İ					
1 2	NOSSAMAN LLP FREDERIC A. FUDACZ (SBN 50546) ffudacz@nossaman.com	EXEMPT FROM FILING FEE PER GOV. CODE, § 6103			
3	GINA R. NICHOLLS (SBN 270174) gnicholls@nossaman.com				
4	777 S. Figueroa Street, 34th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90017				
5	Telephone: 213.612.7800 Facsimile: 213.612.7801				
6	Attorneys for CITY OF ONTARIO				
7	[Additional Parties on Following Pages]				
8					
9					
10					
11	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA				
12	FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO				
13		I			
14	CHINO BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT,	Case No: RCVRS 51010			
15	Plaintiff,	Assigned for All Purposes to: Honorable Gilbert G. Ochoa			
16	vs.	DECLARATION OF COURTNEY JONES			
17	CITY OF CHINO, ET AL.,	IN SUPPORT OF OPPOSITION TO APPROPRIATIVE POOL'S MOTION			
18	Defendants.	FOR AWARD OF EXPENSES  [Concurrently Filed with Opposition; Request for Judicial Notice; Declaration of J. Scott-Coe; Declaration of G. Nicholls]			
19 20					
21		Date: August 22, 2024			
22		Time: 9:00 a.m. Place: Dept. R17			
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DECLARATION OF COURTNEY JONES IN SUPPORT OF OPPOSITION TO APPROPRIATIVE POOL'S MOTION FOR AWARD OF EXPENSES

1 2 3	ARTHUR G. KIDMAN, CAL. BAR NO. 61719 ANDREW B. GAGEN, CAL. BAR NO. 212257 KIDMAN GAGEN LAW LLP 8 Corporate Park, Suite 300 Irvine, CA 92606 Telephone: (714) 755, 3100
4	Telephone: (714) 755-3100 agagen@kidmanlaw.com
5	Attorneys for MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT and MONTE VISTA IRRIGATION COMPANY
6	
7 8 9	JIMMY L. GUTIERREZ, CAL. BAR NO. 59448 JIMMY L. GUTIERREZ LAW CORPORATION 12616 Central Avenue Chino, CA 91710
10	(909) 591-6336 Office  Jimmy@City-Attorney.com
11	Attorneys for CITY OF CHINO
12	
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DECLARATION OF COURTNEY JONES IN SUPPORT OF OPPOSITION TO APPROPRIATIVE POOL'S MOTION FOR AWARD OF EXPENSES

## **DECLARATION OF COURTNEY JONES**

## I, Courtney Jones, declare:

- 1. I am the Utilities Deputy General Manager for the City of Ontario ("Ontario"), a party in the above-captioned case. I have worked for Ontario for six years. I am a licensed Civil Engineer in California. In connection with my management role for Ontario, I closely follow and regularly participate in matters involving the Chino Basin Watermaster. I regularly attend Watermaster meetings, including meetings of the Appropriative Pool ("AP") and the Advisory Committee. I am well-familiar with matters involving the Watermaster, including Watermaster's annual budget process and assessment packages, and I personally review Watermaster's assessment invoices issued to Ontario. I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth herein, unless stated upon information and belief, and if called as a witness, I could and would competently testify to the facts stated herein. As to any matters stated upon information and belief I am informed and believe they are true.
- 2. I make this declaration in support of the Opposition filed on behalf of Ontario to the Appropriative Pools' Motion for Award of Expense, Including Expenses Under Civil Code Section 1717, filed June 26, 2024 (the "Motion"). I have reviewed the Motion and its supporting papers, and I am familiar with their contents.
- 3. After filing the Motion, the AP met in open session to discuss matters presented in the Motion and possible settlement. I personally attended the meeting on behalf of Ontario. Representatives of the City of Chino ("Chino"), Monte Vista Water District and Monte Vista Irrigation Company (collectively, "Monte Vista") also attended. So far, Ontario has not reached a settlement with the AP, but Ontario remains interested in settlement.
- 4. Outside of the AP meeting, I have communicated with Chris Diggs, the AP Chairperson, and with John Schatz, AP legal counsel, as well as representatives of Chino and Monte Vista, in an effort to understand the amounts sought by the Motion and Ontario's share. Based upon these communications and my own analysis, I understand that the AP is seeking \$262,761.21 for Ontario, Chino, and Monte Vista's collective proportionate share of Watermaster assessments for

AP legal and administrative expenses, plus \$196,687.01 for attorney fees incurred by the AP in connection with the dispute about the legal effect of Terms of Agreement ("TOA") entered into by the AP and the Overlying Agricultural Pool ("Ag Pool") in 2022. The \$196,687.01 represents attorney fees paid by AP members other than the Responding Parties according to each AP member's proportionate share of AP assessments for legal and administrative expenses. It includes attorney fees incurred on appeal directly by the AP, as well as attorney fees incurred on appeal by the Ag Pool and assessed to the AP under Section 5.4(a) of the Peace Agreement. The Motion seeks to shift the other AP members' proportionate share of these attorney fees to the Responding Parties.

