



VENTURA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION  
**STAFF REPORT**

Meeting Date: March 20, 2024

**TO:** LAFCo Commissioners

**FROM:** Andrea Ozdy, Deputy Executive Officer *Andrea Ozdy*

**SUBJECT:** Sphere of Influence Review:  
 LAFCo 22-24S Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency

**Recommendation:**

Adopt Resolution LAFCo 22-24S (Attachment 2) making determinations and reviewing the sphere of influence for the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency (OBGMA) pursuant to Government Code Section 56425(g), including that a sphere of influence update is not necessary.

**District Information:**

The OBGMA is a dependent special district formed in 1991 that monitors the extraction and use of groundwater and manages groundwater quality in the Ojai Valley Groundwater Basin, in order to protect and maintain the long-term water supply for water users within its jurisdictional area. It conducts groundwater management and planning activities, documents groundwater extraction, collects extraction fees from well owners, coordinates with the County of Ventura and private entities (e.g., consultants and private well owners) to monitor basin conditions, maintains a groundwater model of the basin, monitors water levels in the basin, performs groundwater-related outreach and education activities, and promotes the operation and maintenance of the San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds (which is currently operated and maintained by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District). The OBGMA does not provide direct water service.

The OBGMA Act specifically prescribes that “the boundaries of the agency include that portion of the Ojai Basin watershed which lies within the boundaries of the Casitas Municipal Water District or the Ojai Water Conservation District, but do not include any land within the boundaries of the Ventura River County Water District.” A five-member board of directors, consisting of representatives of several agencies and groups, governs the District. The District’s

COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

COUNTY	CITY	DISTRICT	PUBLIC
Jeff Gorell	Jenny Crosswhite, Chair	Raul Avila, Vice-Chair	Pat Richards
Janice S. Parvin	John C. Zaragoza	Mary Anne Rooney	
<i>Alternate</i>	<i>Alternate</i>	<i>Alternate</i>	<i>Alternate</i>
Matt LaVere	Susan Santangelo	Mohammed A. Hasan	David J. Ross
<b>Executive Officer</b>	<b>Deputy Executive Officer</b>	<b>Office Manager/Clerk</b>	<b>Legal Counsel</b>
Kai Luoma	Andrea Ozdy	Richelle Beltran	Jeffrey Barnes

sphere of influence covers approximately 10,528 acres (about 16.5 square miles), and its boundary is coterminous with its sphere of influence boundary (Attachment 1).

### **Background:**

Pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (Government Code Section 56000 et seq.), the Commission was required to determine and adopt a sphere of influence (or “sphere”) for each city and special district on or before January 1, 2008. A sphere of influence is defined in Government Code Section 56076 as the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Commission. Every five years thereafter, the Commission must, as necessary, review and update each sphere of influence (Government Code Section 56425(g)).

In compliance with Government Code Section 56425(g), the Commission accepted an MSR report on December 12, 2003, for the District, entitled *Water and Wastewater Municipal Service Review Report*, which addressed agencies within the Ojai/Ventura area.

LAFCo’s past sphere of influence reviews resulted in no modifications of the sphere in 2004, 2009, and 2014.

### **Discussion:**

#### *Sphere of Influence Evaluation*

LAFCo staff consulted with District staff to discuss the District’s sphere of influence, and to determine: (1) if the District has experienced any changes to its service needs or areas since LAFCo’s most recent evaluation of its sphere of influence, and (2) if the District staff anticipates any service changes that would warrant adjustment of the sphere boundaries.

As explained in the analysis below, it appears that the existing sphere of influence boundary continues to reflect the District’s current and probable service area, and is justified based on the MSR report provided for the Commission’s consideration as part of Agenda Item 11 of the March 20, 2024, meeting. The MSR demonstrates that the District has the ability to provide services at acceptable levels. Therefore, no changes to the sphere of influence for the District are recommended. The sphere of influence review involving no changes is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it “will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2)).

