



Fw: Paso Robles Basin and Prop 218

Debbie Arnold to: cr_board_clerk Clerk Recorder
Sent by: **Jennifer Caffee**

11/04/2015 10:50 AM

Debbie Arnold
Supervisor, 5th District
San Luis Obispo County

----- Forwarded by Jennifer Caffee/BOS/COSLO on 11/04/2015 10:50 AM -----

From: "Laurie Gage" <fullsail@onemain.com>
To: "Supervisor Mecham" <fmecham@co.slo.ca.us>, <bgibson@co.slo.ca.us>, "Supervisor Hill" <ahill@co.slo.ca.us>, "Supervisor Compton" <lcompton@co.slo.ca.us>, <darnold@co.slo.ca.us>
Date: 11/01/2015 09:34 PM
Subject: Paso Robles Basin and Prop 218

November 1, 2015

Debbie Arnold, Chair, San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Frank Mecham
Supervisor Bruce Gibson
Supervisor Adam Hill
Supervisor Lynn Compton

Dear Supervisors,

On November 10, 2015, you will be asked to establish Zone 19 and call for the vote for the Paso Robles Basin Water District. In advance of that meeting, I would like to address a few concerns I have about the Prop 218 vote.

As you are fully aware, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act mandates management of the medium and high priority basins in San Luis Obispo County, with groundwater sustainability agencies in place by June 30, 2017. The choices for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin come down to three: the proposed Paso Robles Basin Water District, the County Flood Control District, or the State as a backstop.

Before I go further, I would like to address the question of adjudication. The question as to whether the courts deciding allocations for a basin is a valid management tool, is arguable as many adjudicated basins are not being sustainably managed under that paradigm; some 70% have a medium or high priority rating by the DWR. What is patently clear though, is that adjudication cannot be completed prior to the deadline for GSAs to be in place in mid-2017. Even with the State legislature's effort to speed up adjudications, it is estimated that the litigation will take 5 to 7 years to complete, far too late for SGMA compliance.

Your staff, charged with developing budgets for the two most likely possibilities for

management, the water district and the FCD, returned to you with budgets within less than 3% of each other. As a result, and in light of the requirements of a parcel tax using Prop 218, you decided to have the Prop 218 vote serve as a vote for SGMA funding, with the results of the district formation vote determining where the funding will ultimately rest. This makes good sense as, should the district vote fail, the FCD would be able to utilize the funds as the management agency, should it so choose, without having to repeat the vote. If the FCD winds up as the GSA, it will have to form a zone of benefit in any case; there is no equity in asking all the County taxpayers to fund the SGMA mandates which you would be asking to happen if you believe that the County can cover the costs without a zone of benefit and with current staff.

I therefore ask that you unanimously support the Prop 218 vote as funding for SGMA compliance. If you do not, you are tacitly offering the management of the Basin to the State on a plate as the FCD will not have the funding or staff to do the job without that funding. Additionally, those of you who object to the Prop 218 vote are denying the overlayers of the Basin the very thing you have purported to want all along, as you have publicly and repeatedly stated: that you “Just want the voters to be able to decide.”

Your choice? Support the Prop 218 vote for SGMA compliance, or you will be making it very clear that you want the State to arrive and take any vestige of local control out of our hands.

Thank you.

Laurie Gage

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