- 5. Certain amounts included in the Motion and its supporting papers already have been paid by Ontario. Specifically, the Memorandum of Costs on Appeal includes \$394,574.50 of attorney fees and costs allegedly incurred by legal counsel for the AP and the Ag Pool in connection with the TOA dispute, but Ontario already paid its share of the Ag Pool expenses. Paragraph 4 of the Declaration of Edgar Tellez in support of the Motion acknowledges that the Ag Pool's attorney fees and costs already were apportioned and charged to the AP by Watermaster under Section 5.4(a) of the Peace Agreement. Mr. Tellez's Declaration further acknowledges that the Ag Pool's attorney fees and costs were paid proportionally by the AP members, including Ontario.
- 6. On information and belief, I understand that attorneys for the AP submit detailed invoices to the AP Chair for review before authorizing Watermaster to pay the amounts billed.
- 7. In the course of efforts to facilitate resolution of the dispute, Ontario and Monte Vista indicated that these entities would pay their share of the \$262,761.21 upon receipt of the detailed invoices that support these expenses.
- 8. Attached hereto as <u>Exhibit 1</u> is correspondence that I sent to the AP Chair and Vice Chair on June 20, 2024 confirming Ontario's payment of Ag Pool legal and administrative expenses after receiving backup documentation from the AP.
- 9. Starting in March 2024, I personally requested copies of the AP's detailed legal invoices from the current AP Chair, Mr. Diggs. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 2** are copies of my emails with Mr. Diggs about the invoices on March 27 and June 21, 2024. My emails explained

that Ontario was seeking the invoices in order to complete its review of Ontario's outstanding share of expenses for Ag Pool legal, AP legal, and any other AP expenses. My emails also stated that representatives of Chino (Dave Crosley) and Monte Vista (Justin Scott-Coe) had made similar requests.

- 10. On July 19, 2024, I sent a formal request for the AP's detailed legal invoices to Mr. Diggs. A copy of my email to Mr. Diggs is attached hereto as **Exhibit 3**. On July 23, 2024, I emailed a similar request for AP legal invoices to the prior AP Chairperson, Eduardo Espinoza. A copy of my email to Mr. Espinoza is attached hereto as **Exhibit 4**.
- 11. So far, I have not received any of the AP's detailed legal invoices in response to my requests.
- 12. As a show of good faith for purposes of resolving matters presented by the Motion, Ontario is ready and willing to pay its proportional share of the unpaid AP assessments for legal and administrative expenses into an escrow account with Watermaster, on similar terms and conditions as the escrow account that Watermaster established in 2020 for the AP in its dispute with the Agricultural Pool, in which the AP sought to review the Ag Pool's invoices for legal expenses.
- 13. On July 30, 2024, I personally communicated with the Watermaster seeking to establish an escrow account for the \$262,761.21 sought be the Motion for AP assessments for legal expenses. Attached as **Exhibit 5** is a copy of my correspondence with the Watermaster. An escrow account has not been set up yet.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 1st day of August, at Ontario, California.

Courtney Jo

From: Courtney Jones < CJJones@ontarioca.gov>

Sent: Thursday, June 20, 2024 6:34 PM

To: Diggs, Chris; Chris Berch

Cc: HJLee@cityofchino.org; jrobles@ci.upland.ca.us; jmswift@fontanawater.com; jbrokaw@marygoldmutualwater.com; jscottcoe@mvwd.org; jschatz13@cox.net;

sreimer@mvwd.org; KevinK@cvwdwater.com; Irey@JCSD.US;

directormartinez@mvwd.org; mayala@jcsd.us; MarkG@cvwdwater.com; mwiley@chinohills.org; mmartin47@yahoo.com; mezvirbulis@sgvwater.com; navila@cityofchino.org; ndemoet@ci.upland.ca.us; omramos@sqvwater.com;

randallr@cvwdwater.com; smanbahal@wvwd.org; Scott Burton;

sjzielke@fontanawater.com; spopelar@jcsd.us; tayav@cvwdwater.com;

TLayton@sawaterco.com; TobyMoore@gswater.com; amandac@cvwdwater.com; aalberti@sqvwater.com; benjamin.lewis@gswater.com; bgdecoud@mvwd.org;

Blee@sawaterco.com; bsmith@jcsd.us; CarmenV@cvwdwater.com; cblais@ci.norco.ca.us; Chad Nishida; Melissa.Cansino@pomonaca.gov;

cifealy@fontanawater.com; DCrosley@cityofchino.org; EduardoE@cvwdwater.com; EricG@cvwdwater.com; edtarango@fontanawater.com; eulloa@cityofchino.org; gkamansky@niagarawater.com; JamesC@cvwdwater.com; JimmieM@cvwdwater.com; JiwonS@cvwdwater.com; jchan@wvwd.org; JohnB@cvwdwater.com; jlopez@sarwc.com;

customerservice@sarwc.com; Marsha Ariyasu; Ron Craig

Subject:

Attachments:

Ontario Payment of Ag Pool Legal

CityofOntario-AgPooolPaymentRCVRS51010.pdf

Good afternoon Appropriative Pool Chair and Vice Chair,

Please see the attached letter transmitted today with our payment of \$241,449.19 to Watermaster.

We appreciate the backup documentation provided on June 13th. This allowed us to expedite payment for the Overlying Agricultural Pool's legal administration and expenditures.

