

1 XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California 2 MYUNG J. PARK Supervising Deputy Attorney General 3 MATTHEW G. BULLOCK (SBN 243377) MARC N. MELNICK (SBN 168187) 4 Deputy Attorneys General 1515 Clay Street, 20th Floor 5 P.O. Box 70550 Oakland, CA 94612-0550 Telephone: (510) 879-0750 6 Fax: (510) 622-2270 7 E-mail: Marc.Melnick@doj.ca.gov Attorneys for Respondent State Water Resources 8 Control Board 9 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES 10 11 12 SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER, Case No. 19STCP01176 13 Petitioner. SWRCB'S NOTICE OF MOTION. 14 MOTION, AND MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN V. 15 SUPPORT OF ITS MOTION TO INTERVENE 16 STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD, a California State Agency; CITY Date: December 6, 2019 17 OF BUENAVENTURA, a California Time: 10:00 a.m. municipal corporation, Dept.: 10 18 Judge: Honorable W.F. Highberger Respondents. Trial Date: None Set 19 Action Filed: September 19, 2014 20 CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, a California municipal corporation, 21 Cross-Complainant, 22 23 DUNCAN ABBOTT, an individual; et al., 24 Cross-Defendants. 25 26 27 28

NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION

TO THE COURT AND THE PARTIES AND THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that respondent State Water Resources Control Board hereby moves to intervene on the cross-complaint in this action and that that motion has been set for hearing on December 6, 2019 at 10:00 a.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in Department 10 of the above-entitled court, located at 312 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California. This motion is based on this notice, the accompanying memorandum of points and authorities, and any other matter submitted on reply or at the hearing on matter.

Dated: November 4, 2019

Respectfully Submitted,

XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California MYUNG J. PARK Supervising Deputy Attorney General

MARC N. MELNICK

Deputy Attorney General

Attorneys for Respondent State Water

Resources Control Board

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

Respondent State Water Resources Control Board (the "SWRCB") is the state agency responsible for "the orderly and efficient administration of the water resources of the state," and is empowered with adjudicatory and regulatory functions to carry out this mandate. (Wat. Code, § 174.) Although it is a party to the complaint in this action, it is not a cross-defendant on the cross-complaint brought by the City of San Buenaventura (the "City"). The SWRCB has an interest in ensuring that any determinations by the Court and any settlement are fair, equitable, legally correct, and in the public interest. Its perspective is not shared by any other party. The SWRCB brings this motion in an abundance of caution, to make absolutely clear that it is a party to the adjudication in this action. The SWRCB has met and conferred with counsel about this motion, and no one has expressed any opposition. The SWRCB respectfully requests that it be granted intervention on the cross claims in this action as authorized by the Streamlined Comprehensive Groundwater Adjudication Statute. The SWRCB's counsel has met and conferred with the other counsel in this case, and no one has voiced an objection to the granting of this motion.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

This case began in September 2014 when petitioner Santa Barbara Channelkeeper filed a petition for declaratory relief and a writ of mandate in the San Francisco Superior Court against the City and the SWRCB, alleging that the City's use of Reach 4 of the Ventura River from April through October is unreasonable, in violation of article X, section 2 of the California Constitution, and that the SWRCB has failed to perform alleged mandatory duties to prevent that unreasonable use. In response, the City filed a cross-complaint, alleging that it was other users of surface water and groundwater that were unreasonably using water in the Ventura River watershed. The Court of Appeal has ruled that the cross-complaint was appropriate. (Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. City of San Buenaventura (2018) 19 Cal.App.5th 1176.) Following remand, the parties stipulated to have venue moved to this Court.

The cross-complaint is governed, either entirely or in significant part, by the procedures in the Streamlined Comprehensive Groundwater Adjudication Statute, Code of Civil Procedure

section 830 et seq. As the Court is aware, this action has the potential to involve literally thousands of parties.

