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## STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 2026-

### DENYING REQUESTS FOR EXCLUSION FROM PROBATIONARY REPORTING AND FEES TO EIGHT GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCIES IN THE TULE SUBBASIN

#### WHEREAS:

1. Groundwater provides a significant portion of California's water supply, making up more than one-half of the water used by Californians in drought years when other sources are unavailable. When properly managed, groundwater resources provide for communities, farms, and the environment and help protect against prolonged dry periods and climate change, preserving water supplies for existing and potential beneficial uses. However, excessive groundwater extraction can cause long-term overdraft, failed wells, deteriorated water quality, environmental damage, and irreversible land subsidence that damages infrastructure and diminishes the capacity of aquifers to store water for the future, all of which can have substantial economic impacts. Additionally, failure to manage groundwater to prevent long-term overdraft can potentially infringe on rights to or use of groundwater or interconnected surface water.
2. In 2014, the State of California enacted Assembly Bill 1739, and Senate Bills 1168 and 1319, collectively referred to as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). SGMA's intent is to ensure the proper and sustainable management of groundwater resources in California.
3. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) recognizes that the goal of SGMA is sustainable groundwater management that will ensure the long-term viability of groundwater resources for future use by communities, farms, businesses, and the environment and to prevent groundwater pumping from causing undesirable results including significant and unreasonable depletions of groundwater supplies, degraded water quality, and land subsidence.
4. SGMA authorizes the State Water Board to designate groundwater basins as probationary. Most persons who extract groundwater from a basin the Board has designated probationary must report their extractions to the Board and pay an associated filing fee to the Board.
5. When deficiencies that resulted in a probationary designation of a basin are not corrected within the specified period of time (one year for the Tule

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Subbasin) the State Water Board may develop and, after notice and hearing, adopt an interim plan for the basin.

6. SGMA authorizes the State Water Board to exclude a class or category of extractions from the requirement for reporting that applies to probationary groundwater basins if those extractions are subject to a local plan or program that adequately manages groundwater in the portion of the basin to which that plan or program applies, and provides the State Water Board with discretion to determine what constitutes adequate management for the purposes of an exclusion from reporting and whether to apply an exclusion from reporting to adequately managed extractions. Persons excluded from the requirement for reporting are also excluded from the requirement to pay the associated filing fee.
7. The State Water Board designated the Tule Subbasin as probationary after a public hearing on September 17, 2024 ([Resolution No. 2024-0030](#)). The probationary designation took effect on October 3, 2024.
8. The Lower Tule River Irrigation District groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) (Lower Tule), Pixley Irrigation District GSA (Pixley), Tri-County Water Authority GSA (Tri-County), Tea Pot Dome Water District GSA (Tea Pot Dome), Terra Bella Irrigation District GSA (Terra Bella), Porterville Irrigation District GSA (Porterville), Saucelito Irrigation District GSA (Saucelito), and Vandalia Water District GSA (Vandalia) are among the GSAs that manage groundwater in the Tule Subbasin.
9. In September 2025, Lower Tule, Pixley, Tri-County, Tea Pot Dome, Terra Bella, Porterville, Saucelito, and Vandalia each submitted requests to the State Water Board to be excluded from the reporting requirement and information in support of the requests for exclusion. In December 2025, Board staff requested that the GSAs provide additional information to assist staff's evaluation of the exclusion requests and each GSA provided additional information. Staff capacity for engagement with GSAs was reduced while conducting the review of the exclusion requests.
10. The State Water Board acknowledges and appreciates the improvements Lower Tule, Pixley, Tri-County, Tea Pot Dome, Terra Bella, Porterville, Saucelito, and Vandalia have made to their approaches to groundwater management but continues to have concerns regarding management by those GSAs and the effect of granting reporting and fee exclusions on sustainability in the Tule Subbasin.

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11. State Water Board staff reviewed the information provided and considered it in context of subbasin-wide management, concerns related to each GSA's management, and how management and implementation impact the subbasin's path to sustainability. Staff prepared a Tule Subbasin Exclusion Report that concludes that while Lower Tule, Pixley, Tri-County, Tea Pot Dome, Terra Bella, Porterville, Saucelito, and Vandalia have made improvements to their groundwater management, the information provided by the GSAs does not appear to demonstrate adequate management by those GSAs and staff therefore does not recommend that pumpers within those GSAs be excluded from the reporting requirement. The staff report documents the issues for each GSA.
12. Based on its review and consideration, the State Water Board does not propose to apply exclusions from the reporting requirement to extractions in areas managed by Lower Tule, Pixley, Tri-County, Tea Pot Dome, Terra Bella, Porterville, Saucelito, or Vandalia.
13. The State Water Board has reviewed and considered the staff recommendation and supporting data and considered public comments and testimony.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The State Water Board:

1. Determines that exclusions from the reporting requirement for Lower Tule, Pixley, Tri-County, Tea Pot Dome, Terra Bella, Porterville, Saucelito, or Vandalia are not granted for Water Year 2025-2026 and Water Year 2026-2027.
2. Directs staff to prioritize providing technical feedback to the GSAs in order to assist the GSAs in resolving deficiencies in their groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) development and implementation.
3. Nothing in this resolution precludes the Tule Subbasin GSAs from submitting revised GSPs to the State Water Board for consideration of whether plan deficiencies are resolved sufficient for the subbasin to exit probation.
4. Nothing in this resolution precludes the Tule Subbasin GSAs from implementing existing and future GSPs to address undesirable results.

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## **CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned Clerk to the Board does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on April 21, 2026

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Courtney Tyler  
Clerk to the Board