarding: (i) whether the SGP-GSA wishes to retain its GSA status over the affected portion of the Basin; (ii) whether one or more of the local agency parties of the SGP-GSA wishes to retain GSA status over the affected portion of the Basin; or (iii) whether to address the GSA issues in a different manner. Any resolution of such and other GSA issues shall be undertaken in a manner that satisfies all requirements of SGMA and DWR, including any requirement to file new GSA notices.
  - 2. In the event of withdrawal by CWD, Banning, or SGPWA from this MOA and the SGP-GSA, said three local agency parties shall meet and confer regarding whether the withdrawing local agency party wishes to seek GSA status for a portion of the Basin underlying the service area or management area of the withdrawing party. Said three local agency parties also shall meet and confer regarding: (i) whether the SGP-GSA, or one or both of the non-withdrawing

local agency parties, wishes to retain GSA status over the affected portion of the Basin; (ii) whether to enter a co-GSA management or other arrangement with the withdrawing party; or (iii) whether to address the GSA issues in a different manner. Any resolution of such and other GSA issues shall be undertaken in a manner that satisfies all requirements of SGMA and DWR, including any requirement to file new GSA notices.

3. Any decision by DWA or MSWD not to execute this MOA, or any decision by DWA or MSWD to withdraw after executing this MOA shall not cause or require the termination of this MOA and shall not affect the formation or continued existence of the SGP-GSA.

## **XI. Notice Provisions**

All notices required by this MOA shall be made in writing and delivered to the respective representatives of the Parties at their respective addresses as follows:

Banning Heights Mutual Water Company  
President  
7091 Bluff Street  
Banning, CA 92220, Fax: 951-849-6068

Desert Water Agency  
General Manager  
1200 S Gene Autry Trail  
Palm Springs, CA 92264, Fax: 760-325-6506

City of Banning  
City Manager  
99 East Ramsey Street  
Banning, CA 92220, Fax: 951-922-3128

San Geronio Pass Water Agency  
General Manager  
1210 Beaumont Avenue  
Beaumont, CA 92223, Fax: 951-845-0281

Cabazon Water District  
General Manager  
14618 Broadway  
P.O. Box 297  
Cabazon, CA 92230, Fax: 951-849-2519

Mission Springs Water District  
General Manager  
66575 Second Street  
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240, Fax: 760-329-2482

Any Party may change the address to which notices are to be given under this MOA by providing the other Parties with written notice of such change at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the effective date of the change. All notices shall be effective upon receipt and shall be deemed received upon confirmed personal service, confirmed facsimile delivery, confirmed courier service, or on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) calendar day following deposit of the notice in registered first class mail.

## **XII. General Terms**

- A. Amendments. Amendments to this MOA require unanimous written consent of all Parties and approval by the Parties' respective governing boards; provided, however, that amendments to this MOA pertaining to the SGP-GSA only require unanimous written consent and board approval of the members of the SGP-GSA.
- B. Successors and Assigns. The terms of this MOA shall be binding upon all successors in interest and assigns of each Party; provided, however, that no Party shall assign its



rights or obligations under this MOA without the signed written consent of all other Parties to this MOA.