## *Written Determinations*

Government Code Section 56425(e) requires that, in determining the sphere of influence of an agency, the Commission consider and prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

- (1) *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.* (Section 56425(e)(1))

The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai and unincorporated rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding the City. The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. Based on the land use designations and characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, existing land uses are expected to remain unchanged.

- (2) *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.* (Section 56425(e)(2))

The District monitors the extraction and use of groundwater and manages groundwater quality in the Ojai Valley Groundwater Basin, in order to protect and maintain the long-term water supply for water users within its jurisdictional area. It conducts groundwater management and planning activities, documents groundwater extraction, collects extraction fees from well owners, coordinates with the County of Ventura and private entities (e.g., consultants and private well owners) to monitor basin conditions, maintains a groundwater model of the basin, monitors water levels in the basin, performs groundwater-related outreach and education activities, and promotes the operation and maintenance of the San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds (which is currently operated and maintained by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District). The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai and unincorporated agricultural and open space land surrounding the City. Based on the land use designations and characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, existing land uses are expected to remain unchanged.

- (3) *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.* (Section 56425(e)(3))

The District monitors the extraction and use of groundwater and manages groundwater quality in the Ojai Valley Groundwater Basin, in order to protect and maintain the long-term water supply for water users within its jurisdictional area. It conducts groundwater management and planning activities, documents groundwater extraction, collects

extraction fees from well owners, coordinates with the County of Ventura and private entities (e.g., consultants and private well owners) to monitor basin conditions, maintains a groundwater model of the basin, monitors water levels in the basin, performs groundwater-related outreach and education activities, and promotes the operation and maintenance of the San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds (which is currently operated and maintained by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District). The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. Based on the evaluation contained in the MSR considered by LAFCo on March 20, 2024, including the land use designations and characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, the District has the ability to continue to provide services within its service area and sphere of influence, and additional demands would not adversely impact the present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the District provides or is authorized to provide.

- (4) *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency. (Section 56425(e)(4))*

The District's sphere of influence does not include territory that is known to be a community of interest. No disadvantaged unincorporated communities (defined in Government Code Section 56033.5 as communities having an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income), are located within or contiguous to the District's sphere of influence.

- (5) *For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection. . . the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence. (Section 56425(e)(5))*

The review of the District's sphere of influence is not considered an update (i.e., a modification) to the sphere. Additionally, no disadvantaged unincorporated communities are located within the District's sphere of influence.

### *Notice of Public Hearing*

This matter has been noticed as a public hearing pursuant to Government Code Section 56427. Additionally, all affected agencies have been notified of the public hearing.

### Attachments:

1. Existing Sphere of Influence Map for the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency
2. LAFCo 22-24S Resolution

