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## SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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Coordinated Proceeding
Special Title (Rule 1550(b))

ANTELOPE VALLEY GROUNDWATER CASES

Included Actions:

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Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40 v. Diamond Farming Co.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. BC 325 201

Los Angeles County Waterworks District No.

40 v. Diamond Farming Co. Kern County Superior Court

Case No. S-1500-CV-254-348

22 Wm. Bolthouse Farms, Inc. v. City of Lancaster

Diamond Farming Co. v. City of Lancaster

Diamond Farming Co. v. Palmdale Water

24 District

Riverside County Superior Court

Consolidated Action, Case Nos.

RIC 353 840, RIC 344 436, RIC 344 668

AND RELATED CROSS-ACTIONS.

Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding No. 4408

## ORDER AFTER HEARING ON JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES

Hearing Date: October 10, 2006 Time: 10:00 a.m.

Department:

10:00 a.m. 1. Room 534

Judge:

Hon. Jack Komar

Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases (JCCP 4408) Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC 325 201 Order After Hearing on Jurisdictional Boundaries

## SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Coordinated Proceeding Special Title (Rule 1550(b)) ANTELOPE VALLEY GROUNDWATER **CASES Included Actions:** Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40 v. Diamond Farming Co. Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. BC 325 201 Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40 v. Diamond Farming Co. Kern County Superior Court Case No. S-1500-CV-254-348 Wm. Bolthouse Farms, Inc. v. City of Lancaster Diamond Farming Co. v. City of Lancaster Diamond Farming Co. v. Palmdale Water District Riverside County Superior Court Consolidated Action, Case Nos. RIC 353 840, RIC 344 436, RIC 344 668

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Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding No. 4408

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Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases (JCCP 4408) Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC 325 201 Order After Hearing on Jurisdictional Boundaries

AND RELATED CROSS-ACTIONS.

This matter came on for hearing on October 10, 11, and 12, 2006 for purposes of establishing the geographical boundaries for the ground water adjudication of the Antelope Valley coordinated cases. The court heard the testimony of expert witnesses called by the various parties, admitted exhibits into evidence, and heard oral argument.

The relief sought in this coordinated case is the adjudication of the claims of all parties who assert a right to the ground water within the Antelope Valley basin based upon the various causes of action and defenses stated by the parties. The court must have jurisdiction of all parties who may have a claim to the ground water at issue and accordingly must determine the geographical boundaries of the ground water basin. All overlying land owners with correlative usufructuary rights and appropriators who produce water from the aquifer are necessary parties.

The United States is a major overlying land owner within the basin and has been made a party to this litigation. The United States waives its sovereign immunity pursuant to the McCarran Amendment and may be sued in litigation which involves rights to surface or ground water *only* when the adjudication will be a comprehensive adjudication of all the rights in a river or other water source. 43 *U.S.C.S.* Section 666(a), *United States District Court for Eagle County* (1971) 401 U.S. 520, *United States v. Oregon, Water Resources Dep't* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1994) 44 F. 3d 758.

#### The Watershed

The purpose of the comprehensive adjudication requirement of the McCarran Amendment is to ensure that the United States is not subject piecemeal litigation. It is argued that the jurisdictional boundaries must therefore include the watershed in order to satisfy the McCarran Amendment because the watershed does in fact constitute the primary source of natural recharge of the basin aquifer. Hydrologic connection alone is not sufficient. *United States v. Eagle County*, supra. The rights claimed in the watershed must be such that without adjudicating those rights in the instant action, the United States (and other parties) would be subject to further, separate litigation regarding other *claims of right* affecting their rights to water within the aquifer. It should not be a potential claim based on some theoretical future conduct, but rather an actual claim based upon an existing right. The focus of this

comprehensive litigation is the determination of rights to water that is within the ground water basin. And the watershed is not part of the aquifer within the ground water basin.

The parties produced evidence at the hearing concerning the hydrology of the basin, including surface water and ground water, the hydrology of the watershed, and the extent of the relationship between the basin aquifer and the watershed.