- C. Waiver. No waiver of any provision of this MOA by any Party shall be construed as a further or continuing waiver of such provision or any other provision of this MOA by the waiving Party or any other Party.
- D. Authorized Representatives. Each person executing this MOA on behalf of a Party hereto affirmatively represents that such person has the requisite authority to sign this MOA on behalf of the respective Party.
- E. Exemption from CEQA. The Parties recognize and agree that, pursuant to SGMA Section 10728.6 and Public Resources Code Section 21065, neither this MOA nor the preparation or adoption of a GSP constitutes a “project” or approval of a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or the State CEQA Guidelines, and therefore this MOA is expressly exempt from CEQA review.
- F. Governing Law and Venue. This MOA shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of California. Any suit, action, or proceeding brought under the scope of this MOA shall be brought and maintained to the extent allowed by law in the County of Riverside, California.
- G. Attorney’s Fees, Costs, and Expenses. In the event of a dispute among any or all of the Parties arising under this MOA, each Party shall assume and be responsible for its own attorney’s fees, costs, and expenses.
- H. Entire Agreement/Integration. This MOA constitutes the entire agreement among the Parties regarding the specific provisions of this MOA, and the Parties hereto have made no agreements, representations or warranties relating to the specific provisions of this MOA which are not set forth herein.
- I. Construction and Interpretation. The Parties agree and acknowledge that this MOA has been developed through a negotiated process among the Parties, and that each Party has had a full and fair opportunity to review the terms of this MOA with the advice of its own legal counsel and to revise the terms of this MOA, such that each Party constitutes a drafting Party to this MOA. Consequently, the Parties understand and agree that no rule of construction shall be applied to resolve any ambiguities against any particular Party as the drafting Party in construing or interpreting this MOA.
- J. Force Majeure. No Party shall be liable for the consequences of any unforeseeable force majeure event that (1) is beyond its reasonable control, (2) is not caused by the fault or negligence of such Party, (3) causes such Party to be unable to perform its obligations under this MOA, and (4) cannot be overcome by the exercise of due diligence. In the event of the occurrence of a force majeure event, the Party unable to perform shall promptly notify the other Parties in writing to the extent practicable. It shall further pursue its best efforts to resume its obligations under this MOA as quickly as possible and shall suspend performance only for such period of time as is necessary as a result of the force majeure event.

- K. Execution in Counterparts. This MOA may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which when taken together shall constitute one and the same instrument.
- L. No Third Party Beneficiaries. This MOA is not intended, and will not be construed, to confer a benefit or create any right on a third party or the power or right of any third party to bring an action to enforce any of the terms of this MOA.
- M. Timing and Captions. Any provision of this MOA referencing a time, number of days, or period for performance shall be measured in calendar days. The captions of the various articles, sections, and paragraphs of this MOA are for convenience and ease of reference only, and do not define, limit, augment, or describe the scope, content, terms, or intent of this MOA.