Thank you, Courtney

Courtney Jones, P.E.

Deputy General Manager

MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

1425 S. Bon View Avenue Ontario, CA 91761-4406 Phone: (909) 395-2640

E-mail: cjjones@ontarioca.gov

PAUL S. LEON MAYOR

DEBRA PORADA

ALAN D. WAPNER JIM W. BOWMAN RUBEN VALENCIA COUNCIL MEMBERS June 20, 2024

SHEILA MAUTZ CITY CLERK

JAMES R. MILHISER TREASURER

> SCOTT OCHOA CITY MANAGER

### VIA EMAIL

Mr. Todd M. Corbin, General Manager Chino Basin Watermaster 9641 San Bernardino Road Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 Email: tcorbin@cbwm.org

Subject: <u>City of Ontario Payment to Watermaster for Agricultural Pool Legal Expenses (Court Appeal Case No. E079052 and Super. Ct. No. RCVRS 51010)</u>

Dear Mr. Corbin,

The City of Ontario ("City") submits payment to Chino Basin Watermaster ("Watermaster") in the amount of \$241,449.19 for the Overlying Agricultural Pool ("Ag Pool") legal administration and expenditures resulting from the San Bernardino County Court Appeal Case No. E079052, affirming the original order.

The City is paying the invoices below received for Fiscal Years 2021-2022 through 2023-2024 as they relate to the Ag Pool legal administration and expenditures. The remaining Appropriate Pool special assessment invoices will be paid once the outstanding backup documentation has been received.

- Settlement invoices received for FY 2021-2022 ("AP22-29-SET" and "AP22-42-STL");
- Legal expense invoices received for FY 2022-2023 ("AP22-61-AGL" and "AP23-57-AG");
- Legal expense invoice received for FY 2023-2024 ("AP24-13-AG").

The City appreciates Watermaster's ongoing efforts to provide the outstanding invoices for prompt payment. This payment is made in good faith, and without prejudice to any future payments.

## Sincerely,

Courtney Jones

Courtney Jones, P.E. Deputy General Manager City of Ontario

cc: Scott Burton - General Manger, Ontario Municipal Utilities Company

Chad Nishida - Water Resources Manager, Ontario Municipal Utilities Company

Chris Diggs – Chair, Appropriative Pool Chris Berch – Vice Chair, Appropriative Pool From:

Courtney Jones < CJJones@ontarioca.gov>

Sent:

Friday, June 21, 2024 11:53 AM

To:

Diggs, Chris; Chris Berch

Cc:

Scott Burton

Subject:

**RE: Legal Expenses** 

Good morning AP Chair and Vice Chair,

I am following up on my request below. Ontario is requesting the AP Legal invoice backup documentation to process our remaining unpaid invoices. Specifically, we are looking for the invoices from John Schatz that were approved and paid by the AP to administer our remaining payment.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks!

Courtney

Courtney Jones, P.E.
Deputy General Manager
Ontario Municipal Utilities Company

From: Courtney Jones

Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 4:17 PM

To: Diggs, Chris < Chris. Diggs@pomonaca.gov>
Cc: Scott Burton < SBurton@ontarioca.gov>

Subject: Legal Expenses

Hi Chris,

I understand that Dave and Justin contacted you about their outstanding share of Ag Legal invoices. I'm following up because Ontario is examining our unpaid invoices for Ag Legal due to the appellate ruling. It would be helpful if you could provide an updated balance of what our agency owes and the itemized invoices as supporting documents for Ag Legal, AP Legal, and any other AP expenses (i.e., Tom Harder). This will help us complete our evaluation and determine our payment.

Thanks! Courtney

Courtney Jones, P.E.

Water Resources and Regulatory Affairs Director



1425 S. Bon View Avenueo indicate that

Ontario, CA 91761-4406 Phone: (909) 395-2640

E-mail: cjjones@ontarioca.gov

From:

Diggs, Chris < Chris. Diggs@pomonaca.gov>

Sent:

Wednesday, March 27, 2024 5:08 PM

To: Cc: Courtney Jones

C......

Scott Burton

Subject:

RE: Legal Expenses

Hi Courtney, we are working on this and I will send to you ASAP.

### CD

From: Courtney Jones < CJJones@ontarioca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 4:17 PM
To: Diggs, Chris < Chris.Diggs@pomonaca.gov>
Cc: Scott Burton < SBurton@ontarioca.gov>

Subject: Legal Expenses

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Hi Chris,

I understand that Dave and Justin contacted you about their outstanding share of Ag Legal invoices. I'm following up because Ontario is examining our unpaid invoices for Ag Legal due to the appellate ruling. It would be helpful if you could provide an updated balance of what our agency owes and the itemized invoices as supporting documents for Ag Legal, AP Legal, and any other AP expenses (i.e., Tom Harder). This will help us complete our evaluation and determine our payment.

Thanks! Courtney

Courtney Jones, P.E.