The Little Rock Creek Reservoir, which controls significant recharge into the Antelope Valley aquifer, and which the court understands is operated by the Palmdale Irrigation District and the Little Rock Creek Irrigation District, is in the watershed and not within the ground water basin. Those districts are properly parties to the litigation because they claim rights to that water and because they exercise discretionary control over the release of the reservoir water for recharge. Any other parties who are similarly situated should also be joined in this litigation.

Other *nominal* users in the watershed whose use is fixed by permit or regulation have no rights to water within the aquifer and need not be joined absent some evidence that they have a claim as an appropriator, or otherwise, or are claiming a right to act beyond the parameters of their permit or regulated use to interfere with recharge of the basin aquifer in a material way.

Thus, the court declines to define the jurisdictional boundaries to include the watershed area and will limit the boundaries to the basin aquifer itself. However, to the extent that any other identified parties outside the boundaries of the ground water basin make a claim to ground basin water, or who claim a right to control basin recharge water from the watershed, they may be joined as parties upon motion to amend a complaint or cross complaint.

#### The Ground Water Basin

The principal area of disagreement in defining the basin relates to the area north of the Willow Springs/Cottonwood fault lines. The specific issue is whether the fault line or bedrock is so impermeable that it constitutes a northerly barrier so no water flows south of the fault line; or on the other hand, whether there is sufficient conductivity between the area north of the fault

and the balance of the Antelope Valley that the more northerly area should be included within the jurisdictional boundaries for this adjudication.

There are some additional areas of dispute involving the North Muroc area on the northeastern boundary of the basin, and the Leona Valley, and related areas, where there are a number wells pumping from fractured bedrock.

The court concludes that the alluvial basin as described in California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118-2003 should be the basic jurisdictional boundary for purposes of this litigation. In addition to the alluvial basin, the adjacent valleys also may have conductivity and potentially some impact on the aquifer. The evidence presently before the court is that the amount of flow at the present time and historically has been nominal and in some cases virtually nil, and will likely remain so for the indefinite future. The court will exclude them at this time from the jurisdictional boundaries. *De minimus non curat lex*. However, any party who believes that there is measurable impact on the aquifer so that particular parties in those areas should be joined may seek leave to do so.

The eastern boundary will be the jurisdictional line on the east which was established as the westernmost boundary in the Mojave litigation.

These boundaries are established for purposes of ensuring that the most reasonably inclusive boundaries will be used to ensure a complete and final adjudication of rights to the ground water.

As the litigation in this case progresses certain geographical areas, upon further evidence, may appear to lack any real connection to the Antelope Valley aquifer and such areas may ultimately be excluded. Other areas may be added as evidence establishes a claim adverse to the rights of the other parties involved in this groundwater adjudication. Again, any party who believe that parties who are not within the jurisdictional bounds should be joined may make application to the court to file a cross complaint, or amended complaint or cross complaint (as the case may be) to include such parties.

At the next Case Management Conference, counsel should address the possibility of creating defendant subclasses or other remedies for all potential parties who may be in marginal

water production areas, including various portions of the watershed that are currently excluded. Innovative methods may be used to minimize delay and service issues and expenses. The court reaffirms the Case Management Conference set for November 13, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. in the Los Angeles Superior Court, Central District, Department 1, Room 534, 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. SO ORDERED. /s/ Jack Komar Dated: November 3, 2006 Judge of the Superior Court 

# Exhibit 3

Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases (JCCP 4408) Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC 325 201 Order After Hearing on Jurisdictional Boundaries

On the court's own motion, the order entered November 3, 2006, is revised to read as follows:

This matter came on for hearing on October 10, 11, and 12, 2006 for purposes of establishing the geographical boundaries for the ground water adjudication of the Antelope Valley coordinated cases. The court heard the testimony of expert witnesses called by the various parties, admitted exhibits into evidence, and heard oral argument.

