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Government Code § 6103**

6 Attorneys for
7 Antelope Valley Watermaster

8 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
9 **FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - CENTRAL DISTRICT**

10
11 Coordination Proceeding,
Special Title (Rule 1550(b))

Judicial Council Coordination
Proceeding No. 4408

12 LASC Case No.: BC 325201

13 **ANTELOPE VALLEY
GROUNDWATER CASES**

Santa Clara Court Case No. 1-05-CV-049053
Assigned to the Hon. Jack Komar, Judge of
the Santa Clara Superior Court

14
15 **ANTELOPE VALLEY
16 WATERMASTER'S CASE
17 MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE
STATEMENT**

18 **AND ALL RELATED ACTIONS**

Date: February 18, 2022
Time: 10:00 a.m.
19 Dept: By Courtcall

20
21 The Antelope Valley Watermaster ("Watermaster") submits the following Case
22 Management Conference Statement in response to the Case Management Conference Statement
23 filed on behalf of Plaintiff Richard A. Wood, et al. ("Wood Class") in *Richard A. Wood et al., v.*
24 *Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40, et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior Court Case
25 No. BC 291869 ("Wood Class Case").

26 As the Court is aware, the Wood Class Case was filed in 2008 against Los Angeles County
27 Waterworks District No. 40 ("District 40") and certain other water suppliers. The Wood Class Case
28 is one of several lawsuits related to the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin ("Basin") that were

1 coordinated by the Judicial Council and assigned to the Court for all purposes (“Antelope Valley
2 Groundwater Cases” or “AVGC”). After extensive litigation involving six distinct phases, the
3 Court entered judgment adjudicating the parties’ respective rights to the Basin’s groundwater and
4 creating a mechanism for the Basin’s management. The Watermaster was created by the judgment
5 to manage and administer the provisions of the judgment, including, among other things, imposing
6 and collecting assessments from parties that pump water from the Basin in excess of the amounts
7 allocated to them under the judgment.

8 Following the entry of judgment, counsel for the Wood Class filed a motion for attorney
9 fees and costs incurred in connection with their representation of the Wood Class. On April 25,
10 2016, the Court issued a written ruling order awarding over \$2.5 million in attorney fees, paralegal
11 fees and litigation costs, most of which was to be paid by District 40. Dissatisfied with the amount
12 of the award, the Wood Class appealed the Court’s ruling to the Fifth District Court of Appeal,
13 which on August 24, 2021, issued an opinion partially affirming and reversing the Court’s ruling
14 and remanding the matter for further proceedings.

15 On September 29, 2021 the Wood Class filed a Statement of Disqualification of the Court
16 pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 170.3. On October 4, 2021, the Court requested that
17 the Judicial Council appoint another judicial officer to preside over the further proceedings directed
18 by the Court of Appeal in the Wood Class Case.

19 In its Case Management Conference Statement, the Wood Class states that Rule 3.542 of the
20 California Rules of Court permits the Court to assign all matters related to the Wood Class fee
21 motions back to the Los Angeles County Superior Court for reassignment to a new judicial officer.
22 Rule 3.542 provides in pertinent part that “[t]he coordination trial judge may at any time remand a
23 coordinated action or any severable claim or issue in that action to the court in which the action was
24 pending at the time the coordination of that action was ordered.”

25 The Watermaster agrees that the transfer of the Wood Class Case back to the Los Angeles
26 County Superior Court for the further proceedings directed by the Court of Appeal is both
27 authorized and appropriate to promote judicial efficiency by allowing the Court to continue to
28 preside over the remaining coordinated matters in the Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases. (See,

1 e.g., *Jane Doe v. Superior Court* (2007) 148 Cal.App.4th 489, 498 fn.3 [to promote judicial
2 efficiency, in coordinated actions involving an issue in which reversal of a judgment occurred
3 (whether or not followed by a disqualification motion), the coordination trial judge is authorized to
4 transfer the involved action back to the court in which it was originally pending].)

5 The Court's retention of jurisdiction over the remaining matters in the AVGC is essential
6 for the effective enforcement of the judgment and the management of the Basin. Since its
7 creation, the Watermaster has been involved in numerous proceedings with various parties to the
8 judgment concerning their pumping rights under the judgment and payment for the water they
9 have pumped from the Basin. These proceedings have been efficiently resolved via post-trial
10 motions heard by the Court, which is able to draw on its considerable knowledge of the Basin, the
11 parties and the judgment gleaned over the approximately 17 years that it has presided over the
12 AVGC. The Watermaster accordingly requests that the Court continue to preside over all aspects
13 of the AVGC except for the remanded proceedings directed by the Court of Appeal for the Wood
14 Class Case.

15 Respectfully submitted,

16 Dated: February 16, 2022

PRICE, POSTEL & PARMA LLP

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18 By:  _____

19 CRAIG A. PARTON
20 TIMOTHY E. METZINGER
21 CAMERON GOODMAN
22 Attorneys for
23 ANTELOPE VALLEY WATERMASTER
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1 **PROOF OF SERVICE**

2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

3 I am employed in the County of Santa Barbara, State of California. I am over the age of
4 eighteen (18) and not a party to the within action. My business address is 200 East Carrillo Street,
Fourth Floor, Santa Barbara, California 93101.

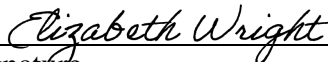
5 On February 16, 2022, I served the foregoing document described **ANTELOPE VALLEY**
6 **WATERMASTER’S CASE MANAGEMENT STATEMENT** on all interested parties in this
action by placing the original and/or true copy.

7
8 **BY ELECTRONIC SERVICE:** I posted the document(s) listed above to the Santa Clara
County Superior Court Website @ www.scefilng.org and Glotrans website in the action of
9 the Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases.

10 (*STATE*) I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that
the foregoing is true and correct.

11 (*FEDERAL*) I hereby certify that I am employed in the office of a member of the Bar of
12 this Court at whose direction the service was made.

13
14 Executed on February 16, 2022, at Santa Barbara, California.

15
16 
17 _____
Signature
Elizabeth Wright