Water Resources and Regulatory Affairs Director



1425 S. Bon View Avenueo indicate that

Ontario, CA 91761-4406 Phone: (909) 395-2640

E-mail: cijones@ontarioca.gov

To: Diggs, Chris < Chris. Diggs@pomonaca.gov>

Cc: Chris Berch <cberch@jcsd.us>; Scott Burton <SBurton@ontarioca.gov>; Justin Scott-Coe <jscottcoe@mvwd.org>;

Dave Crosley <a href="mailto:crosley@cityofchino.org">crosley cityofchino.org</a></a>

Subject: RE: AP Invoices

Good afternoon Chris,

I am following up on my below email send last week. Please reply to this email letting us know if you will provide the invoices to us, and by when. If we don't receive a response by end of business today, **7/29/24**, we may need to treat that as a refusal for purposes of our settlement discussion, the Public Records Act, and any court filings.

Thank you, Courtney

Courtney Jones, P.E.
Deputy General Manager
Ontario Municipal Utilities Company

From: Courtney Jones

Sent: Friday, July 19, 2024 10:53 AM

To: Diggs, Chris < Chris. Diggs@pomonaca.gov>

Cc: Chris Berch <a href="mailto:cberch@jcsd.us">cberch@jcsd.us</a>; Scott Burton <a href="mailto:SBurton@ontarioca.gov">SBurton@ontarioca.gov</a>; Justin Scott-Coe <a href="mailto:scott-coe@mvwd.org">jscottcoe@mvwd.org</a>;

Dave Crosley < dcrosley@cityofchino.org>

Subject: AP Invoices

Good morning Chris,

I'm writing to follow up on requests by Ontario and MVWD/MVIC for copies of AP legal invoices. We're seeking complete copies (i.e., not summaries or redactions) of all the AP legal invoices, including invoices for all AP attorneys/legal consultants, that you received during your time as AP Chairperson.

As members of the AP, we have equal rights as all AP members, including Pomona, to see the invoices that we're being asked to pay. We don't think it should be necessary to make a Public Records Act request, but if that's what it takes for us to receive the invoices, then please treat this email as such.

Time is of the essence given the imperative to reach a settlement or respond to the pending motion by August 1. So please reply to this email **by Monday**, **7/22/24**, letting us know if you will provide the invoices to us, and by when. If we don't receive a response, we may need to treat that as a refusal for purposes of our settlement discussion, the Public Records Act, and any court filings.

Thank you for your time, Courtney



Ontario, CA 91761-4406
Phone: (909) 395-2640
E-mail: cjiones@ontarioca.gov

From: Taya Victorino < <a href="mailto:tayav@cvwdwater.com">tayav@cvwdwater.com</a> Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 10:50 AM

To: Courtney Jones < <a href="mailto:courtney-color: bluestarioca.gov">cJJones@ontarioca.gov</a>>

Cc: Scott Burton <<u>SBurton@ontarioca.gov</u>>; <u>iscottcoe@mvwd.org</u>; <u>dcrosley@cityofchino.org</u>; Eduardo Espinoza <<u>EduardoE@cvwdwater.com</u>>; John Bosler <<u>JohnB@cvwdwater.com</u>>; Cindy Cisneros <<u>CindyC@cvwdwater.com</u>>

Subject: RE: AP Invoices

### Good morning Courtney,

We have received your public records request dated July 23, 2024. We will research the documents responsive to your request and respond to you within 10 days of receipt of your request (by August 2, 2024).

Thank you,
Taya Victorino, CMC
Executive Services Administrator / District Clerk
(909) 987-2591



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I 0440 Ashford Street
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730
www.CVWDWater.com [linkprotect.cudasvc.com]

From: Courtney Jones < CJJones@ontarioca.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 2:06 PM

To: Eduardo Espinoza < Eduardo E@cvwdwater.com >

Cc: John Bosler <JohnB@cvwdwater.com>; Scott Burton <SBurton@ontarioca.gov>; Justin Scott-Coe

<iscottcoe@mvwd.org>; Dave Crosley <dcrosley@cityofchino.org>

Subject: AP Invoices

Good afternoon Eduardo,

I'm writing to follow up on requests by Ontario and MVWD/MVIC for copies of AP legal invoices. We're seeking complete copies (i.e., not summaries or redactions) of all the AP legal invoices, including invoices for all AP attorneys/legal consultants, that you received during your time as AP Chairperson.

As members of the AP, we have equal rights as all AP members, including CVWD, to see the invoices that we're being asked to pay. We don't think it should be necessary to make a Public Records Act request, but if that's what it takes for us to receive the invoices, then please treat this email as such.

Time is of the essence given the imperative to reach a settlement or respond to the pending motion by August

1. So please reply to this email by Thursday, 7/25/24, letting us know if you will provide the invoices to us, and by

when. If we don't receive a response, we may need to treat that as a refusal for purposes of our settlement discussion, the Public Records Act, and any court filings.

Thank you for your time, Courtney



1425 S. Bon View Avenue Ontario, CA 91761-4406 Phone: (909) 395-2640

E-mail: cijones@ontarioca.gov

From: Courtney Jones

Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:18 PM

To: tcorbin@cbwm.org

Cc: Justin Scott-Coe <jscottcoe@mvwd.org>; Scott Burton <SBurton@ontarioca.gov>

Subject: Escrow Account Inquiry

Hi Todd,

I'm following up on our discussion from earlier today regarding the potential setup of an escrow account for the unpaid Appropriative Pool Legal and Administrative assessments. As you know, Ontario and MVWD/MVIC are exploring this option with Watermaster. This approach was previously utilized in 2020 for the Agricultural Pool Legal and Other Expenses dispute. At that time, members of the Appropriative Pool deposited funds into an escrow account to cover legal and expert expenses that exceeded the fiscal year 2019-20 budget.