The relief sought in this coordinated case is the adjudication of the claims of all parties who assert a right to the ground water within the Antelope Valley basin based upon the various causes of action and defenses stated by the parties. The court must have jurisdiction of all parties who may have a claim to the ground water at issue and accordingly must determine the geographical boundaries of the ground water basin. All overlying land owners with correlative usufructuary rights and appropriators who produce water from the aquifer are necessary parties.

The United States is a major overlying land owner within the basin and has been made a party to this litigation. The United States waives its sovereign immunity pursuant to the McCarran Amendment and may be sued in litigation which involves rights to surface or ground water *only* when the adjudication will be a comprehensive adjudication of all the rights in a river or other water source. 43 *U.S.C.S.* Section 666(a), *United States District Court for Eagle County* (1971) 401 U.S. 520, *United States* v. *Oregon, Water Resources Dep't* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.1994) 44 F. 3d 758.

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The purpose of the comprehensive adjudication requirement of the McCarran Amendment is to ensure that the United States is not subject to piecemeal litigation. It is argued that the jurisdictional boundaries must therefore include the watershed in order to satisfy the McCarran Amendment because the watershed does in fact constitute the primary source of natural recharge of the basin aquifer. Hydrologic connection alone is not sufficient. *United States* v. *Eagle County*, supra. The rights claimed in the watershed must be such that without adjudicating those rights in the instant action, the United States (and other parties) would be subject to further, separate litigation regarding other *claims of right* affecting their rights to

water within the aquifer. It should not be a potential claim based on some theoretical future conduct, but rather an actual claim based upon an existing right. The focus of this comprehensive litigation is the determination of rights to water that is within the ground water basin. And the watershed is not part of the aquifer within the ground water basin.

The parties produced evidence at the hearing concerning the hydrology of the basin, including surface water and ground water, the hydrology of the watershed, and the extent of the relationship between the basin aquifer and the watershed.

The Little Rock Creek Reservoir, which controls significant recharge into the Antelope Valley aquifer, and which the court understands is operated by the Palmdale Irrigation District and the Little Rock Creek Irrigation District, is in the watershed and not within the ground water basin. Those districts are properly parties to the litigation because they claim rights to that water and because they exercise discretionary control over the release of the reservoir water for recharge. Any other parties who are similarly situated should also be joined in this litigation.

Other *nominal* users in the watershed whose use is fixed by permit or regulation have no rights to water within the aquifer and need not be joined absent some evidence that they have a claim as an appropriator, or otherwise, or are claiming a right to act beyond the parameters of their permit or regulated use to interfere with recharge of the basin aquifer in a material way.

Thus, the court declines to define the jurisdictional boundaries to include the watershed area and will limit the boundaries to the basin aquifer itself. However, to the extent that any other identified parties outside the boundaries of the ground water basin make a claim to ground basin water, or who claim a right to control basin recharge water from the watershed, they may be joined as parties upon motion to amend a complaint or cross complaint.

#### The Ground Water Basin

The principal area of disagreement in defining the basin relates to the area north of the Willow Springs/Cottonwood fault lines. The specific issue is whether the fault line or bedrock is so impermeable that it constitutes a northerly barrier so no water flows south of the fault line;

or on the other hand, whether there is sufficient conductivity between the area north of the fault and the balance of the Antelope Valley that the more northerly area should be included within the jurisdictional boundaries for this adjudication.

There are some additional areas of dispute involving the North Muroc area on the northeastern boundary of the basin, and the Leona Valley, and related areas, where there are a number of wells pumping from fractured bedrock.

The court concludes that generally the alluvial basin as described in California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118-2003 should be the basic jurisdictional boundary for purposes of this litigation. In addition to the alluvial basin, the adjacent valleys, including a portion of the North Muroc area and the Leona Valley, also may have conductivity and potentially some impact on the aquifer. The evidence presently before the court is that the amount of flow at the present time and historically has been nominal and in some cases virtually nil, and will likely remain so for the indefinite future. The court will exclude them at this time from the jurisdictional boundaries. *De minimus non curat lex*. However, any party who believes that there is measurable impact on the aquifer so that particular parties in those areas should be joined may seek leave to do so.

