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OJAI BASIN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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MEMBER AGENCIES AND OBGMA DIRECTORS

<u>Agency</u>		<u>Director</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
City of Ojai	2006 - 07	<i>Rae Hanstad</i>	<i>No Alternate</i>
Casitas Municipal Water District	2006 - 07	<i>Russ Baggerly</i>	<i>Rich Handley</i>
Golden State Water Company (Southern California Water Co.)	2006 - 06 2006 - 07	<i>Frank Heldman</i> <i>Edward Faria</i>	<i>Scott Slater</i> <i>Diana Leach</i>
Ojai Water Conservation District	2006 - 07	<i>Jerry Conrow</i>	<i>Jim Ruch</i>
Mutual Water Companies (Senior Canyon, Siete Robles, Hermitage)	2006 - 07	<i>Roger Essick</i>	

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

December 21, 2007

Dear Constituents of the Ojai Groundwater Basin,

The recently-concluded water year was the driest year in the recorded history of the Ojai Basin.

I believe that this statement will come as no surprise to all of the readers of this document so I will try to describe for you the efforts that your board of directors has undertaken and what the results of our efforts have been.

The annual volume of water extracted from the Basin is, on average, about 5,000 acre feet. Our maximum extraction rate permitted by our enabling legislation is \$7.50 per acre foot, which provides the Agency with about \$35,000 of income per year. This amount of money is not sufficient to accomplish anything of significance, so the Board directed a major effort toward changing our legislation. Late in 2007, the efforts were rewarded when the California legislature passed an amendment to our enabling legislation which, if approved by all affected pumpers, would allow our maximum extraction rate to be raised to a new ceiling of \$25 per acre foot.

Early in 2008, an election will be held among all pumpers in the Basin to determine if the newly passed ceiling will become the new effective ceiling.

While the legislative effort described above was ongoing, a major effort started to take shape in the form of a project to rehabilitate the San Antonio spreading grounds. This involved all members of OBGMA and their individual constituents and is to be funded by a State of California Proposition 50 grant in the amount of \$1.3 million. All of the necessary agreements between all of the parties will be executed before the end of the year.

The goal of this project is to aid in the recharge of the Basin during rainfall periods, with the possibility of adding between 300 to 500 acre feet annually.

OBGMA has taken the first step toward assuming (from the State of California) the responsibility for groundwater recordation. This recording process is required by the State for every well but, in the past, enforcement of the law has been spotty. The effect on the individual well owner is that, if they have not filed such documents annually with the State, there are no officially recognized records attesting to the amount of water taken from the Basin. This becomes important to every individual well owner if a groundwater adjudication process were ever undertaken.

In December, 2007, the Board approved and filed a request for grant aid from the California Department of Water Resources to develop a groundwater model to support the analysis of alternative basin management scenarios.

As the reader can see from the above, this has been a very busy year and all of the events now coming together in the Ventura River watershed will require even more efforts from everyone in the future.

The lack of rainfall will have long lasting effects and require more active management of our water resource than we have ever had to consider in the past. We hope to be able to employ on a part-time basis an experienced staff member to help shoulder the load that we see on the horizon. The Board has, in the past, spent all of the extraction fees in a wise and responsible manner, benefiting all wells across the valley. An election to be held in early 2008 will determine the future effectiveness of the OBGMA in truly managing our underground water basin when demands are expected to exceed supply.

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Very truly yours,

Jerry L. Conrow

Jerry L. Conrow
President of the Board

2007 OJAI BASIN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

ANNUAL REPORT

OVERVIEW

2007 was the driest year in the recorded water history of the Ojai Basin. Water levels in the Basin and in Lake Casitas as well have dropped alarmingly. Some hydrologists believe this may be the start of an extended drought period. There are indications that the demand for water in the Ventura River watershed, which includes the Ojai Basin, exceeds the available supply; and cooperative, coordinated plans to deal with a water supply crisis are not in place.

This annual report for the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency is intended to document, briefly, the water use and demand in the Basin and summarize the key actions and events of the year. It is necessarily a brief summary because, due to the limits of the historic legislated extraction charge ceiling, the agency has inadequate resources and no staff capability to prepare anything other than this abbreviated report, much less to effectively engage in the planning and management activities that are vitally needed in a period of growing water availability concerns. Until the extraction charge can be raised to provide for at least one part-time professional staff person to manage OBGMA the agency will not be able to carry out its mandated responsibilities to manage and protect the water in the basin.