From our conversation, Watermaster is still assessing whether setting up a similar escrow account is feasible, what kind of direction they would need, and who should provide the direction, given that this is not standard practice. Please let me know if there's anything I can do to assist.

Thank you, Courtney

Courtney Jones, P.E.

Deputy General Manager

MUNICIPAL

UTILITIES

1425 S. Bon View Avenue Ontario, CA 91761-4406 Phone: (909) 395-2640 E-mail: cjiones@ontarioca.gov

# **CHINO BASIN WATERMASTER**

Case No. RCVRS 51010

Chino Basin Municipal Water District v. City of Chino, et al.

# **PROOF OF SERVICE**

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I O	50	alc		

I am employed in the County of San Bernardino, California. I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the action within. My business address is Chino Basin Watermaster, 9641 San Bernardino Road, Rancho Cucamonga, California 91730; telephone (909) 484-3888.

On August 1, 2024 I served the following:

1.	DECLARATION OF COURTNEY JONES IN SUPPORT OF OPPOSITION TO APPROPRIATIVE POOL'S MOTION FOR AWARD OF EXPENSES
<u>'X</u> /	BY MAIL: in said cause, by placing a true copy thereof enclosed with postage thereon fully prepaid, for delivery by the United States Postal Service mail at Rancho Cucamonga, California, addresses as follows:  See attached service list: Mailing List 1
/	BY PERSONAL SERVICE: I caused such envelope to be delivered by hand to the addressee.
/	BY FACSIMILE: I transmitted said document by fax transmission from (909) 484-3890 to the fax number(s) indicated. The transmission was reported as complete on the transmission report, which was properly issued by the transmitting fax machine.
<u>'X</u> /	BY ELECTRONIC MAIL: I transmitted notice of availability of electronic documents by electronic transmission to the email address indicated. The transmission was reported as complete on the transmission report, which was properly issued by the transmitting electronic mail device.  See attached service list: Master Email Distribution List

and correct.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true

Executed on August 1, 2024 in Rancho Cucamonga, California.

By: Ruby Favela Quintero Chino Basin Watermaster

PAUL HOFER 11248 S TURNER AVE ONTARIO, CA 91761

JEFF PIERSON 2 HEXAM IRVINE, CA 92603

# Ruby Favela Quintero

**Contact Group Name:** 

Master Email Distribution

Categories:

Main Email Lists

#### Members:

Adrian Gomez Alan Frost

Alberto Mendoza Alejandro R. Reyes

Alex Padilla

Alexis Mascarinas

Alfonso Ruiz Allen Hubsch Alma Heustis Alonso Jurado Alyssa Coronado Amanda Coker

Amy Bonczewski Andrew Gagen Andy Campbell

Andy Malone Angelica Todd Anna Nelson

Anthony Alberti April Robitaille

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**Board Support Team IEUA** 

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Brandi Goodman-Decoud

Brandon Howard Brenda Fowler Brent Yamasaki Brett Godown Brian Dickinson Brian Geve Brian Lee Bryan Smith

Carmen Sierra

Brandi Belmontes

agomez@emeraldus.com

Alan.Frost@dpw.sbcounty.gov Alberto.Mendoza@cmc.com

arreyes@sqvwater.com Alex.Padilla@wsp.com

AMascarinas@ontarioca.gov

alfonso.ruiz@cmc.com ahubsch@hubschlaw.com

alma.heustis@nucor.com

ajurado@cbwm.org acoronado@sarwc.com amandac@cvwdwater.com ABonczewski@ontarioca.gov agagen@kidmanlaw.com

acampbell@ieua.org amalone@westyost.com angelica.todd@ge.com atruongnelson@cbwm.org

aalberti@sqvwater.com arobitaille@bhfs.com

citycouncil@chinohills.org akidman@kidmanlaw.com ashley.zapp@cmc.com ash@akdconsulting.com

benjamin.lewis@gswater.com

bmarkham@bhfs.com BenR@cvwdwater.com ben.weink@tetratech.com

Beth.McHenry@hoferranch.com

bschwartz@mvwd.org bvelto@uplandca.gov

BoardSupportTeam@ieua.org bbowcock@irmwater.com rjdiprimio@sqvwater.com bobfeenstra@gmail.com

bakuhn@aol.com bkuhn@tvmwd.com

Bob.Page@rov.sbcounty.gov

bherrema@bhfs.com

bradley.jensen@cao.sbcounty.gov

BBelmontes@ontarioca.gov bgdecoud@mvwd.org

brahoward@niagarawater.com balee@fontanawater.com

byamasaki@mwdh2o.com

Brett.Godown@Airports.SBCounty.Gov

bdickinson65@gmail.com bgeye@autoclubspeedway.com

blee@sawaterco.com bsmith@jcsd.us

carmens@cvwdwater.com

Carol Boyd Carol.Boyd@doj.ca.gov
Carolina Sanchez csanchez@westyost.com
Casey Costa ccosta@chinodesalter.org
Cassandra Hooks chooks@niagarawater.com

