



**ULARA**

UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER AREA WATERMASTER

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**REPORT OF ULARA WATERMASTER  
STATUS CONFERENCE of OCTOBER 9, 2019  
SUPERIOR COURT, DEPARTMENT 52  
HONORABLE SUSAN BRYANT-DEASON**

**A. Status of Annual reports**

1. A draft of the Annual Watermaster Report for Water Year (WY) 2016-17 is complete and has been approved for publication by the ULARA Parties. This Annual Report is in the process of final publishing, and is expected to be submitted to the Court and published on the ULARA Website in October 2019; it will be dated December 2018. The Watermaster has requested and is awaiting delivery of necessary data for all reporting Parties for the Annual Report for WY 2017-18. A Draft of this latter Annual Report is projected to be available for review by the Parties in December 2019. On September 30, 2019, WY 2018-19 ended; the Watermaster will formally request data from the Parties for WY 2018-19 in November 2019.
2. A Draft of the Annual Groundwater Pumping and Spreading Plans for WYs 2016-17 through 2020-21, and WYs 2017-18 through 2021-22 is currently in progress. These reports are expected to be finalized and sent to the Court in November 2019. Data for WYs 2018-19 through 2022-23 will be requested by the ULARA Watermaster in October 2019.

**B. Ongoing Watermaster Activities**

1. The Watermaster continues to submit information to the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) website to help verify that ULARA maintains its compliance with SGMA. Such data uploads occur on an annual basis. Finalized data for the WY 2016-17 were recently uploaded in October 2019.
2. The Watermaster continues to maintain compliance with DWR on its California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring program (known as CASGEM) for the four groundwater basins within ULARA. Data from the Parties for their spring 2019 water level measurements were uploaded to the CASGEM system in May 2019.
3. The Watermaster has been working with the Parties on the issue of Hill and Mountain (H&M) pumping in the watershed regions of ULARA. After receiving comments from the Parties, the Watermaster completed and distributed to the Parties on February 14, 2019 a revised version of a Technical Memorandum on H&M pumping (along with attendant tables and figures). Additional review by the Parties revealed that further clarification was needed related to definition of certain water “extractors”. Hence, the Watermaster distributed a revised version of the document on May 30, 2019, and the Watermaster is expecting further review comments from the Parties.



4. The Watermaster has continued to review and either approve or deny, based on site-specific conditions, the Low Impact Development (LID) projects within the City of Los Angeles portions of ULARA (i.e., the San Fernando & Sylmar basins).

### **C. Salt & Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP)**

The Watermaster is nearing completion of work on the SNMP for the four groundwater basins within ULARA. This project has basically involved an assessment and proposed management of possible changes in concentration trends over time in total dissolved solids, nitrate (as NO<sub>3</sub>), and chloride in the ULARA groundwater basins, as a result of the use of recycled water for various projects. As part of the SNMP process, five Technical Memoranda have been distributed to date for public review. The published Technical Memoranda can be accessed by the public by visiting [www.ULARAwatermaster.com/SNMP](http://www.ULARAwatermaster.com/SNMP).

In July 2017, the Watermaster was given the go-ahead by the RWQCB-LA to begin work on the environmental documentation for the SNMP. Preparation of the necessary CEQA environmental documentation process is ongoing, and the Watermaster has been working with RWQCB-LA and ESA, the CEQA subcontractor, to move the documentation forward. ESA is revising a draft of the document, and is expected to deliver a review draft of the document in the next few weeks (October 2019).

### **D. ULARA “Policies and Procedures”**

The original ULARA Watermaster prepared the first “Policies and Procedures” document in July 1987. Second and Third Updates to the document were subsequently prepared by that Watermaster, and were dated July 1993 and February 1998, respectively.

The basic purposes of the “Policies and Procedures” document are: to provide a summary of the decreed extraction rights of the various parties to the Court-adjudicated ULARA region; to discuss the overall management of groundwater; and to state the basic rules for the activities of the Watermaster and the Administrative Committee.

The Watermaster, in conjunction with the Administrative Committee, is preparing an update to the most current “Policies and Procedures” document for ULARA, dated February 1998. Numerous and substantial changes are being provided to bring that document up to date, and to help ensure that it is in conformance with the more current guidelines established by the DWR and other agencies, in regard to programs like CASGEM, SGMA, and SNMP, as well as reflecting the current practices of the Watermaster in relation to report preparation and approval, report distribution, etc.

The Watermaster expects to have several meetings and discussions with the Parties in regard to possible changes, deletions, and additions to the existing document. The Watermaster is still working on the document in order to eventually provide a complete Draft of the Updated “Policies and Procedures” document to the Parties. The Watermaster’s outside counsel (BB&K) will also be asked to review and provide possible comments to the document once it become available.