The eastern boundary will be the jurisdictional line on the east which was established as the westernmost boundary in the Mojave litigation.

A map and verbal description of the jurisdictional boundaries established by this order are attached hereto as Exhibit A. These boundaries are established for purposes of ensuring that the most reasonably inclusive boundaries will be used to ensure a complete and final adjudication of rights to the ground water.

As the litigation in this case progresses certain geographical areas, upon further evidence, may appear to lack any real connection to the Antelope Valley aquifer and such areas may ultimately be excluded. Other areas may be added as evidence establishes a claim adverse to the rights of the other parties involved in this groundwater adjudication. Again, any party who believe that parties who are not within the jurisdictional bounds should be joined may make application to the court to file a cross complaint, or amended complaint or

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1	cross complaint (as the case may be) to include such parties.		
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4	SO ORDERED.		
5	Dated:		
6	Judge of the Superior Court		
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Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases (JCCP 4408) Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC 325 201 Order After Hearing on Jurisdictional Boundaries

cross complaint (as the case may be) to include such parties.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: MAR I 2 2007

Judge of the Superior Court

JACK KOMAF

Anielope Valley Groundwater Cases (ICGP 4408) Las Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC 325 201 Order After Hearing on Jurisdictional Boundaries

# Exhibit 4

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3	& SLAVENS LLP Tel: (619) 232-0331		
4	Fax: (619) 232-4019	•	
5	Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Class		
6			
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8	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
9	FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES		
10	ANTELOPE VALLEY )	RELATED CASE TO JUDICIAL	
11	GROUNDWATER CASES )	COUNCIL COORDINATION PROCEEDING NO. 4408	
12	This Pleading Relates to Included Action: )		
13	REBECCA LEE WILLIS, on behalf of herself ) and all others similarly situated,	PLAINTIFF REBECCA WILLIS' RESPONSE TO EX PARTE	
14	Plaintiff,	APPLICATION FOR ORDER CONTINUING TRIAL DATE AND TO	
15	vs. )	AGWA'S REQUEST FOR ORDER PROTECTING PHASE 2 FINDINGS	
16   17	LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS )	·	
18	DISTRICT NO. 40; CITY OF LANCASTER; ) CITY OF LOS ANGELES; CITY OF )		
19	PALMDALE; PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT; LITTLEROCK CREEK IRRIGATION DISTRICT; PALM RANCH )	Date: October 6, 2008 Time: 9:00 a.m.	
20	IRRIGATION DISTRICT; QUARTZ HILL WATER DISTRICT; ANTELOPE VALLEY	Dep't: 1 Judge: Hon. Jack Komar	
21	WATER CO.; ROSAMOND COMMUNITY   SERVICE DISTRICT; MOJAVE PUBLIC		
22	UTILITY DISTRICT; and DOES 1 through 1,000;		
23	Defendants.		
24			
25	Plaintiff Rebecca Willis responds to Fred Kia's Ex Parte Application for an Order		
26	Continuing the Trial Date and to AGWA's Request for an Order Protecting Phase 2 Findings.		
27	For the reasons stated below, the Willis Class has not sought and does not seek to postpone the		
28	Phase 2 trial. But no Order can or should be entered "protecting" the Court's findings from later		
	- 1 -		

challenge by parties who were not timely made parties to this proceeding. In particular, as a matter of due process, the Willis Class members cannot be bound by the Phase II findings since they have not yet had notice of these proceedings.

#### RELEVANT PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

For approximately two years, this Court and parties have worked to make this proceeding comprehensive and binding to the extent possible upon all parties in interest. We will not recount the entire lengthy history. For present purposes, the critical facts are that the Court's Amended Order of June 3, 2008 approved the form of Notice to be sent to the Willis Class and required L.A. County Waterworks District No. 40 to "compile a list of Class members and propose a means for disseminating the Class Notice to such persons, which it shall post on the case website." L.A. County District No. 40 has not yet done so, apparently because it is trying to work with counsel for the small pumpers Class to craft a Notice to that Class. The Willis Class notice was finalized by counsel and approved by the court but was delayed by the Public Water Suppliers in order to achieve one mass mailing. In any event, there is no way that the members of the Willis Class will get Notice prior to the currently schedule Phase 2 trial.