Cathleen Pieroni - Inland Empire Utilities Agency (cpieroni@ieua.org)

cpieroni@ieua.org
Chad Blais cblais@ci.norco.ca.us
Chad Nishida CNishida@ontarioca.gov
Chander Letulle cletulle@jcsd.us

Charles Field cdfield@att.net
Charles Moorrees cmoorrees@sawaterco.com

Chino Hills City Council citycouncil@chinohills.org
Chris Berch cberch@jcsd.us

Chris Diggs Chris\_Diggs@ci.pomona.ca.us
Christen Miller Christen.Miller@cao.sbcounty.gov

Christensen, Rebecca A rebecca\_christensen@fws.gov

Christiana Daisy cdaisy@ieua.org
Christopher M. Sanders cms@eslawfirm.com
Christopher R. Guillen cguillen@bhfs.com
Cindy Cisneros cindyc@cvwdwater.com

Cindy Li Cindy.li@waterboards.ca.gov

administration@cityofchino.org

Courtney Jones cjjones@ontarioca.gov
Craig Miller CMiller@wmwd.com
Craig Stewart craig.stewart@wsp.com
Cris Fealy cifealy@fontanawater.com
Curtis Burton CBurton@cityofchino.org

Dan McKinney dmckinney@douglascountylaw.com

Daniel Bobadilla dbobadilla@chinohills.org

Daniela Uriarte dUriarte@cbwm.org

Danny Kim dkim@linklogistics.com

Dave Argo daveargo46@icloud.com

Dave Crosley DCrosley@cityofchino.org

Dave Schroeder DSchroeder@cbwcd.org

David Barnes DBarnes@geoscience-water.com

David De Jesus ddejesus@tvmwd.com

David Schroeder (dschroeder@cbwcd.org)

dschroeder@cbwcd.org

Dawn Varacchi-lves (dawn.varacchi@ge.com)

City of Chino, Administration Department

dawn.varacchi@ge.com
Denise Garzaro dgarzaro@ieua.org
Dennis Mejia dmejia@ontarioca.gov
Dennis Williams dwilliams@geoscience-water.com

Derek Hoffman dhoffman@fennemorelaw.com
Diana Frederick diana.frederick@cdcr.ca.gov
Ed Diggs ediggs@uplandca.gov

Ed Means edmeans@icloud.com
Eddie Lin (elin@ieua.org) elin@ieua.org

Edgar Tellez Fosteretellezfoster@cbwm.orgEduardo EspinozaEduardoE@cvwdwater.comElizabeth M. Calcianoecalciano@hensleylawgroup.comElizabeth P. Ewenselizabeth.ewens@stoel.com

Elizabeth Willis Eric Fordham Eric Garner

Eric Grubb

Eric Lindberg PG,CHG Eric N. Robinson Eric Papathakis

Eric Tarango Erik Vides Erika Clement Eunice Ulloa

Eunice Ulloa - City of Chino (eulloa@cityofchino.org)

**Evette Ounanian** 

Frank Yoo Fred Fudacz Fred Galante

G. Michael Milhiser G. Michael Milhiser

Garrett Rapp

Geoffrey Kamansky Geoffrey Vanden Heuvel

Gerald Yahr Gina Gomez Gina Nicholls Gino L. Filippi Gracie Torres Grant Mann

Grant Mann Greg Zarco Gregor Larabee Ha T. Nguyen Henry DeHaan Hvianca Hakim

Hye Jin Lee Imelda Cadigal Insixiengmay, Maria

Irene Islas Ivy Capili James Curatalo

Janelle S.H. Krattiger, Esq

Jasmin A. Hall Jason Marseilles Jayne Joy

Jean Cihigoyenetche

Jeff Evers
Jeff Mosher
Jeffrey L. Pierson
Jenifer Ryan
Jennifer Hy-Luk
Jeremy N. Jungries
Jesse Pompa
Jessie Ruedas

Jill Keehnen

ewillis@cbwcd.org

eric\_fordham@geopentech.com

eric.garner@bbklaw.com ericg@cvwdwater.com

eric.lindberg@waterboards.ca.gov

erobinson@kmtg.com Eric.Papathakis@cdcr.ca.gov edtarango@fontanawater.com

evides@cbwm.org Erika.clement@sce.com eulloa@cityofchino.org

eulloa@cityofchino.org EvetteO@cvwdwater.com

FrankY@cbwm.org ffudacz@nossaman.com fgalante@awattorneys.com directormilhiser@mvwd.org Milhiser@hotmail.com grapp@westyost.com

gkamansky@niagarawater.com geoffreyvh60@gmail.com

yahrj@koll.com

ggomez@ontarioca.gov gnicholls@nossaman.com Ginoffvine@aol.com gtorres@wmwd.com

GMann@dpw.sbcounty.gov Greg.Zarco@airports.sbcounty.gov Gregor.Larabee@cdcr.ca.gov

ha.nguyen@stoel.com Hdehaan1950@gmail.com HHakim@linklogistics.com HJLee@cityofchino.org Imelda.Cadigal@cdcr.ca.gov