This case was assigned to this Department on May 15, 2019, and the Court has held a case management conference and an initial hearing on the City's motion for approval. Pursuant to counsel's stipulation, the Court ordered a partial stay of the action on August 23, 2019. The City's motion for approval of its notice is to come for hearing on November 1, 2019. At that point, the City will have a period of time to serve the potential cross-defendants. (Code Civ. Proc., § 836, subd. (d).)

ARGUMENT

Intervention in this Court is generally governed by Code of Civil Procedure section 387. This provision is to be "liberally construed in favor of intervention." (*Lincoln Nat'l Life Ins. Co. v. State Bd. of Equalization* (1994) 30 Cal.App.4th 1411, 1423.)

A nonparty may also intervene as a matter of right upon timely application when (1) the proposed intervenor has an interest relating to the property or transaction that is the subject of the action; (2) the disposition of this case may as a practical matter impair or impede the proposed intervenor's ability to protect that interest; and (3) the proposed intervenor's interests are not adequately represented by the existing parties. (Code Civ. Proc., § 387, subd. (d)(1); see also *Reliance Ins. Co. v. Superior Court* (2000) 84 Cal.App.4th 383, 386.)

In the alternative, the Court may permit intervention in its discretion when "(1) the proper procedures have been followed; (2) the nonparty has a direct and immediate interest in the action; (3) the intervention will not enlarge the issues in the litigation; and (4) the reasons for the intervention outweigh any opposition by the parties presently in the action." (*Reliance Ins. Co.*, *supra*, 84 Cal.App.4th at p. 386, citing *Truck Ins. Exchange v. Superior Court* (1997) 60 Cal.App.4th 342, 346.)

The Streamlined Comprehensive Groundwater Adjudication Statute recognizes that the SWRCB has a statutory right to intervene as a state agency. (See Code Civ. Proc., §§ 835, subd. (a)(6) [requiring the plaintiff to provide notice to the SWRCB], 837.5 [recognizing that the law allows the state to intervene in a water rights adjudication].)

I. THE SWRCB IS ENTITLED TO INTERVENE AS A MATTER OF RIGHT

A. Intervention Is Timely

This case is just beginning. Not all parties have been named. The City has stated its intention to file a third amended cross-complaint. The City has yet to give notice under the Streamlined Comprehensive Groundwater Adjudication Statute. The case is currently stayed, except for that notice to landowners, initial disclosures, motions to intervene such as this motion, and other minor matters. Of course, no discovery has occurred, and no trial date has been set. As such, intervention is timely.

B. The SWRCB has an Unconditional Right to Intervene

The Streamlined Comprehensive Groundwater Adjudication Statute provides that the plaintiff is required to give notice of this comprehensive adjudication to the SWRCB, as well as other specified state agencies. (Code Civ. Proc., § 835, subd. (a)(6).) The statutes also provide that "the state" may intervene in a comprehensive adjudication. (*Id.*, § 837.5.) The Code of Civil Procedure provides that a nonparty must be allowed to intervene when a statute confers an unconditional right to intervene. (Code Civ. Proc., § 387, subd. (d)(1)(A).) Given that the Streamlined Groundwater Adjudication statutes require the plaintiff to give notice to the SWRCB as a state agency, and that "the state" is entitled to intervene as a matter of right, it is a fair reading of these statutes together to mean that the Legislature intended that the state agencies who are given notice of a comprehensive groundwater adjudication be allowed to intervene in such action as a matter of right. As such, the SWRCB should be allowed to intervene as a matter of right pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure, section 387, subdivision (d)(1)(A).