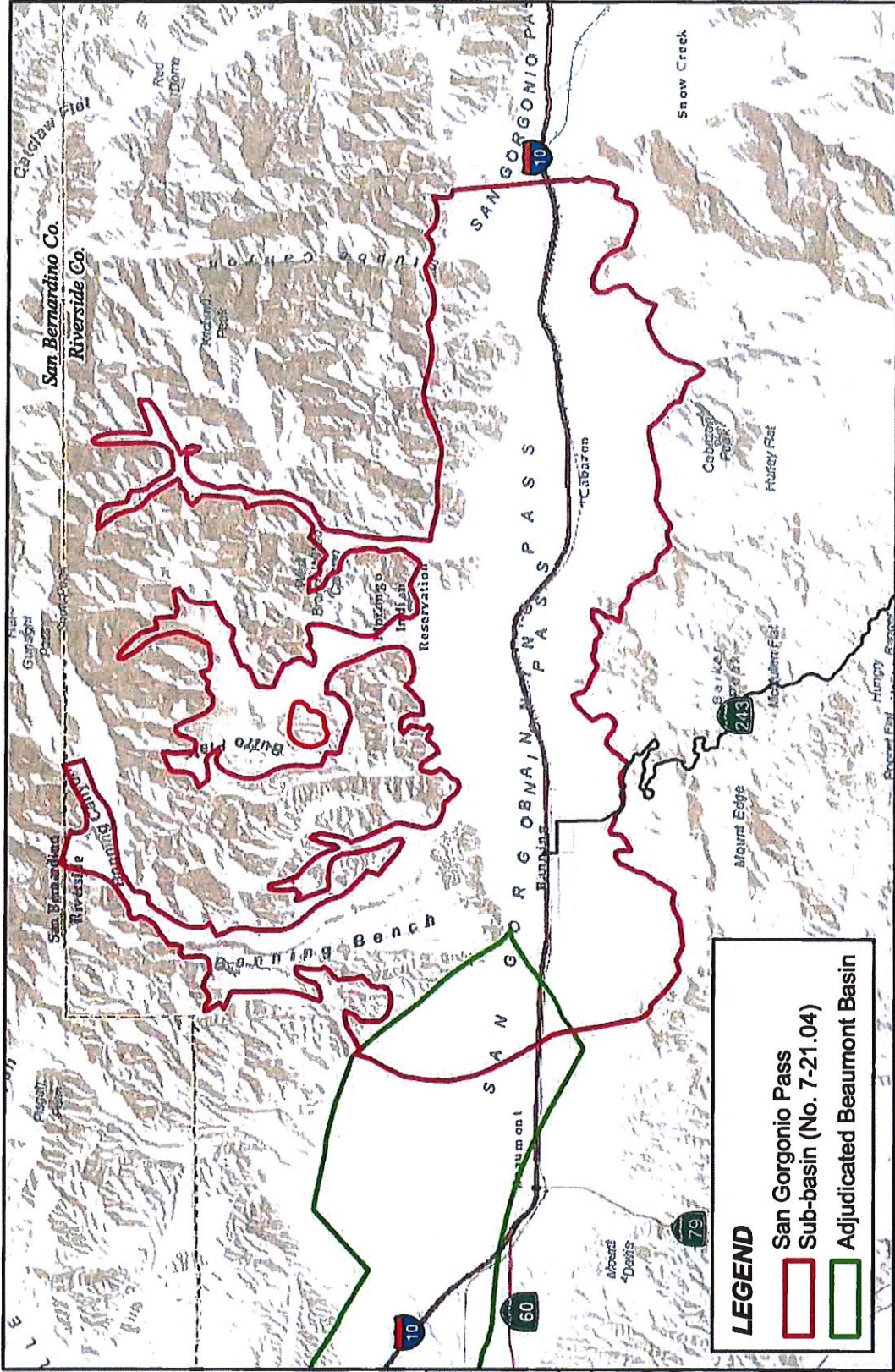
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have approved and executed this MOA as of the respective dates specified in the adopting Resolution of each Party as provided above in Article III of this MOA.

*[Signature Pages to Follow]*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have approved and executed this MOA as of the respective dates specified in the adopting Resolution of each Party as provided above in Article III of this MOA.

