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10 Attorneys for The Thacher School; Friend's Ranches, Inc.; Topa Ranch & Nursery, LLC;  
11 Finch Farms, LLC; Red Mountain Land & Farming, LLC; Thacher Creek Citrus, LLC; The Finch  
12 Family Trust; James P. Finch; Robert Calder Davis, Jr.; Robert Calder Davis, Jr., TTEE of Trust  
13 Owned Properties; Sharon H. Booth, Trustee of The Survivor's Trust Created Under Declaration  
14 of Trust of Richard G. Booth and Sharon H. Booth Dated July 10, 1980; David Robert Hamm and  
15 Reeves Orchard, LLC (collectively, the "East Ojai Group")

16 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
17 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

18 SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER, a  
19 California non-profit organization

20 Petitioner,

21 vs.

22 STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL  
23 BOARD, a California State Agency; CITY OF  
24 SAN BUENAVENTURA, a California  
25 municipal corporation,

26 Respondents.

CASE No. 19STCP01176

Judge: Hon. William F. Highberger

**NOTICE OF EX PARTE APPLICATION  
TO CONTINUE TRIAL; POINTS AND  
AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT OF  
CONTINUANCE**

**[Filed Concurrently with Declarations of  
Gregory J. Patterson and Anthony Brown]**

**Date: January 18, 2022**

**Time: 1:30 p.m.**

**Dept: 10**

Action Filed: September 19, 2014

First Amended Complaint Filed:

September 7, 2018

Trial Date (Phase One): February 14, 2022

27 CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, etc.,

28 Cross-Complainant,

DUNCAN ABBOTT, an individual, et al.,

Cross-Defendants.

1 TO ALL PARTIES AND THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:

2 The Thacher School; Friend's Ranches, Inc.; Topa Ranch & Nursery, LLC; Finch Farms,  
3 LLC; Red Mountain Land & Farming, LLC; Thacher Creek Citrus, LLC; The Finch Family  
4 Trust; James P. Finch; Robert Calder Davis, Jr.; Robert Calder Davis, Jr., TTEE of Trust Owned  
5 Properties; Sharon H. Booth, Trustee of The Survivor's Trust Created Under Declaration of Trust  
6 of Richard G. Booth and Sharon H. Booth Dated July 10,1980; David Robert Hamm and Reeves  
7 Orchard, LLC (collectively, the "East Ojai Group") submits this ex parte application for an order  
8 to continue the trial date in this matter currently scheduled on February 14, 2022, until a date  
9 convenient for this Court in either June or July 2022, which is the first available time period the  
10 parties have no pending conflicts, and to continue all pre-trial deadlines related to that new date.

11 This ex parte application is based upon the fact that Cross-Complainant, the City of  
12 Ventura ("City"), did not timely provide its expert's groundwater flow and transport model when  
13 it disclosed its expert's initial report, which relies primarily upon that model. (See Declaration of  
14 Gregory Patterson at Paragraphs 3-11.) The City was required under the Comprehensive  
15 Adjudication Statute, namely, Code Civ. Proc. § 843, to provide its expert's model on August 31,  
16 2021, the date the Court ordered the City to make its initial expert disclosure. In comparison,  
17 Defendant State Water Resources Control Board ("State Board") timely provided its expert's  
18 respective model on September 24, 2021, the date it was required to disclose its expert's initial  
19 report.

20 Thereafter, for several months, the City continued to refuse providing its expert's essential  
21 and material model, despite repeated requests from the East Ojai Group's counsel and others. On  
22 December 27, 2021, after a four-month delay, the City provided its model to a limited number of  
23 parties, pursuant to a stipulation, and after the East Ojai Group's counsel raised this issue at a  
24 hearing before this Court on December 9, 2021. (See Declaration of Gregory Patterson at  
25 Paragraph 11.)

26 In addition, as of this date, the City has also refused to provide its expert's model to certain  
27 other cross-defendants, who, at this time, have not disclosed any experts, despite requests by these  
28 cross-defendants for the model. (See Declaration of Gregory Patterson at Paragraph 14.)

1 In short, the City has improperly withheld critical information necessary for all cross-  
2 defendants to adequately represent their clients' interests in the Phase One Trial. Specifically, the  
3 inability of cross-defendants to timely obtain these models has prevented them from access to  
4 essential information and data critical to preparing their defense, including fully and effectively  
5 deposing the City's experts and others. As a consequence, the delayed production of the City's  
6 expert's models necessitates the continuance of the trial and related pre-trial dates. (See  
7 Declaration of Gregory Patterson at Paragraphs 12, 13; Declaration of Anthony Brown.)

8 It is important to note that neither the City nor any of the significant parties participating  
9 in Phase 1 of the trial initially were opposed to a continuance of the trial, including a continuance  
10 of that trial to a date convenient for his Court in April or May. (See Declaration of Gregory  
11 Patterson at Paragraph 16) However, after consultation among the parties, it became apparent  
12 that there were multiple various conflicts during the months of March, April and May. The  
13 parties do, however, have available dates on June 13-24. (See Declaration of Gregory Patterson  
14 at Paragraph 16 and Exhibit G summarizing then known available dates.)