#### ARGUMENT

1. As a Matter of Due Process, Mr. Kia and Others Similarly Situated Should Not Be Bound By the Findings Reached at the Phase 2 Trial.

Mr. Kia, as well as other persons who were not timely served by the purveyors and have not had adequate notice of the proposed Phase 2 trial, should not be forced to participate in that trial and, as a matter of due process, cannot be legally bound by the Court's findings. Any other ruling would be unfair and would not hold up on appeal.

2. The Members of the Willis Class Should Not Be Bound by the Findings at the Phase 2 Trial.

Due to the Purveyors' delays in sending Notice, the members of the Willis Class have also not had Notice of this action or the opportunity to opt out. Under these circumstances, the

Class Members cannot be properly bound by the trial findings. The law is clear that prior to class notice, class members cannot be bound by a determination on the merits; the defendants only gain the res judicata benefits of class certification after notice has been disseminated. *Civil Service Employees Ins. Co. v. Superior Court* (1978) 22 Cal. 3d 362, 372-74.

Given the Purveyor's delays in effecting service and Class notice, they must bear the risks of "One Way Estoppel."

# 3. At a Minimum, the Collateral Estoppel Consequences of Any Findings Reached at the Phase 2 Trial Should Be Decided Based on a Noticed Motion.

This Court should reject AGWA's invitation to order "on the Court's own Motion" that the Phase 2 Trial findings may **not** be challenged "by parties who have not yet appeared." That is simply an invitation to reversal and will not serve to protect those findings. At a bare minimum, the complicated issue of the collateral estoppel consequences of any Phase 2 findings should be decided based on a noticed motion, not on an "off the cuff" basis.

#### 4. As a Practical Matter, There Is No Need to Delay The Next Phase of Trial.

Notwithstanding the above, the Willis Class does not seek to continue the trial date. The simple fact is that the Class members, almost by definition, may not have adequate economic interests in the pending issues to spend the many thousands of dollars that would be required to take a position regarding the next phase of the trial. We understand that virtually everyone who does have such a significant interest has been served and has been given the opportunity to participate. Thus, there is little risk of any meaningful challenge to the Court's findings being asserted at a later date. In that regard, we note that the boundaries of the adjudication area were determined prior to certification of the Class, and, to our knowledge, no one has challenged those findings. Hopefully, preceding through the next phase of trial will advance a final resolution.

#### 5. Class Notice Should Be Served Promptly After This Phase of Trial.

From the Class' perspective, much more significant issues will be raised at the

subsequent phases of trial; and it is imperative that Notice be sent to the Class and that Class Members be given an opportunity to exclude themselves well before any further phases. We trust that the purveyors will work with us to make sure that happens. **CONCLUSION** For the reasons stated above, the Willis Class does not object to the Phase 2 trial going forward, but maintains that any findings rendered should not be binding on the Class Members. KRAUSE KALFAYAN BENINK Dated: October 1, 2008 & SLAVENS LLP David B. Zlotnick/Esq. Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Class 

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA 9 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES 10 11 Judicial Council Coordination Coordinated Proceeding Proceeding No. 4408 Special Title (Rule 1550(b)) 12 ANTELOPE VALLEY GROUNDWATER 13 CASES 14 Included Actions: 15 Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 16 ORDER AFTER PHASE TWO 40 v. Diamond Farming Co. TRIAL ON HYDROLOGIC 17 Los Angeles County Superior Court NATURE OF ANTELOPE VALLEY Case No. BC 325 201 18 Department: Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. Hon. Jack Komar Judge: 19 40 v. Diamond Farming Co. 20 Kern County Superior Court Case No. S-1500-CV-254-348 21 22 Wm. Bolthouse Farms, Inc. v. City of Lancaster Diamond Farming Co. v. City of Lancaster 23 Diamond Farming Co. v. Palmdale Water District 24 Riverside County Superior Court Consolidated Action, Case Nos. 25 RIC 353 840, RIC 344 436, RIC 344 668 26 27 AND RELATED CROSS-ACTIONS. 28

This matter came on for the second phase of the trial on October 6, 2008. Further trial in Phase Two continued on October 7, 8, 9, and 10 and November 3, 4, and 5, 2008. The court heard the testimony of expert witnesses called by the various parties, admitted exhibits into evidence, and heard oral argument. The matter was submitted on November 5, 2008.