CABAZON WATER DISTRICT

By:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Lynk, Board Chair



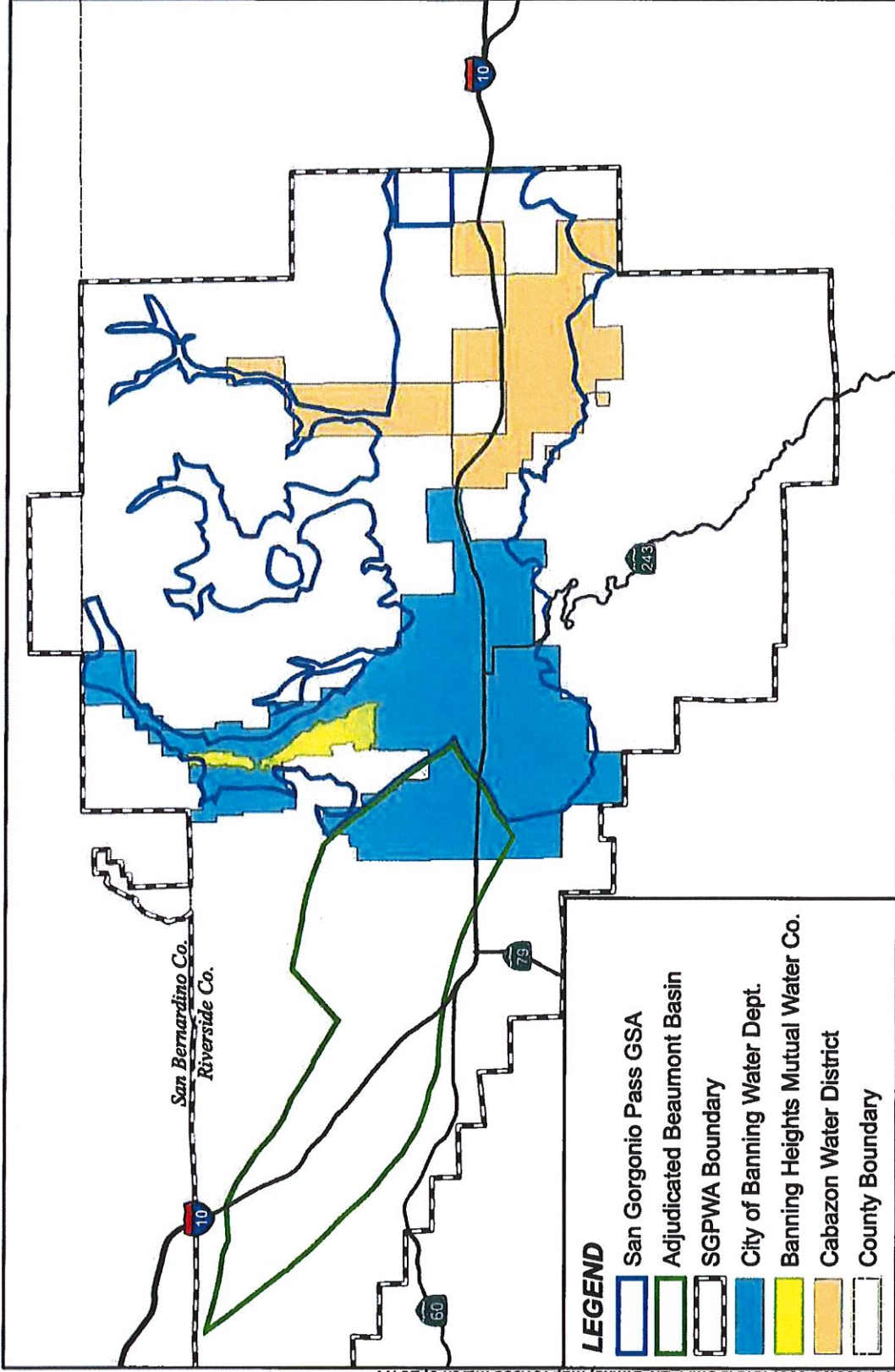
G:\2008\08-0007\GIS\GMA\_Ex\_A.mxd; Map revised March 9, 2017.

Sources: Calif. Dept. of Water Resources, 2016; Riverside Co. GIS, 2016.










## Exhibit A San Geronimo Pass Sub-basin





G:\2008\08-0007\GIS\SGMA Ex B.mxd; Map revised March 9, 2017.