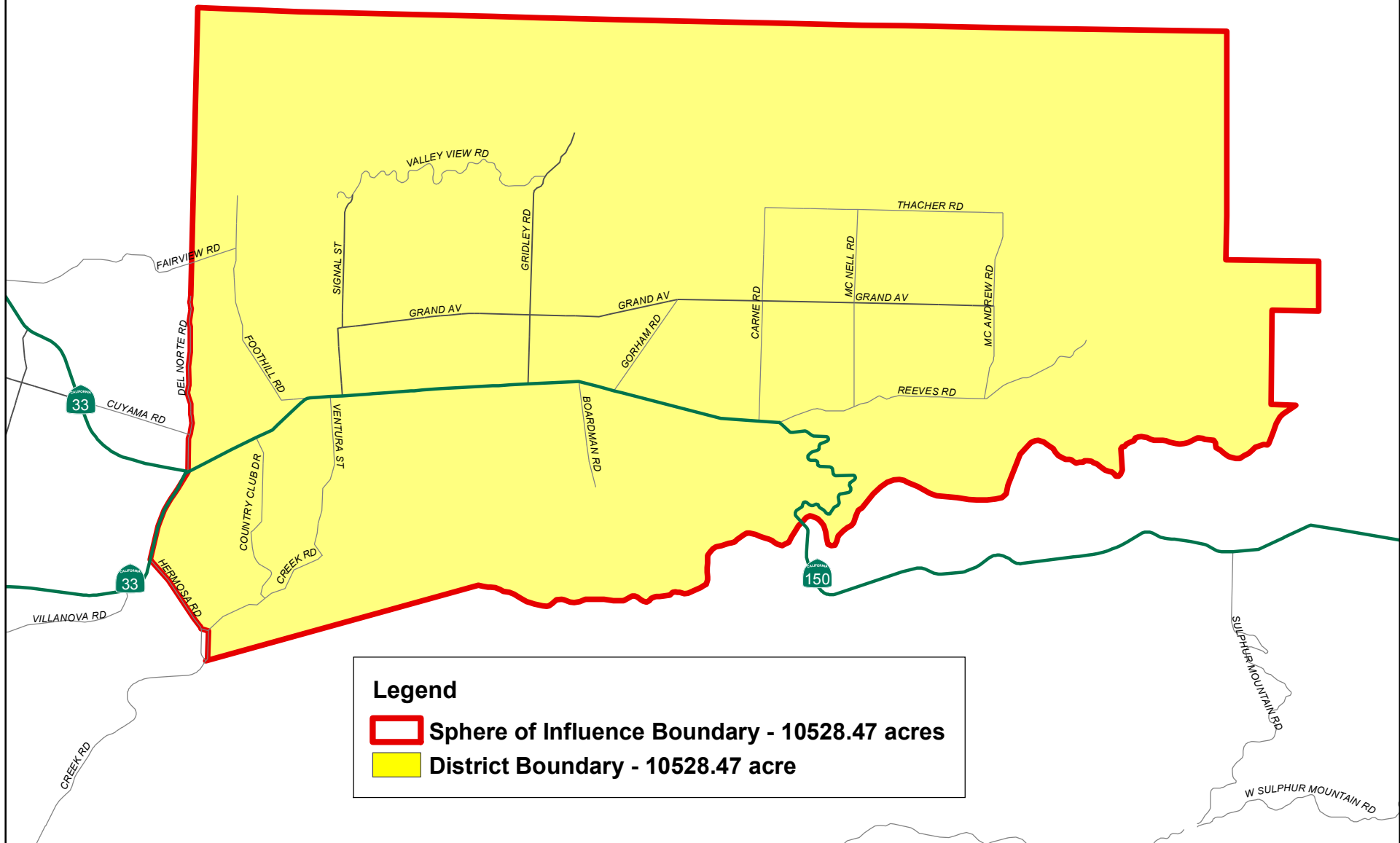
LAFCo makes every effort to offer legible map files with the online and printed versions of our reports; however, occasionally the need to reduce oversize original maps and/or other technological/software factors can compromise readability. Original maps are available for viewing at the LAFCo office by request.

Staff Report – Sphere of Influence Review

LAFCo 22-24S – Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency

March 20, 2024

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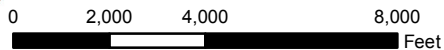
# Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency

Current as of November 19, 2014

Prepared by County of Ventura - IT Services Department - GIS Services

State Plane Coordinate System California Zone V - NAD 27

This map was compiled from records and computations



**LAFCO 22-24S**

**RESOLUTION OF THE VENTURA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION  
COMMISSION MAKING DETERMINATIONS AND REVIEWING  
THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE FOR THE OJAI BASIN  
GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

WHEREAS, Government Code § 56425 et seq. requires the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo or Commission) to develop and determine the sphere of influence of each local governmental agency within the County; and

WHEREAS, Government Code § 56425(g) requires that on or before January 1, 2008, and every five years thereafter, the Commission shall, as necessary, review and update the sphere of influence of each city and special district; and

WHEREAS, the Commission reviewed the sphere of influence for the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency (OBGMA or District) in 2004, 2009, and 2014;

WHEREAS, the Commission most recently accepted a Municipal Service Review report for the District dated March 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Commission desires to review the sphere of influence for the District; and