Maria.Insixiengmay@cc.sbcounty.gov

irene.islas@bbklaw.com ICapili@bhfs.com jamesc@cvwdwater.com janelle.krattiger@stoel.com

jhall@ieua.org jmarseilles@ieua.org

Jayne.Joy@waterboards.ca.gov

Jean@thejclawfirm.com jevers@niagarawater.com jmosher@sawpa.org jpierson@intexcorp.com

jryan@kmtg.com jhyluk@ieua.org jjungreis@rutan.com jpompa@jcsd.us

Jessie@thejclawfirm.com jill.keehnen@stoel.com

Jim Markman Jim W. Bowman

jimmiem@cvwdwater.com

Jimmy Gutierrez - Law Offices of Jimmy Gutierrez

Jimmy L. Gutierrez Jimmy Medrano Jiwon Seung Joanne Chan Joao Feitoza Jody Roberto Joe Graziano

Jimmy@City-Attorney.com Jaime.medrano2@cdcr.ca.gov JiwonS@cvwdwater.com jchan@wvwd.org joao.feitoza@cmc.com jroberto@tvmwd.com jgraz4077@aol.com jignacio@ieua.org johnb@cvwdwater.com jrharper@harperburns.com

jmarkman@rwglaw.com

jbowman@ontarioca.gov

jimmylaredo@gmail.com

jimmiem@cvwdwater.com

John Hughes - Monte Vista Water District (jhughes@mvwd.org)

John Huitsing John Lopez

Joel Ignacio

John Bosler

John Harper

John Lopez and Nathan Cole

John Mendoza John Partridge John Russ John Schatz Jordan Garcia Jose A Galindo Jose Ventura Josh Swift Joshua Aquilar

Justin Brokaw Justin Nakano

Justin Scott-Coe Ph. D. Kaitlyn Dodson-Hamilton

Karen Williams Kathleen Brundage Keith Person Kelly Ridenour Ken Waring Kevin O'Toole

Kevin Sage kparker@katithewaterlady.com

Krista Paterson Kurt Berchtold Kyle Brochard Kyle Snay Laura Roughton Laura Yraceburu

Lauren V. Neuhaus, Esq. Lee McElhaney Lewis Callahan

Liz Hurst Lorena Heredia

Linda Jadeski

jhughes@mvwd.org

johnhuitsing@gmail.com jlopez@sarwc.com

customerservice@sarwc.com imendoza@tvmwd.com jpartridge@angelica.com

iruss@ieua.org jschatz13@cox.net jgarcia@cbwm.org Jose.A.Galindo@linde.com

jose.ventura@linde.com jmswift@fontanawater.com jaguilar1@wmwd.com

jbrokaw@marygoldmutualwater.com

JNakano@cbwm.org jscottcoe@mvwd.org kaitlyn@tdaenv.com kwilliams@sawpa.org

kathleen.brundage@californiasteel.com keith.person@waterboards.ca.gov KRIDENOUR@fennemorelaw.com

kwaring@jcsd.us kotoole@ocwd.com Ksage@IRMwater.com

kparker@katithewaterlady.com

Kpaterson@kmtg.com kberchtold@gmail.com KBrochard@rwglaw.com kylesnay@gswater.com lroughton@wmwd.com lyraceburu@bhfs.com lauren.neuhaus@stoel.com Imcelhaney@bmklawplc.com Lewis.Callahan@cdcr.ca.gov

ljadeski@wvwd.org ehurst@ieua.org Iheredia@ieua.org

Mallory Gandara

### MGandara@wmwd.com

Manny Martinez - Monte Vista Water District Director

DirectorMartinez@mvwd.org

cella Correa MCorrea@rwglaw.com

mtule@ieua.org mayala@jcsd.us

mmendoza@westyost.com msosa@ci.pomona.ca.us Marilynhlevin@gmail.com mturner@tvmwd.com

mhensley@hensleylawgroup.com

mwiley@chinohills.org mwiman@nossaman.com marty@thejclawfirm.com martin@rauchcc.com mezvirbulis@sgvwater.com mlitchfield@tvmwd.com

Maureen.snelgrove@airports.sbcounty.gov

Mtrevino@icsd.us

michael.adler@mcmcnet.net michael.brown@stoel.com mblay@uplandca.gov mfam@dpw.sbcounty.gov

mhurley@ieua.org

Michael.Mayer@dpw.sbcounty.gov mthornton@tkeengineering.com

mlicea@mvwd.org mikayla@cvstrat.com mgardner@wmwd.com mikem@cvwdwater.com mgarcia@ieua.org mnelson@ieua.org

TobyMoore@gswater.com MWDProgram@sdcwa.org naguirre@tvmwd.com navila@cityofchino.org

natalie.costaglio@mcmcnet.net

n8deboom@gmail.com

ngupta@ieua.org

Nichole.Horton@pomonaca.gov

njacobs@somachlaw.com ndemoet@uplandca.gov NEscalante@ontarioca.gov Noah.goldenkrasner@doj.ca.gov

nferreira@uplandca.gov omramos@sgvwater.com farmwatchtoo@aol.com farmerhofer@aol.com pleon@ontarioca.gov PVicario@cityofchino.org peterhettinga@yahoo.com progers@chinohills.org

rwalker@jcsd.us

Marcella Correa Marco Tule Maria Ayala Maria Mendoza Maribel Sosa

Marilynhlevin@gmail.com

Marissa Turner Mark D. Hensley Mark Wiley Marlene B. Wiman

Martin Cihigoyenetche Martin Rauch

Martin Zvirbulis Matthew H. Litchfield Maureen Snelgrove Melanie Trevino Michael Adler

Michael B. Brown, Esq.