**LEGEND**

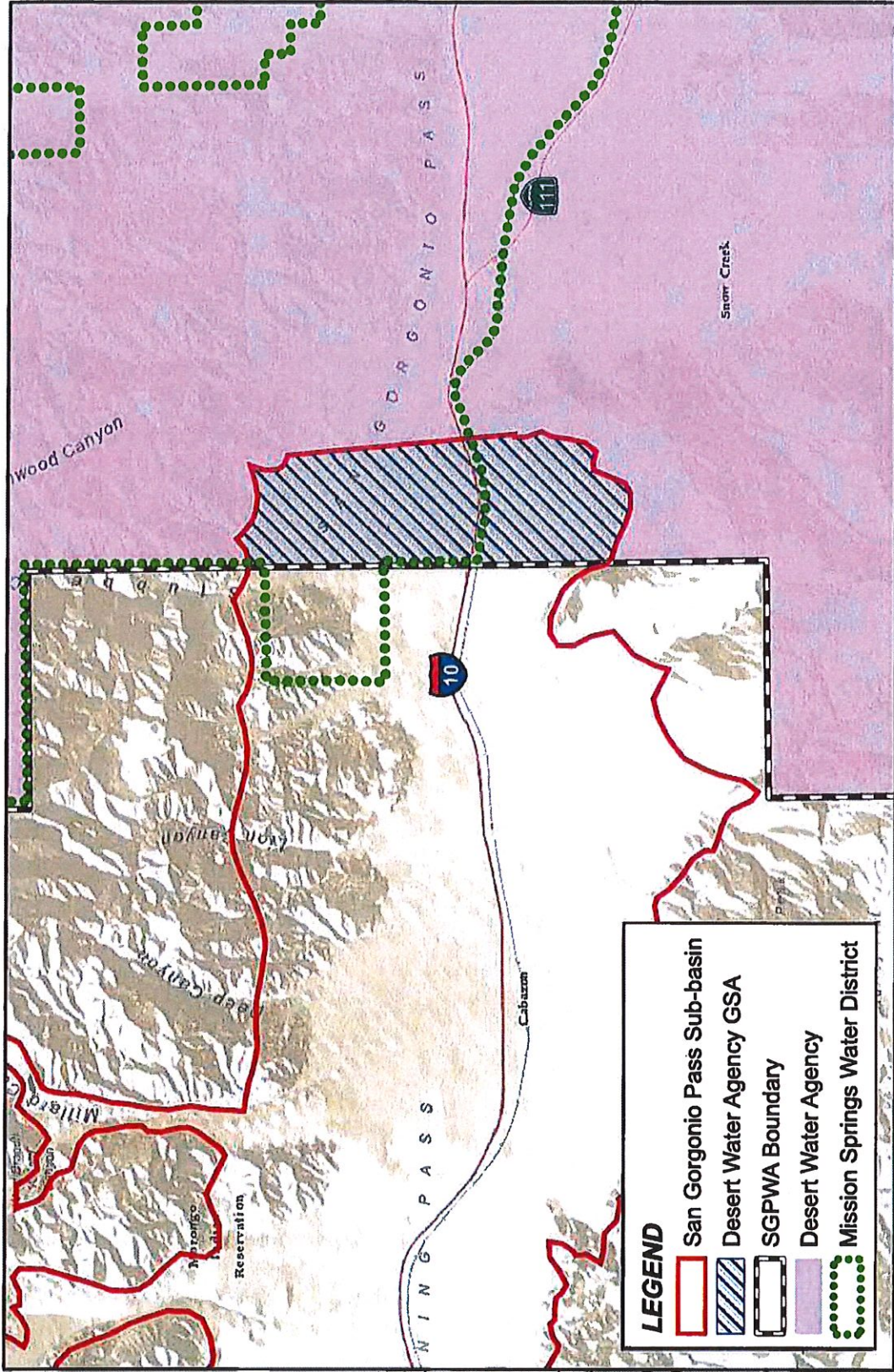
-  San Geronio Pass GSA
-  Adjudicated Beaumont Basin
-  SGPWA Boundary
-  City of Banning Water Dept.
-  Banning Heights Mutual Water Co.
-  Cabazon Water District
-  County Boundary

Sources: Calif. Dept. of Water Resources, 2016; LAFCO 2010; Riverside Co. GIS, 2017.



**Exhibit B**  
SGP GSA Portion of Sub-basin





G:\2008\08-0007\GIS\GMA Ex\_C.mxd; Map revised March 9, 2017.