WHEREAS, no change in regulation, land use, or development will occur as a result of reviewing the sphere of influence for the District; and

WHEREAS, at the times and in the manner required by law, the LAFCo Executive Officer gave notice of the consideration of this item by the Commission; and

WHEREAS, the sphere of influence review item was duly considered at a public hearing on March 20, 2024, as specified in the notice of hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Commission heard, discussed, and considered all oral and written testimony for and against the sphere of influence review including, but not limited to, the LAFCo Staff Report dated March 20, 2024, and recommendations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED by the Commission as follows:

- (1) The LAFCo Staff Report dated March 20, 2024, and recommended review of the sphere of influence for the District are adopted; and
- (2) The subject sphere of influence review is assigned the following distinctive short form designation:  
**LAFCO 22-24S OJAI BASIN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY SPHERE OF INFLUENCE REVIEW;** and
- (3) An update (modification) to the sphere of influence for the District is not necessary; and
- (4) The Commission has considered the criteria set forth in Government Code § 56425(e) and determines as follows:

**a. *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands. (§ 56425(e)(1))***

The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai and unincorporated rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding the City. The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. Based on the land use designations and characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, existing land uses are expected to remain unchanged.

**b. *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area. (§ 56425(e)(2))***

The District monitors the extraction and use of groundwater and manages groundwater quality in the Ojai Valley Groundwater Basin, in order to protect and maintain the long-term water supply for water users within its jurisdictional area. It conducts groundwater management and planning activities, documents groundwater extraction, collects extraction fees from well owners, coordinates with the County of Ventura and private entities (e.g., consultants and private well owners) to monitor basin conditions, maintains a groundwater model of the basin, monitors water levels in the basin, performs groundwater-related outreach and

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**c. *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide. (§ 56425(e)(3))***

The District monitors the extraction and use of groundwater and manages groundwater quality in the Ojai Valley Groundwater Basin, in order to protect and maintain the long-term water supply for water users within its jurisdictional area. It conducts groundwater management and planning activities, documents groundwater extraction, collects extraction fees from well owners, coordinates with the County of Ventura and private entities (e.g., consultants and private well owners) to monitor basin conditions, maintains a groundwater model of the basin, monitors water levels in the basin, performs groundwater-related outreach and education activities, and promotes the operation and maintenance of the San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds (which is currently operated and maintained by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District). The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. Based on the evaluation contained in the MSR considered by LAFCo on March 20, 2024, including the land use designations and characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, the District has the ability to continue to provide services within its service area and sphere of influence, and additional demands would not adversely impact the



present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the District provides or is authorized to provide.

**d. *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency. (§ 56425(e)(4))***

The District's sphere of influence does not include territory that is known to be a community of interest. No disadvantaged unincorporated communities (defined in Government Code Section 56033.5 as communities having an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income), are located within or contiguous to the District's sphere of influence.

**e. *For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection. . . the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence. (§ 56425(e)(5))***

The review of the District's sphere of influence is not considered an update (i.e., a modification) to the sphere. Additionally, no disadvantaged unincorporated communities are located within the District's sphere of influence.

- (5) The sphere of influence for the District is hereby reviewed and is generally depicted in Exhibit A, "Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency," attached hereto; and
- (6) LAFCo staff is directed to have the official Geographic Information System (GIS) sphere of influence data maintained for the Ventura LAFCo by the Ventura County Information Technology Services Department as the official sphere of influence record for the District updated consistent with this action.

This resolution was adopted on March 20, 2024.