C. The SWRCB Has a Right to Intervene to Protect Its Interests

1. The SWRCB Has an Interest in the Adjudication

The SWRCB is the agency established "to provide for the orderly and efficient administration of the water resources of the state." (Wat. Code, § 174; see generally 62 Cal.Jur 3d (2018) Water, § 45.) The SWRCB has regulated all appropriative water rights acquired since 1914 through a permit system. (*Calif. Farm Bureau Fed. v. State Water Resources Control Board* (2011) 51 Cal.4th 421, 429; see also Wat. Code, §§ 1200-851.) In doing so, the SWRCB

considers avoidance of injury to existing senior water rights and the public interest. (*United States v. State Water Resources Control Board* (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 82, 103-04.) The SWRCB has the power to prevent waste or unreasonable use of water. (Wat. Code, § 275.) And it has the authority to determine water rights. (*Id.*, § 2501; see also *id.*, §§ 2500-868 [provisions related to such a statutory adjudication].) In fact, the Legislature has provided that courts adjudicating water rights may make a reference to the SWRCB to determine legal and factual issues. (*Id.*, §§ 2000-48.) As to the City's cross-complaint, the SWRCB's interest is in ensuring a fair, equitable, and legally correct determination of the water rights at issue, and an outcome consistent with the public interest. This is a sufficient interest for intervention.

The SWRCB's interest is made evident by two things the Court is well aware of. First, the SWRCB is conducting engineering work to model the interaction between the groundwater and the surface water in the region. The purpose of this work is to understand that interaction to understand how some uses affect other uses, and how all reasonable uses can best be preserved given competing demands. Second, the original action by Santa Barbara Channelkeeper here alleges that the SWRCB has mandatory duties to manage the water use in the region. While there can be argument about whether those duties are mandatory or discretionary, and whether they can be enforced by this Court, there is no doubt that the SWRCB could act to impose limits on the use of water in the Ventura River watershed – exactly what the City is seeking in this action.

2. This Case's Disposition May Affect the SWRCB's Interests

This case will, by way of court order or settlement, affect the use of water rights in the Ventura River watershed. That outcome may affect the SWRCB's ability to administer water rights and regulate use of water in the region in the public interest. Should the SWRCB act to impose limits on the use of water, it would be constrained by the holding of any court order in this case. Thus, this case might affect the SWRCB's regulatory power to prevent unreasonable use.

3. The SWRCB's Interests Are Not Adequately Represented By Existing Parties

The primary concern for the City and each of the cross-defendants is to protect their water

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rights and access to water. If this case is litigated, they will be focused on advancing the propriety and priority of their water rights, and casting doubts on others' water rights. The SWRCB has a very different interest at stake. Its interest is to ensure that the outcome in these disputes is consistent with the law and the public interest.

The SWRCB's interest is also different from the interest of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (the "Department"). The Department's interest is as the public's trustee to protect the fish and wildlife resources of the Ventura River and its watershed. The SWRCB certainly has a public trust responsibility, but its interest is broader in scope to encompass balancing all of the competing uses to water in the watershed.

** ** **

Based on the foregoing factors, the SWRCB should be granted the right to intervene in this action. The case is in its infancy, the SWRCB has an interest in the adjudication which may be affected by the disposition of the adjudication, and there are currently no existing parties that can adequately represent the SWRCB.

II. IN THE ALTERNATIVE, THE COURT SHOULD PERMIT INTERVENTION IN ITS DISCRETION

While the SWRCB's right to intervene makes analysis under permissive intervention unnecessary, the SWRCB nonetheless meets the requirements for permissive intervention as well. The SWRCB has followed all of the necessary procedural requirements for this motion. As discussed above, the SWRCB has a clear interest in this action. The SWRCB has no interest in enlarging the issues in this litigation, and will only be adding its views on the significant issues already at play in the litigation. Lastly, no party has voiced any opposition to the SWRCB intervening in the action. The SWRCB can bring its expertise to bear in this litigation, to assist the Court in ensuring an outcome consistent with the water rights priority system and the public interest. The SWRCB meets the requirements for permissive intervention, and respectfully requests that the Court exercise its discretion to allow it to participate in this adjudication.

7.