Hope For The Future

However, there may be light at the end of the tunnel. Thanks to the efforts of the OBGMA Board of Directors and assemblywoman Audra Strickland AB 738 became law in late 2007. The legislation amends OBGMA's enabling statute and provides that the extraction charge ceiling may be raised to \$25 per acre foot pumped if approved by a majority of the well owners in the Basin. Under that revised ceiling the Board will be able to set an annual extraction fee at a level sufficient to meet the needs and obligations of the agency annually, for, hopefully, at least the next decade. OBGMA will be holding public meetings with well owners

and operators early in 2008 to provide information about water and management issues in the basin, the actions OBGMA needs to be taking and the level of budget required to operate the agency effectively and efficiently. This information will also be placed on the OBGMA website <www.obgma.com>. The vote to approve the new extraction charge ceiling will be by mail-in ballot late in the Spring of 2008. If approved, the Board will, as usual, set the budget for FY 08/09 at public meetings in May and June, which will determine the actual extraction charge for water pumped during the second half of 2008.

In 2007 a major step was taken that may result in an actual increase in the recharge of groundwater in the Ojai Basin. OBGMA is one of 5 agencies participating in the proposed San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds Rehabilitation Project. This \$1.3 million project, to be built with State Proposition 50 bond funding, has the potential to increase basin recharge on average between 300 to 500 acre feet annually. It does require upfront funding which has been made available thanks to Ventura County. It will also require annual operation and maintenance funding after construction which is one of a number of reasons that the OBGMA's extraction charge must be increased.

Groundwater Management Plan Update

In order for OBGMA to compete successfully for this project, as well as to plan for the future, the agency needed an updated Groundwater Management Plan. The 2007 OBGMA Management Plan Update was prepared for the agency by Jordan Kear, the hydrogeologist whose studies of the Ojai Basin in the past have advanced the initial understanding of the basin, and was adopted by the OBGMA Board of Directors. A copy of the plan was provided to every well owner in the Basin.

During 2007 OBGMA took the first steps toward assuming from the State of California the responsibility for groundwater recordation in the Basin. Groundwater recordation is both required by law and a wise investment for every well owner. It is wise because it constitutes the legal record of water use which is the best protection a well owner has in the event of a legal action or a groundwater basin adjudication process. Considering the potential impact of increased water demand and declining supply, official recordation makes good sense. Best of all, by taking over this responsibility from the state, OBGMA will be able to save each well owner \$75 per year or more in annual recordation costs.

In December, 2007, OBGMA filed an application for a Local Groundwater Assistance Grant with the California Department of Water Resources. Under this grant, if accepted, OBGMA proposes to develop a groundwater model to support the analysis of alternative basin management scenarios which is crucial to successful management of the basin. The model can be used to evaluate hydrogeologic factors including basin storage, effects of pumping, recharge and discharge components of the system, proposed new well construction and

development, and conservation measures. Field data collected will clearly fill data gaps. The natural, enhanced, and artificial recharge along and near streambeds will be prime focus of modeling efforts.

Ventura Watershed Facts Needed

During the year OBGMA Board Members attempted to keep up with the ever increasing activities in water resource planning in Ventura County, particularly in the Ventura River Watershed. OBGMA expressed concerns to the Casitas Municipal Water District Board regarding the possible impact of dramatic increases in agricultural water rates that could result in the drilling of new wells and significantly greater pumping demands in the Ojai Basin. OBGMA also advised the Ojai City Council about the uncertainties and limits on the water supplies in the Ventura Watershed and the Ojai Basin in connection with potential growth inducing changes proposed for the City's Housing Plan. Recognizing that all water supplies in the Ventura River watershed come from local precipitation with no practical importation of water possible in the foreseeable future, OBGMA has urged the County, under the Ventura River Watershed portion of the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to develop a very specific water budget for the Ventura River watershed based upon a detailed analysis of water demand and supply so that plans and projects in the watershed can proceed on the basis of reliable fact rather than speculation.

2008 ?

In 2007 OBGMA took the first steps toward becoming an effective agency. What happens in 2008 will determine whether these first steps will result in the wise and responsible management of the basin's groundwater resource.