15 The East Ojai Group, the Upper Ojai Group, Casitas Municipal Water District, and the  
16 State Board are all agreeable to continue and schedule the trial to those dates, subject to Court  
17 availability. (See Declaration of Gregory Patterson at Paragraph 16). Although the City is  
18 agreeable to a continuance of the trial currently-scheduled on February 14, 2022, it opposes a  
19 continuance to June or July. (See Declaration of Gregory Patterson at Paragraphs 16-17.)

20 The East Ojai Group is unaware of any prejudice to the City in continuing the trial to the  
21 date in June dates. In any event, the need for the continuance is of the City's own making: caused  
22 by its delay in providing its experts' model, in contravention of Code Civil Proc. § 843.

23 **I. POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT OF EX PARTE APPLICATION TO**  
24 **CONTINUE TRIAL**

25 **A. The Court May Continue The Trial If A Party Has Been Precluded From**  
26 **Obtaining Material and Relevant Evidence**

27 California Rules of Court 3.1332(c) provides various grounds for a continuance of a trial.  
28 In particular, Rule 3.1332(c)(6) provides good cause for continuing the trial based a party's

1 inability to obtain essential testimony, documents or other material evidence despite diligent  
2 efforts. Where denial of a continuance would result in substantial injustice, it is an abuse of  
3 discretion to deny it. *Hamilton v. Orange County Sheriff's Dept.* (2107) 8 Cal App. 5<sup>th</sup> 759, 756.

4 In this case, the City has precluded the cross-defendants from obtaining critical data and  
5 model information until very late in the proceedings. More specifically, having just recently  
6 received the requested expert's model, cross-defendants cannot reasonably complete expert  
7 witness depositions and be ready for trial on the currently set date of February 14, 2022.

8 **B. The City Of Ventura Was Required To Turn Over The Modeling Data When**  
9 **It Provided Its Initial Expert Disclosure**

10 California Code of Civil Procedure § 843, involving comprehensive water adjudication  
11 under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, a claim asserted by the City in this matter,  
12 provides explicit expert disclosure requirements: Aside from requiring a written report, Code  
13 Civil Proc. § 843(b), requires that the expert's report must be accompanied by "The facts or data  
14 considered by the witness in forming his or her opinions." The City's expert's model, which  
15 includes data and information relied upon by the expert in developing her expert report clearly  
16 falls within the disclosure requirements of § 843(b).<sup>1</sup>

17 Timely access to the City's expert's model, as well as sufficient time to fully and  
18 effectively review the model is necessary and reasonable to allow the cross-defendants the ability  
19 to prepare for the deposition of the City's expert, as well as allow the cross-defendants' respective  
20 experts to prepare their testimony and any related reports. Timely access to the City's expert's  
21 model is especially critical given the anticipated highly-technical and disputed nature and scope  
22 of the Phase 1 trial, namely, whether the groundwater basins and surface waters, which are spread  
23 out over a huge watershed, are hydrologically-interconnected, in a matter of first impression  
24 under the recently enacted provisions of § 830 *et seq.*

25 \_\_\_\_\_  
26 <sup>1</sup> As noted above, although the State Board did turn over its expert's model in a timely manner, it  
27 is important to note that the East Ojai Group's expert finds it more effective and efficient to  
28 analyze the competence and accuracy of all models at the same time. (See Declaration of Anthony  
Brown.)

1           **C.     The East Ojai Group Diligent Efforts to Obtain the Model**

2           On September 1, 2021, counsel for East Ojai Group first requested that the City provide a  
3 fully-functioning model of its expert's model, immediately after the City provided its initial expert  
4 disclosure on August 31, 2021. (See Greg Patterson Declaration at Paragraph 3 and Exhibit A to  
5 the Declaration.

6           However, via an email on September 2, 2021, the City refused to provide the requested  
7 expert's model. (See Declaration of Greg Patterson at Paragraph 4 and Exhibit B attached to the  
8 Declaration.) Subsequently, counsel for the East Ojai Group had multiple conversations with  
9 counsel for the City in an attempt to reach resolution. (Declaration of Greg Patterson at  
10 Paragraph 5.

11           As a result of the City's continued refusal to provide the model, the East Ojai Group was  
12 forced to continue the depositions of City experts, Ms. Tamara Klug and Dr. Claire Archer, that  
13 had been scheduled in early December 2021 and early January 2022, respectively. The  
14 depositions of the State Board's experts scheduled in early January 2022 were also continued by  
15 the East Ojai Group. The East Ojai Group was forced to continue these deposition given its  
16 inability to timely review and analyze the City's expert's model, which was not received until  
17 December 27, 2021, preventing the East Ojai Group's expert the opportunity to compare the City's  
18 expert's model with that model used by the State Board's experts, having different criteria and  
19 variables. As such, the East Ojai Group could not effectively prepare for and take those expert  
20 depositions, where those experts' development and use of the models, which serve as the primary  
21 bases for their respective expert opinions, could be fully examined and challenged.. (See  
22 Declaration of Greg Patterson at Paragraphs 6-13 and Exhibits attached B through E.)