	AYE	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Commissioner Avila	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Crosswhite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Gorell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Parvin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Richards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Rooney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Zaragoza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner Hasan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner LaVere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner Ross	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner Santangelo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3-20-24

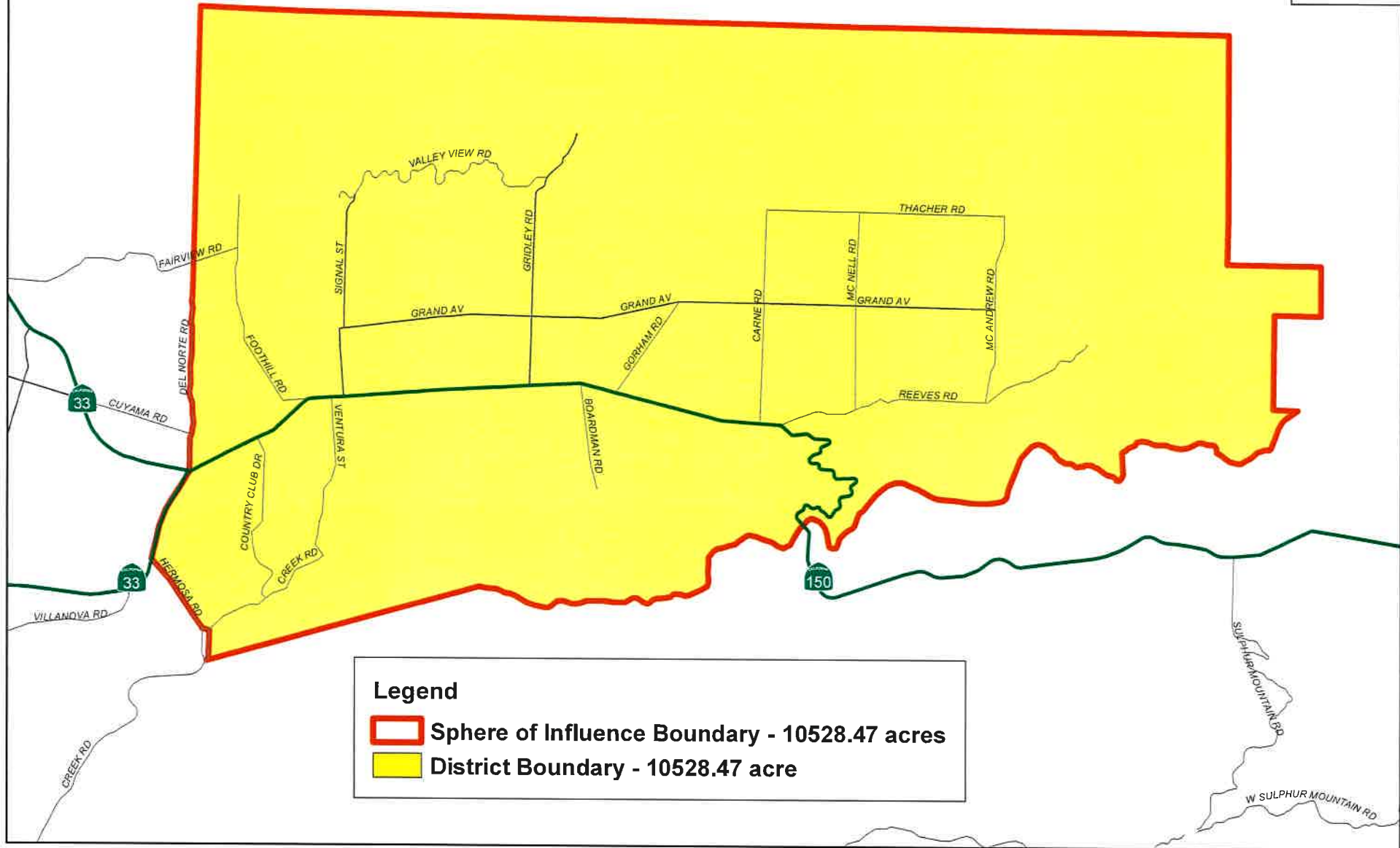
Date



Chair, Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission

Attachment: Exhibit A

c: Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency  
Ventura County Information Technology Services Department



# Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency

Current as of November 19, 2014

Prepared by County of Ventura - IT Services Department - GIS Services

State Plane Coordinate System California Zone V - NAD 27

This map was compiled from records and computations