WATER SUPPLY RECORDS

Rainfall

Information on rainfall provided to OBGMA by David Panaro, Manager Groundwater Section of the Ventura County Watershed Protection District. 2007 was the driest year on record. Both 2005 and 2006 were exceptionally high rainfall years for the Ojai Basin. Serious flooding occurred in January and February of 2005 with rainfall amounts of over 50 inches at some places in the Basin Watershed. Steady rains in the spring of 2006 maintained the Ojai Basin at maximum capacity.

From Ojai Fire Station – Gauge # 30

2003	-	20.35 inches
2004	-	13.06 inches
2005	-	43.84 inches
2006	-	23.87 inches
2007	-	7.43 inches (unofficial total as of 12-12-07)

Basin Storage Calculations

These calculations were made during the month of April and prepared for OBGMA by Ventura County Watershed Protection District.

Although future water storage predictions may be somewhat dire, groundwater basin levels have not fluctuated as severely since the mid 1960's compared to what they did prior to that period (i.e., volumes have stabilized somewhat over the last 40+ years). Estimated Ojai Valley Basin groundwater storage for the last several years is presented for comparison purposes below:

2002	-	62,567 Acre-Feet
2003	-	57,087 Acre-Feet
2004	-	55,094 Acre-Feet
2005	-	80,000 Acre-Feet*
2006	-	62,810 Acre-Feet
2007	-	49,570 Acre-Feet

*Note, at 80,000 Acre-Feet the basin is filled to overflowing (flowing conditions in the central and west ends due to sufficiently high pressures in the confined portion of the valley). The basin storage low was estimated at 43,741 AF in 1951 (using all available records), so the 2007 figure is not considered extreme, merely cautionary, and some conservation measures should be considered to ensure future year groundwater supplies.

WATER DEMAND IN THE OJAI BASIN

Beginning in 1993 the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency has kept a record of the reported groundwater extractions in the basin. In the following table this is divided into two columns; extractions by Golden State Water (formerly Southern California Water) for Ojai City use, primarily domestic (column E); and extractions from private wells, primarily for irrigation use (column D). These are added together to show total groundwater extractions (column F). Casitas importations reported by that Agency are shown in column C. Since 1993 the Casitas importations and private well extractions have been added together to show "Estimated Irrigation Demand". Prior to 1993 an estimate of irrigation demand based on land use, crop water requirements, evapotranspiration, and rainfall was made, then the Casitas importations were subtracted, to come up with an estimate of private well extractions in the basin. All units in the table below are in acre feet.

A	B	C	D	E	F
Calendar Year	Estimated Irrigation Demand	Casitas Importation	Groundwater Extractions (Private Wells)	Groundwater Extraction for Ojai City Use (GSWC)	Estimated Total Groundwater Extractions
2000	7054	4044	3010	2075	5085
2001	7204	3195	4009	2134	6143
2002	7021	4249	2772	2213	4985
2003	6450	3428	3022	2053	5075
2004	7058	4185	2873	2015	4888
2005	5462	2768	2694	1945	4639
2006	5462	2796	2666	1834	4500
2007	6877	3770	3107	1958	5065

State of the Ojai Groundwater Basin 2006/07 Water Year

D.B. Stephens and Associates provided this summary at the end of the water year in Ventura County. (September 31, 2007)

Precipitation, water year second driest year on record	7.14 inches
Regional Drought Conditions, Palmer Drought Severity Index	- 4 or less (extreme drought)
Groundwater Extracted from Basin 2006-2007	5065
Water Levels in Key Ojai Basin Wells	Low to Moderate
Estimated amount of water in storage in the Ojai Basin	62,000 acre-feet -70% capacity
Outlook for coming year	Relatively dry, persistent drought conditions

Although local precipitation has been low and the region is experiencing extreme drought conditions, the amount of groundwater in storage in the Ojai Basin is moderate due to the remnant water recharged during the extremely wet 2004-2005 water year and the "average" preceding and following water years of 2003-2004 and 2005-2006, Accumulative precipitation in Ojai remains above the long term average. Sources indicate, however, that dry conditions will continue and that basin storage will likely decrease significantly without adequate precipitation, recharge, and conservation measures