23           On December 6, 2021, counsel for the City finally suggested that the parties discuss a  
24 possible resolution regarding the requested production of the City's expert's model. (See  
25 Declaration of Greg Patterson at Paragraph 8 and Exhibit E attached to the Declaration). After  
26 further discussions, the City agreed to provide the requested model on the condition that the  
27 parties sign a stipulation controlling use and access to the model. Notwithstanding the absence of  
28 any statutory authority requiring such a stipulation, the East Ojai Group agreed to the stipulation

1 in order to expedite obtaining the long-requested model. (Declaration of Greg Patterson at  
2 paragraphs 10-11.)

3 On December 27, 2021, pursuant to the stipulation, the City finally turned over the model  
4 to the East Ojai Group's counsel. Given the schedules and other factors, the East Ojai Group's  
5 expert was not able to begin his review and assessment of the City's expert's model until January  
6 3, 2020. As a consequence, the delayed production of the requested model provided a mere  
7 two(2) weeks to review, analyze and compare the City and State Board models at issue, and  
8 thereafter confer with counsel, as well as prepare for and complete all expert witness depositions  
9 by January 14, 2022, pursuant to the discovery deadline set by this Court. (Declaration of Greg  
10 Patterson at Paragraph 13.)

11 Such a short time period made it impossible for the East Ojai Group and its expert to  
12 effectively review, analyze and compare the expert models at issue. Specifically, after an initial  
13 review of the models at issue, the East Ojai Group's expert has informed counsel that he needs at  
14 least eight (8) weeks to adequately review, analyze and compare the models, develop opinions  
15 regarding those models, consult with counsel and assist counsel in the preparation of expert  
16 depositions and related matters. (See Declaration of Anthony Brown.)

17 The City has also apparently withheld disclosure of the City's expert's model for other  
18 cross-defendants, Andrew Whitman, Heidi Whitman, Nancy L. Whitman and the John R. and  
19 Nancy L. Whitman Trust, although they are named parties to the instant matter. According to a  
20 brief filed by these other parties, the City has refused to provide them with the requested model,  
21 arguing that those parties are not entitled to receive the model because they have not retained an  
22 expert. (Brief filed on January 7, 2022. For the convenience of the Court, a copy of this brief is  
23 attached to the Declaration of Gregory Patterson as Exhibit F.)

24 The City's continued failure to provide its expert's model to other parties remains  
25 unresolved, preventing all named parties who have expressed an intention to participate in  
26 Phase 1 of the trial from effectively challenging the opinions of the City's expert. It appears  
27 manifestly unfair that these other parties would not be able to adequately defend their interests  
28 without access to the requested model.

1           **D. A Continuance of the Trial And Related Dates Will Allow Cross-Defendants**  
2           **The Opportunity to Properly Prepare For Trial**

3           Given the impending pre-trial and trial dates, it is not possible to thoroughly (1) review  
4 and analyze the City's expert's models, as well as compare to the different model used by the  
5 experts for the State Board; (2) prepare expert witness testimony and related matters; (3) prepare  
6 for and complete opposing expert witness depositions; and (4) comply with current pre-trial  
7 deadlines and prepare for trial date on February 14, 2020. Given the delayed production of the  
8 expert model by the City, there simply is not sufficient time and opportunity for the East Ojai  
9 Group to effectively and properly prepare for trial and related litigation dates.

10           As the Court is well aware, this is a case of first-impression involving the recently enacted  
11 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act ("SGMA") (Water Code § 10720 *et seq.*) and the  
12 Comprehensive Adjudication Statute (Code Civ. Procedure §§ 830-852), seeking the  
13 unprecedented comprehensive adjudication of four(4) separate and distinct groundwater basins  
14 and the surface waters of several rivers, creeks and their respective tributaries in a huge  
15 watershed, and involving hundreds of parties – all of which is disputed by the parties, who have  
16 retained at least a half-dozen experts providing highly-technical and conflicting opinions on the  
17 subjects of hydrogeology, biology and botany. It is therefore imperative that a complete and  
18 accurate factual record be made in the instant matter, which requires that cross-defendants have  
19 sufficient time and opportunity to fully investigate and prepare their case.

20           Accordingly, the East Ojai Group respectfully requests that the Court set a trial date in  
21 June, the first available time period in which one or more parties does not have a conflict on date  
22 convenient to the Court and set all other pre-trial dates consistent with the current order.


23           **NOTICE OF SERVICE OF EX-PARTE APPLICATION**

24           This Ex-Parte application was served on all parties om January 13, 2022 via File and  
25 ServExpress as per attached Proof of Service.

1 DATED: January 13, 2022

MUSICK, PEELER & GARRETT LLP

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By:   
Gregory J. Patterson  
Attorneys for  
the "East Ojai Group")