DECLARATION OF SERVICE BY U.S. MAIL

Case Name:

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. State Water Board

No.:

19STCP01176

I declare:

I am employed in the Office of the Attorney General, which is the office of a member of the California State Bar, at which member's direction this service is made. I am 18 years of age or older and not a party to this matter. I am familiar with the business practice at the Office of the Attorney General for collection and processing of correspondence for mailing with the United States Postal Service. In accordance with that practice, correspondence placed in the internal mail collection system at the Office of the Attorney General is deposited with the United States Postal Service with postage thereon fully prepaid that same day in the ordinary course of business.

On November 4, 2019, I served the attached **SWRCB's Notice of Motion, Motion, and Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support of its Motion to Intervene** by placing a true copy thereof enclosed in a sealed envelope in the internal mail collection system at the Office of the Attorney General at 1515 Clay Street, 20th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612-0550, addressed as follows:

Please see attached lists.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on November 4, 2019, at Oakland, California.

Ida Martinac

Declarant

Signature

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Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. State Water Resources Control Board Los Angeles Superior Court No. 19STCP01176 As of August 14, 2019

Daniel Cooper
daniel@lawyersforcleanwater.com
Cooper & Lewand-Martin Inc.
1004-A O'Reilly Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94129
Attorney for Petitioner and Plaintiff Santa
Barbara Channelkeeper

Gene Tanaka
gene.tanaka@bbklaw.com
Sarah Christopher Foley
sarah.foley@bbklaw.com
Dakotah Benjamin
dakotah.benjamin@bbklaw.com
Best Best& Krieger LLP
2001 N. Main Street, Suite 390
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
Attorneys for Respondent and Cross-Complainant
City of San Buenaventura

Shawn Hagerty
shawn.hagerty@bbklaw.com
Best Best & Krieger LLP
655 West Broadway, 15th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

Attorneys for Respondent and Cross-Complainant
City of San Buenaventura

Robert N. Kwong

rkwong@atozlaw.com

Dennis O. La Rochelle

A to Z Law Firm, LLP

300 Esplanade Dr. Ste 2100

Oxnard, CA 93036

Attorneys for Cross-Defendant Casitas Municipal

Water District

William G. Short, Esq.

billshortesq@me.com

Law Offices of William G. Short

Post Office Box 1313

Ojai, CA 93024-1313

Attorney for Cross-Defendant Robin Bernhoft

Stephen C. Lewis
slewis@bargcoffin.com
Barg Coffin Lewis & Trapp LLP
600 Montgomery Street, Suite 525
San Francisco, CA 94111
Attorney specially appearing for Cross-Defendant
Rudd Ranch, LLC

Paul Blatz blatzlawfirm@gmail.com Ryan Blatz ryan@ryanblatzlaw.com Blatz Law Firm 206 N. Signal St. Suite G Ojai, CA 93023 Attorneys for Cross-Defendants Troy Becker; Janet Boulten; Michael Boulten; Michael Caldwell; Joe Clark; Michael Cromer; Linda Epstein; Lawrence Hartmann; Ole Konig; Krotona Institute of Theosophy; Stephen Mitchell; North Fork Springs Mutual Water Company; Rudd Ranch, LLC; Shlomo Raz; Sylvia Raz, Senior Canyon Mutual Water Company; Siete Robles Mutual Water Company; Soule Park Golf Course, Ltd;, Telos LLC; Victor Timar; John Town and Trudie Town

Lindsay F. Nielson
nielsonlaw@aol.com
Law Office of Lidsay F. Nielson
845 E Santa Clara Street
Ventura, CA 93001
Attorney for Cross-Defendants Meiners Oaks
Water District and Ventura River Water District

Jeanne Zolezzi
jzolezzi@herumcrabtree.com
Herum Crabtree Suntag
5757 Pacific Avenue, Suite 222
Stockton, CA 95207
Attorney for Cross-Defendants Meiners Oaks
Water District and Ventura River Water District