The relief sought in this coordinated case is the adjudication of the claims of all parties who assert a right to the ground water within the Antelope Valley basin based upon the various causes of action and defenses stated by the parties in the various complaints, cross-complaints and answers on file herein.

The purpose of this second phase of the trial was to establish the hydrologic nature of the aquifer within the previously established geographical boundaries for the ground water adjudication of the Antelope Valley. Specifically, the issue was whether there were any distinct groundwater sub basins within the valley that did not have hydrologic connection to other parts of the aquifer underlying the valley.

Three parties have asserted that there are separate basins or sub basins within the jurisdictional boundaries established by the court within the Antelope Valley, and that therefore those areas should be treated as separate unconnected basins for purposes of the adjudication. The three parties are Tejon Ranchcorp, Anaverde LLC, and Crystal Organic Farms LLC. All other participating parties (with the exception of Sheep Creek, which is not participating in this phase) assert there is a single aquifer for purposes of the adjudication and that there are no sub basins within the aquifer.

Crystal Organic LLC has taken the position that there is no hydrologic connection between the area north of the Willow Springs fault and that area should be excluded from the area of adjudication of the Antelope Valley. Tejon Ranchcorp contends that there is a bedrock ridge separating the Antelope Valley into an east basin and a west basin and that the court should adjudicate each of those areas separately. Anaverde LLC contends that there is no hydrologic connection between the Anaverde Valley and the Antelope Valley.

 Anaverde LLC moved for judgment under CCP § 631.8 after the Public Water Producers had completed calling witnesses with regard to the issues on Phase Two of the trial. That motion is denied.

The court considers hydrologic connection within a groundwater aquifer for purposes of this adjudication to be that condition where ground water actually or potentially moves from one part of the basin to the other with the potential to affect the water status or condition of the other portion of the basin aquifer. If such connectivity is shown, then the area in question must be included within the adjudication of the valley. If there is no hydrologic connection, and there is no other basis for jurisdiction, then such an area should be excluded from the adjudication.

Based on the evidence presented, the court concludes that there is sufficient hydraulic connection between the disputed areas and the rest of the Antelope Valley such that the court must include the disputed areas within the adjudication area.

While the exact location of the bedrock ridge and its nature and extent have not been established with any precision, whatever its nature, specific location and extent may ultimately be proved to be, the court concludes that the evidence establishes that there is hydrologic connection between the so-called east and west portions of the Antelope Valley over the bedrock ridge. The court also concludes that there is hydrologic connection between the Anaverde Valley and the Antelope Valley as well as between the area north and south of the Willow Springs Fault.

The affect of the hydrologic connection on the rights of parties to the litigation cannot be determined at this stage of the proceedings. There are multiple claims to be adjudicated in this case, including declaratory relief, claims of prescription, claims of overlying owners to quiet title to water rights, claims that portions of the basin should be treated as a separate area for management purposes in the event a physical solution to water use is established, among other issues and claims. The resolution of many of these claims may well be affected by the nature and extent of the hydrologic connectivity of water within various portions of the aquifer. However, it would be premature to make any such determination at this stage of the proceedings,

At the next Case Management Conference scheduled for November 25, 2008, at 10:30 a.m. in Department 17 at the Santa Clara County Superior Court, counsel should address the status of the service of notices in the two class action proceedings, and the setting for trial of the remaining phases of the trial. The parties must provide narrative case management statements addressing these issues to the court no later than November 21, 2008.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: November 6, 2008

Judge of the Superior Court

**JACK KOMAR**