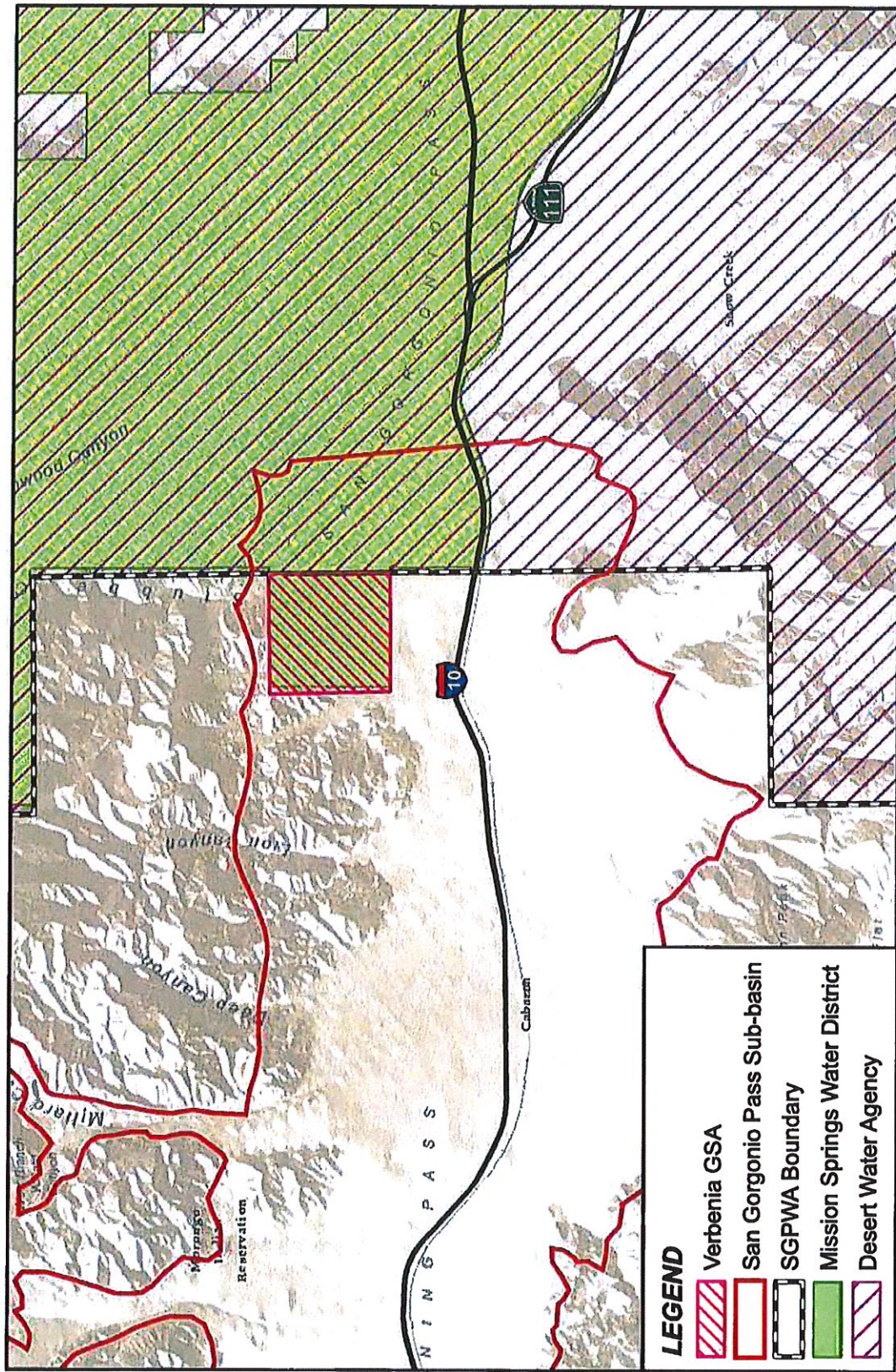
Sources: Calif. Dept. of Water Resources, 2016; Riverside Co. GIS, 2016.

**Exhibit C**

Desert Water Agency GSA

0 1 2 3 Miles





G:\2009\08-0007\GIS\SGMA Ex. D.mxd: Map revised March 2, 2017.

**LEGEND**

-  Verbenia GSA
-  San Geronio Pass Sub-basin
-  SGPWA Boundary
-  Mission Springs Water District
-  Desert Water Agency

Sources: Calif. Dept. of Water Resources, 2016; LAFCO 2010; Riverside Co. GIS, 2017.

**Exhibit D**  
 Verbenia GSA  
 ALBERT A. **WEBB**  
 ASSOCIATES