Antony Lee Francois
alf@pacificlegal.org
TFrancois@pacificlegal.org
Jeremy Talcott
jtalcott@pacificlegal.org
David Deerson
ddeerson@pacificlegal.org
Pacific Legal Foundation
930 G Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-1802
Attorney for Cross-Defendant Robin Bernhoft

Neal P. Maguire
nmaguire@fcoplaw.com
Ferguson Case Orr Patterson LLP
1050 South Kimball Road
Ventura, CA 93004
Attorney for Cross-Defendant Rancho Matilija
Mutual Water Company

Michael J. VanZandt

mvanzandt@hansonbridgett.com

Nathan A. Metcalf

nmetcalf@hansonbridgett.com

Sean G. Herman

sherman@hansonbridgett.com

Hanson Bridgett LLP

425 Market Street, 26 Floor

San Francisco, CA 94105

Attorney for Cross-Defendant Ventura County

Watershed Protection District

Clynton Namuo, Esq
clynton.namuo@alston.com
Edward J. Casey, Esq
ed.casey@alston.com
Alston & Bird LLP
333 South Hope Street, 16th floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071
Attorneys for Cross-Defendant Bentley Family
Ltd. Partnership and specially appearing for
Cross-Defendant AGR Breeding, Inc.

Joseph C. Chrisman
jchrisman@hathawaylawfirm.com
Hathaway, Perrett, Webster, Powers, Chrisman &
Gutierrez
5450 Telegraph Road
Ventura, CA 93003

Attorney for Cross-Defendant Wood-Claeyssens
Foundation

Scott Slater
sslater@bhfs.com
Bradley Herrema
bherrema@bhfs.com
Christopher Guillen
cguillen@bhfs.com
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP
1021 Anacapa Street, 2nd Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Attorneys for Cross-Defendant Wood-Claeyssens
Foundation

Patrick Loughman

ploughman@lrmmt.com

Cristian Arrieta

Carrieta@lrmmt.com

Lowthorp, Richards, McMilla, Miller &

Templeman

300 Esplande Drive, Suite 850

Oxnard, CA 93036

Attorney for Cross-Defendants Ernest Ford and

Tico Mutual Water Company

Gregory J. Patterson
g.patterson@musickpeeler.com
Musick, Peeler & Garrett LLP
2801 Townsgate Road, Suite 200
Westlake Village, CA 91361
Attorney for Cross-Defendants Friend's Ranches,
Inc., Krotona Institute of Theosophy, Topa Topa
Ranch Company, LLC and The Thacher School

Thomas S. Bunn III
tombunn@lagerlof.com
Elsa Sham
esham@lagerlof.com
Lagerlof Senecal Gosney & Kruse LLP
301 N. Lake Avenue, 10th Floor
Pasadena, CA 91101-5123
Attorney for Cross-Defendant St. Joseph's
Associates for Ojai, California, Inc.

David B. Cosgrove

dcosgrove@rutan.com

Jeffrey M. Oderman
joderman@rutan.com

Douglas J. Dennington
ddennington@rutan.com

Jeremy N. Jungreis
jjungrei@rutan.com

Rutan & Tucker, LLP
611 Anton Boulevard, Suite 1400
Costa Mesa, CA 92626-1931

Attorneys for Cross-Defendant Casitas Municipal
Water District

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. State Water Resources Control Board San Francisco Superior Court No. CPF -14-513875 Service List for Non-appearing Cross-Defendants As of March 8, 2019

