

Julie Dachtler

From: David Sandino <david.sandino05@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 3:05 PM
To: Clerkoftheboard
Cc: April Meneghetti
Subject: Groundwater Management

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Dear Chair Sandy and Members of the Board of Supervisors

I am a university water law professor, but I am writing to express my personal views as a Yolo County citizen interested in promoting sustainable groundwater management practices for the long-term prosperity of the County. This letter is to express my support for a 45-day well moratorium for agricultural wells in the Focus Areas as discussed in the staff report. As noted in the report, there are eleven pending applications in the Focus Areas, which could further collectively stress those areas if the wells were approved. This moratorium would provide an opportunity to develop improvements for the Urgency Ordinance 1569 to enhance groundwater management in Yolo County and to preserve the status quo in the Focus Areas to avoid any further groundwater levels declines. In addition, the moratorium may allow for additional well data and groundwater levels information to become available after this summer's irrigation season to assist in the improvement of the ordinance.

It is prudent for this Board to take a careful approach to groundwater management through a moratorium and ordinance improvements. Looking around the State outside of Yolo County, other groundwater basins have reached a tipping point due to low groundwater levels, subsidence, and contaminated groundwater. The result has been that seven groundwater basins are under probationary review by the State Water Resources Control Board and facing potential State takeover, and five basins are in base-wide adjudications (expensive water rights lawsuits involving many land owners, well owners, public agencies, etc.). And in many other basins around the state that have not reached the stress level of probation or adjudication, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies have had to allocate available groundwater supply to achieve sustainability. In some basins, there has been as much as a 50% cutback of allocated groundwater supplies from historical use. Through a proactive approach to adopt the short-term moratorium and improve the ordinance, the Board and Yolo County will be in a much better position to avoid the difficult regulatory and court approaches that have reached our friends in other agricultural counties.

Thank you for considering these comments. Sincerely, David Sandino