MIchael Blay Michael Fam Michael Hurley Michael Mayer Michael P. Thornton

Michelle Licea
Mikayla Coleman
Mike Gardner
Mike Maestas
Miriam Garcia
Monica Nelson
Moore, Toby
MWDProgram
Nadia Aquirre

Natalie Avila

Natalie Costaglio
Nathan deBoom
Neetu Gupta
Nichole Horton
Nick Jacobs
Nicole deMoet
Nicole Escalante

Noah Golden-Krasner Norberto Ferreira

Oscar Ramos Paul Hofer Paul Hofer Paul S. Leon Pete Vicario Peter Hettinga

Peter Rogers

Richard Anderson Richard Rees

Rickey S. Manbahal Robert DeLoach Robert E. Donlan Robert Neufeld

Robert S. (RobertS@cbwcd.org)

Robert Wagner Ron Craig

Ron LaBrucherie, Jr. Ronald C. Pietersma

Ruben Llamas
Ruby Favela
Rudy Nunez
Ryan Shaw
Sam Nelson
Sam Rubenstein
Sandra S. Rose
Scott Burton
Scott Slater
Seth J. Zielke
Shawnda M. Grady
Shivaji Deshmukh
Sonya Barber

SRamirez@kmtg.com Stephanie Reimer Stephen Deitsch

Stephen Parker - sparker@uplandca.gov

Steve Kennedy Steve M. Anderson

Steve Nix Steve Smith

Sonya Zite

Steven Andrews Engineering

Steven Flower
Steven J. Elie
Steven J. Elie
Steven Popelar
Steven Raughley
Susan Palmer
Sylvie Lee
Tammi Ford
Tariq Awan
Taya Victorino
Teri Layton
Terri Whitman

Terry Watkins Thomas S. Bunn Tim Barr

Terry Catlin

Tim Moore Timothy Ryan horsfly1@yahoo.com richard.rees@wsp.com smanbahal@wvwd.org robertadeloach1@gmail.com

red@eslawfirm.com
robneu1@yahoo.com
RobertS@cbwcd.org
rwagner@wbecorp.com
Rcraig21@icloud.com
ronLaBrucherie@gmail.com
rcpietersma@aol.com
rllamas71@yahoo.com
rfavela@cbwm.org
rnunez@cbwm.org
RShaw@wmwd.com
snelson@ci.norco.ca.us
srubenstein@wpcarey.com

sslater@bhfs.com sjzielke@fontanawater.com sgrady@eslawfirm.com sdeshmukh@ieua.org sbarber@ci.upland.ca.us szite@wmwd.com SRamirez@kmtg.com

directorrose@mvwd.org

sburton@ontarioca.gov

SReimer@mvwd.org

stephen.deitsch@bbklaw.com

sparker@uplandca.gov skennedy@bmklawplc.com steve.anderson@bbklaw.com

snix@ci.upland.ca.us ssmith@ieua.org

sandrews@sandrewsengineering.com

sflower@rwglaw.com s.elie@mpglaw.com selie@ieua.org spopelar@jcsd.us

Steven.Raughley@isd.sbcounty.gov

spalmer@kidmanlaw.com

slee@tvmwd.com tford@wmwd.com Tariq.Awan@cdcr.ca.gov tayav@cvwdwater.com tlayton@sawaterco.com TWhitman@kmtg.com tlcatlin@wfajpa.org

Twatkins@geoscience-water.com

tombunn@lagerlof.com tbarr@wmwd.com tmoore@westyost.com tjryan@sgvwater.com **Toby Moore** 

Todd M. Corbin (tcorbin@cbwm.org)

Tom Barnes
Tom Bunn

Tom Cruikshank

Tom Dodson (tda@tdaenv.com)

Tom Harder Tom O'Neill

Toni Medell

Tony Long

Toyasha Sebbag

Tracy J. Egoscue

Trevor Leja

Veva Weamer

Victor Preciado

Vivian Castro

Wade Fultz

WestWater Research, LLC

William Brunick

William McDonnell

William Urena

toby.moore@gswater.com

tcorbin@cbwm.org

tbarnes@esassoc.com

TomBunn@Lagerlof.com

tcruikshank@linklogistics.com

tda@tdaenv.com

tharder@thomashardercompany.com

toneill@chinodesalter.org

mmedel@mbakerintl.com

tlong@angelica.com

tsebbag@cbwcd.org

tracy@egoscuelaw.com

Trevor.Leja@cao.sbcounty.gov

vweamer@westyost.com

Victor\_Preciado@ci.pomona.ca.us

vcastro@cityofchino.org

Wade.Fultz@cmc.com

research@waterexchange.com

bbrunick@bmklawplc.com

wmcdonnell@ieua.org

wurena@emeraldus.com