



**STAFF REPORT**  
**12/8/2021**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Cástulo R. Estrada, Utilities Manager

**SUBJECT:** Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Coachella Water Authority Authorizing Resolution No. WA-2021-10 Adoption of the 2022 Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan Update: SGMA Alternative Plan

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt Resolution No. WA-2021-10, Authorizing the Adoption of the 2022 Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan Update: SGMA Alternative Plan.

**BACKGROUND:**

Water resources planning in the Coachella Valley is of the utmost importance to sustain the area's residents, businesses, and agriculture in a desert climate.

The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) required the formation of groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) by June 30, 2017 in medium- and high-priority basins, as designated by DWR, and to develop groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs). The GSA is responsible for developing and implementing a GSP to meet sustainability goal of the basin to ensure that it is operated within its sustainable yield, without causing undesirable results. SGMA allows a 20-year timeframe for GSAs to implement their plans and achieve long-term groundwater sustainability. Due to the stressed conditions of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin, water purveyors within the Coachella Valley have been implementing various programs to address and avoid the problem of overdraft and unstable groundwater levels.

On March 9, 2016, the Coachella Water Authority elected on to become a GSA for the Indio Subbasin of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin.

Subsequently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated October 5, 2016 was entered into among the four GSAs in the Indio Subbasin, which are the City of Coachella, a municipal corporation acting through, and on behalf of, the Coachella Water Authority (CWA), the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), the Desert Water Agency (DWA), and the City of Indio, a municipal corporation acting through, and on behalf of, the Indio Water Authority (IWA) for the purpose of developing a common understanding among the GSAs regarding the governance structures applicable to implementation of the SGMA in the Indio Subbasin.

On December 29, 2016, the GSAs collaboratively submitted an Alternative to a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (Alternative Plan) for the Indio Subbasin to DWR in accordance with Water Code section 10733.6

On July 17, 2019, DWR determined that the Alternative Plan for the Indio Subbasin satisfies the objectives of SGMA and notified the Indio Subbasin GSAs that the Alternative Plan was approved, and that they would be required to submit an assessment and update of the Alternative Plan by January 1, 2022, and every five years thereafter

The Alternative Plan Update includes a range of planning scenarios with robust climate change assumptions to assess whether projected water demands over the 25-year planning horizon can be met while continuing to sustainably manage the Indio Subbasin. A 10% safety factor (buffer) was included for drinking water and other potable uses. Results of analysis and groundwater modeling show that implementation of planned projects and management actions will meet projected water demands and sustainable management of the Indio Subbasin. The GSAs have established sustainability criteria for groundwater storage, levels, and subsidence that will be evaluated annually. The presentation included with this staff report provides highlights of the Alternative Plan Update.

Following the adoption of Resolution No. WA-2021-10 and subsequent adoption by the other Indio Subbasin GSAs, the City will submit to DWR the approved Alternative Plan Update, resolutions, and any additional information required by law. A complete copy of the plan is available on the District's website at <https://www.indiosubbasinsgma.org/alternative-plan-update/>

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

None

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Indio-SGMA-Alternative Plan