OJAI WATER QUALITY DATA 2006 - 2007

SWN	Date	TDS	Cl	NO3	eC (Lab)	Ca	Mg	Na	C O 3	HCO 3	SO4	pH	K	Fe	Mn	F	B
04N22W05M04S	02-Aug-07	810	20	41.5	989	141	35	32	0	330	209	6.9	1	0	0	0.2	0
04N22W06K10S	02-Aug-07	800	75	21.3	1050	124	28	73	0	270	205	7.4	1	0	0.06	0.3	0.2
04N22W06M01S	02-Aug-07	812	88	19.5	1070	112	32	74	0	350	135	6.8	1	0	0.1	0.3	0
04N23W01K02S	23-Aug-07	958	71	6.1	1200	156	37	64	0	430	193	7.4	0	0	0	0.4	0.1
04N23W02A02S	23-Aug-07	524	33	0	666	68	13	67	0	250	93	8	0	0.48	0.01	0.3	0
04N23W12L03S	23-Aug-07	1040	164	49.1	1430	173	40	78	0	310	230	7.3	0	0	0	0.4	0.1
04N22W04F01S	01-Aug-07	670	9	4.6	863	104	26	31	0	230	260	7.2	2	9.95	0.04	0.2	0
04N22W04P05S	01-Aug-07	730	23	30.3	922	117	32	41	0	270	215	7.2	1	0	0	0.3	0
04N22W05D03S	01-Aug-07	700	21	12.8	894	115	30	36	0	270	215	7.2	1	0.19	0.04	0.2	0
04N22W05H04S	01-Aug-07	710	11	17.3	883	124	31	30	0	280	220	7.2	1	0	0	0.2	0
04N22W07C05S	01-Aug-07	2000	780	0	3140	302	68	267	0	310	220	6.9	2	0	2.31	0.3	0.3
04N22W07D04S	01-Aug-07	770	50	12	1000	114	24	74	0	290	209	7.3	1	0	0.1	0.4	0
05N22W32K02S	01-Aug-07	920	144	3.7	1310	78	4	215	0	240	230	7.5	1	0	0.06	1.3	0.3
05N22W33J01S	01-Aug-07	740	20	0.7	933	121	30	47	0	260	260	7.6	2	0.41	0.12	0.4	0
04N23W02P01S	08-Aug-07	980	134	17.9	1330	107	92	39	0	530	31	7	1	0.14	0.01	0.3	0.1

WATER QUALITY

The quality of groundwater in the Ojai Basin is extremely important to water users. Water extracted by the Golden State Water Company and by the small mutual water districts for domestic consumption is routinely monitored under state regulations to assure that it meets drinking water standards. Quality monitoring is not done on most of the wells in the basin.

Under an agreement with the Ventura County Watershed Protection District, OBGMA took samples from a few selected wells each year that were sent to a laboratory for analysis which was paid for by the County. For the last two years OBGMA was unable to take the samples, however the County did take some samples and had them analyzed in the lab.

Unfortunately funds were not available to undertake the study needed to determine useful information about water quality conditions and trends in the Basin, nor to refine and improve the sampling methodology. This work needs to be undertaken in the future. The data gathered by the County from wells in the basin was provided by the County for use in this report.

WELL PERMIT ACTIVITY 2006 – 2007

The following table shows all the well permits issued by Ventura County for wells within the boundaries of the Ojai Groundwater Basin for the Calendar years 2006 - 2007.

Permit Number	Activity	Date Issued	Date Complete	State Well Number	Owner
6251	New/Dom	01/09/06	01/27/06	04N23W12F01	Paul Baker
6318	New/Dom	05/08/06	05/26/06	04N23W01G01	Arthur Downer
6337	New/Dom	05/22/06	08/17/06	04N23W01G02	Joe Avalos
6433	New/Ag	09/26/06	10/27/06	04N22W05M06	Telos, LLC
6463	New/Ag	11/15/06	11/22/06	04N23W12G02	John Ventress
6545	New/Dom	04/10/07	08/03/07	04N23W12K06	Tom Vanrynsorer
6605	Destroyed	07/05/07	08/13/07	04N22W05R02	Bill Rusin
6605	Destroyed	07/05/07	08/13/07	04N22W05R03	Bill Rusin
6605	Destroyed	07/05/07	08/13/07	04N22W05R04	Bill Rusin
6649	Modified	09/07/07	11/01/07	04N22W07B07	Steve Luttenberg
6626	New/Dom	08/02/07	11/19/07	04N22W05N01	St. Joseph's Assoc.