Duncan Abbott P.O. Box 1322 Carpinteria, CA 93014

DeWayne Boccali 3277 Ojai Avenue Ojai, CA 93023

Dwayne Bower 970 Boardman Road Ojai, CA 93023

James Burgess 356 Carne Road Ojai, CA 93023

Kevin Clark & Lisa Clark 715 El Toro Road Ojai, CA 93023

Michael Cromer 3310 Maricopa Highway Ojai, CA 93023

Essick Farm Management Company, LLC 2955 Hermitage Road Ojai, CA 93023

James Finch 900 Orange Road Ojai, CA 93023

Wayne Francis 160 Oak Glen Avenue Ojai, CA 93023

John Galaska 909 Drown Avenue Ojai, CA 93023

Gridley Road Water Group 487 Gridley Road Ojai, CA 93023 Asquith Family Ltd. 910 Mercer Avenue Ojai, CA 93023

Casitas Mutual Water Company c/o Margaret Aldrich, Agent for Service of Process 8239 Edison Drive Ventura, CA 93001

Rebecca Collins & Thomas Collins 241 Longhorn Road Ojai, CA 93023

Robert C. Davis, Jr. 1380 Gridley Road Ojai, CA 93023

Etchart Ranch 3310 Maricopa Highway Ojai, CA 93023

Flying H. Ranch, Inc c/o Joseph Yung, Agent for Service of Process 10221 Slater Avenue, Suite 101 Fountain Valley, CA 92708

J & G Trust 1060 Shokat Drive Ojai, CA 93023

Jurgen Gramckow 12401 Ranch Road Ojai, CA 93023

Stephanie Gustafson 811 Saddle Lane Ojai, CA 93023

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. State Water Resources Control Board San Francisco Superior Court No. CPF -14-513875 Service List for Non-appearing Cross-Defendants As of March 8, 2019

Hermitage Mutual Water Company

2955 Hermitage Road Ojai, CA 93023 Stephen Huyler 10 Sea Street

Camden, ME 04843

Brett Kantrowitz & Denise Kantrowitz

2133 McNell Road Ojai, CA 93023

Tim Krout 230 Saddle Lane Ojai, CA 93023

Lutheran Church of the Holy Cross of Ojai c/o Wayne Francis, Agent for Service of Process

160 Oak Glen Avenue

Ojai, CA 93023

Jeffrey Luttrull 283 Carne Road

Ojai, CA 93023 Stephen Mitchell

Stephen Mitchell 140 Longhorn Lane Ojai, CA 93023

Ojai Water Conservation District 417 Bryant Circle, Suite 112

Ojai, CA 93023

Rancho de Cielo Mutual Water Company

763 Haverford Avenue Pacific Palisade, CA 90272

Rincon Water and Road Works 6500 Casitas Pass Road

6500 Casitas Pass Ro Ventura, CA 93001

Sisar Mutual Water Company c/o Rodney Edward Thompson, Agent for

Service

12264 Topa Lane Santa Paula, CA 93060 Dorothy Homes

16350 Maricopa Highway

Ojai, CA 93023 Cheryl Jensen 901 Shaddle Lane Ojai, CA 93023

Jerry Kenton

1113 Serenidad Place Oakview, CA 93022

Betina La Plante 1203 Daly Road Ojai, CA 93023

Scott Luttenberg 1138 Mariano Drive Ojai, CA 93023

Frederick Menninger & Margaret Menninger

1710 Ladera Road Ojai, CA 93023

Bill Moses

1352 Foothill Road Ojai, CA 93023

Old Creek Road Mutual Water Company

9940 Old Creek Road Ventura, CA 93001

William Rusin 229 McNell Road Ojai, CA 93023

Mark Saleh

10586 W. Pico Boulevard #111 Los Angeles, CA 90064

Andrew Stasse 4510 Grand Avenue Ojai, CA 93023

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. State Water Resources Control Board San Francisco Superior Court No. CPF -14-513875 Service List for Non-appearing Cross-Defendants As of March 8, 2019

Victor Timar 13877 Polk Street Sylmar, CA 91342

Ernesto Vega 400 Gorham Road Ojai, CA 93023 Lou Tomesetta 2865 Ladera Road Ojai, CA 93023

Calvin Zara 1312 Rugby Road Ojai, CA 93023