

County of Lassen Board of Supervisors



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April 27, 2021

CERTIFIED RETURN RECEIPT

7020 1290 0000 0270 7649

Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1303 10th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Inquiry Regarding the March 23, 2021, Letter Requesting an Extension for Submittal of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Big Valley Groundwater Basin (DWR Bulletin 118 Basin 5-004)

Dear Governor Gavin Newsom:

This letter is to request a response from you to our letters to you dated March 23, 2021, February 9, 2021, November 17, 2020, and August 11, 2020 (attached), in regard to preparation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) required to be submitted to the Department of Water Resources by January 31, 2022, pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA), for the Big Valley Groundwater Basin. To date, we have not received communication of any type regarding said letter (by telephone, letter or email).

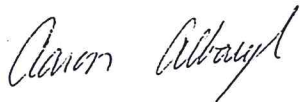
As stated in more detail in our previous letter, your Executive Orders have drastically limited our ability, and the public's willingness, to have the in-person public meetings necessary to prepare the required GSP. This has left both the Lassen and Modoc Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) with few options. Many around the state have turned to internet-based meetings during this pandemic. However, conducting meetings through the internet is a poor substitution in Big Valley because there is not sufficient internet access. Further, we do not have sufficient resources to conduct internet-based meetings in a meaningful way. Again, our letter to you describes our challenges in great detail.

The GSP deadline is now only nine months away, and it is clear that we do not have enough time to prepare a GSP supported by the level of public participation a plan of this magnitude deserves. Lassen County and the residents of Big Valley have accepted the responsibility required by SGMA to prepare the GSP when no one else would. Neither Lassen County or Modoc County were required by SGMA to accept the responsibility (financially and in terms of land use responsibility) to serve as the GSAs for Big Valley, but that is exactly what we have done. We have more than demonstrated our willingness to meet the challenges presented by SGMA head-on. That said, if we are going to prepare this GSP, it is in the interest of everyone, including you, that it be done right.

This was a serious enough subject to warrant passage of SGMA and signature by the prior Governor. We can assure you that preparation of the GSP for the Basin is certainly a matter of direct concern to the citizens of Big Valley. As such, this Board deserves an answer to our letter, and, even more so, the citizens of Big Valley deserve the courtesy of an answer, even if the answer is contrary to our request. To give the GSP the service it truly deserves, we simply need a little more time. That's all.

Thank you for considering our request and we look forward to your prompt response.

Thank you in advance,



Aaron Albaugh, Chairman
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

AA:MLA:gfn
Enclosures

cc: Brian Dahle, Senator, California Senate
Megan Dahle, Assembly Member, California State Assembly
Modoc County Board of Supervisors as the Big Valley Modoc GSA
Big Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee
Department of Water Resources