FINANCIAL REPORT

	Fiscal Year 04/05	Fiscal Year 05/06	Fiscal Year 06/07	Budget 07/08
Income	\$29,998.00	\$37,984.00	\$39,247.00	\$37,500.00
Expenses:				
Advertisement	437.00	161.00	368.00	360.00
Dues	115.00	130.00	20.00	270.00
Office Supplies	2,169.00	3,135.00	2,258.00	1,568.00
Rent	4,200.00	4,039.00	4,084.00	4,092.00
Utilities	897.00	845.00	883.00	1,104.00
Travel	1,571.00	208.00	479.00	2,000.00
Payroll	22,688.00	14,432.00	9,543.00	12,000.00
Office Support	-0-	2,078.00	1,838.00	-0-
Insurance:				
Worker's Comp.	414.00	227.00	196.00	200.00
Liability	2,852.00	813.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Professional Fees:				
Audit	450.00	4,828.00	500.00	5,425.00
Data Base	341.00	-0-	1,000.00	-0-
Tech Support	5,495.00	499.00	8,865.00	5,000.00
Water Quality	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
Basin Study	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
VCIRWMP	1,500.00	300.00	-0-	-0-
HCP	-0-	200.00	-0-	-0-
Total Expenses:				
	\$38,129.00	\$31,895.00	\$31,034.00	\$33,019.00

UNDERSTANDING THE GROUNDWATER BASIN

One of the important responsibilities of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency is to increase our understanding of the Ojai Groundwater Basin. This is critical if we are to avoid over drafting, wells going dry, and conflict among water users when faced with a series of dry years, a continuing drought, negative impacts from new wells, or the potential reduction in the availability of water from Casitas.

OBGMA has developed information, and initiated studies related to the function and management of the groundwater basin. Some of these accomplishments are:

1. Prepared an updated 2007 Basin Management Plan that guard against the export of water beyond the OBGMA boundaries.
2. Conducted preliminary supply and demand studies of the Ojai Basin.
3. Completed a census of all groundwater wells within the Basin.
4. Initiated a water quality sampling program.
5. Created an extensive database regarding extraction and water usage.
6. Published an Annual Report on the status of the Ojai Basin.

The management and monitoring of the Ojai Basin for optimal water use by well owners has arrived at a critical junction. OBGMA has the opportunity to begin a series of new studies and management techniques that will eventually lead to better groundwater use. Some of the projects OBGMA could be involved with through grants are listed below:

1. OBGMA Staff and consultants have been actively pursuing grant funding for the rehabilitation of the San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds. Upon completion, the spreading grounds will allow for infiltration of water into the groundwater basin that would have otherwise exited via surface flow. Effectively, this will keep more water in Ojai.
2. OBGMA Staff and consultants are formulating plans to monitor depth-discrete water quality parameters in the Ojai Valley. This will allow for a better understanding of the aquifers that are utilized, where poor quality water exists, and how new wells can be designed to target the best quality of water for a given application. Grant funds are currently being pursued to construct new depth-discrete monitoring wells, evaluate existing wells, and possibly convert older wells to monitoring points.
3. OBGMA is working on obtaining funding to develop and refine a groundwater model of the basin to optimize the locations and designs of new wells and prevent unnecessary interference of pumping cones between adjacent property owner's wells.

RESOLUTIONS

The OBGMA Board of Directors passed the following resolutions during the period covered by this annual report. They are reprinted in their entirety in the following final section of the report.

- No. 2007-1 Resolution of Intention to Draft a Groundwater Management Plan Update for the Ojai Groundwater Basin.**
- No. 2007-2 Resolution approving and Levying Extraction Charges For Fiscal Year 2007-08.**
- No. 2007-3 Resolution in support of Legislation to Raise the Extraction Charge Ceiling for the Operation of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency.**
- No. 2007-4 Resolution approving the Fiscal Year Budget for 2007-08.**
- No. 2007-5 Resolution regarding the Statutory Exemption from the California environmental Quality Act of Adoption of The Agency Management Plan 2007 Update.**
- No. 2007-6 Resolution adopting the Agency Management Plan 2007 Update.**
- No. 2007-7 Resolution supporting the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency Application to the California Department of Water Resources for a Local Groundwater Assistance Grant pursuant to the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Water Code Section 79560 *et seq.*)**