

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

*Prepared for:*

**Yucaipa Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency**  
YucaipaSGMA.org

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# Public Outreach and Engagement Plan

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### GLOSSARY OF TERMS/ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
Yucaipa SGMA	Yucaipa Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
South Mesa	South Mesa Water Company
South Mountain	South Mountain Water Company
WHWC	Western Heights Water Company
YVWD	Yucaipa Valley Water District
SBVMWD	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
SGPWA	San Geronio Pass Water Agency
Term	Definition
Aquifer	An underground layer of water-bearing permeable rock, rock fractures or unconsolidated material (gravel, sand, or silt) that yields significant amounts of groundwater to wells or springs (DWR Bulletin 118).
Yucaipa Subbasin	Upper Santa Ana Valley Groundwater Basin, Yucaipa Subbasin, identified as Groundwater Basin Number 8-2.07 in DWR Bulletin 118 – California’s Groundwater
Stakeholder	An individual with interest in the Yucaipa Subbasin GSP
Engagement	Efforts made to understand and involve stakeholders and their concerns in the activities and decision-making of the Yucaipa GSA
Member Agencies	The water purveyors, municipalities and regional water agencies who are members of the Yucaipa Groundwater Sustainability Agency

### 1 BACKGROUND OF THE SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown on September 16, 2014, created a new framework for groundwater management in California. The framework includes a structure and schedule to achieve sustainable groundwater management within 20 years. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has historically managed the state's central repository for groundwater data. Under The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, DWR provides guidance, financial assistance, and technical support for compliance with state requirements. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) provides the regulatory backstop under The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, taking over basin management and assessing fees if local groundwater management is not successful in complying with the requirements of The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act established a new structure for local groundwater management through Groundwater Sustainable Agencies (GSAs). The formation of GSAs for all basins that the DWR designated as high and medium priority groundwater basins was required by July 1, 2017. Each GSA for these high and medium priority basins must then develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) that details how sustainable groundwater management will be achieved within 20 years of implementing the GSP. Sustainable groundwater management is defined by The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act as *the management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results*. This avoidance of undesirable results is measured through six sustainability indicators:

1. Chronic lowering of groundwater levels indicating a significant and unreasonable depletion of supply if continued over the planning and implementation horizon,
2. Significant and unreasonable reduction of groundwater storage,
3. Significant and unreasonable seawater intrusion,
4. Significant and unreasonable degradation of water quality,
5. Significant and unreasonable land subsidence, and
6. Depletion of interconnected surface water and groundwater that has significant and unreasonable adverse impacts on beneficial uses of the surface water.

The GSP is a tool used to help the GSA sustainably manage the basin. The criteria for sustainable management, including determining what is significant and unreasonable within the parameters of The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act for the

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groundwater basin managed by that GSA, must be assessed, with input from stakeholders, before the GSP can be adopted.

### 1.1 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Requirements for Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is an important component of any successful long term planning effort. Engaging members of the public in groundwater sustainability planning will improve public understanding of the technical and political considerations the GSA factors into their decision-making process. Participation by the public will also improve the GSA's understanding of the potential impacts of their decisions.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act recognized the importance of stakeholder engagement and laid out specific requirements for stakeholder engagement within each of the four phases of The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act:

#### Phase 1: GSA Formation and Coordination

*The following Phase 1 requirements were completed by Yucaipa SGMA in 2017 and 2018:*

- Establish and maintain a list of interested parties
- Provide public notice of the GSA formation
- Conduct a GSA formation public hearing
- Notify DWR of the GSA formation
- Provide a written statement to DWR as well as cities and counties within the GSA boundary describing how interested parties may participate in the GSP development.
- Develop GSA website for interested parties

#### Phase 2: GSP Preparation and Submission

*The following Phase 2 requirements will be completed by Yucaipa SGMA by January 31, 2022:*

- Submit initial notification.
- Prepare a GSP that considers beneficial uses and users of groundwater when describing undesirable results, minimum thresholds, projects and actions.
- The GSP must include a communication section that includes the following:
  - An explanation of the Agency's decision-making process.
  - Identification of opportunities for public engagement and a discussion of how public input and response will be used.

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- A description of how the Agency encourages the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the basin.
- The method the Agency will follow to inform the public about progress implementing the Plan, including the status of projects and actions.
- The GSA must provide public noticing and hold a public meeting before adopting or amending a GSP.

### **Phase 3: GSP Review and Evaluation**

*The following Phase 3 requirements will be completed by DWR:*

- After the GSA adopts the GSP and it is submitted to DWR, the GSP will be available on the DWR website for a 60-day comment period for any person to provide comments to DWR before the DWR completes evaluation and assessment of the GSP.

### **Phase 4: Implementation and Reporting**

*The following Phase 4 requirements will be completed by Yucaipa SGMA through 2042:*

- The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires assessments and re-evaluation of the GSP at least every 5 years. The GSA must provide public notice and hold public meetings prior to amending the GSP.
- Public notice is also required before the GSA imposes or increases fees.

There are also general requirements that apply to all four phases of Sustainable Groundwater Management Act implementation.

## **2 YUCAIPA SUBBASIN AND GSA FORMATION**

The Upper Santa Ana Valley Groundwater Basin, Yucaipa Subbasin lies under portions of the cities of Calimesa, Redlands, and Yucaipa, as well as unincorporated San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. The Subbasin, cataloged by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) as groundwater basin number 8-2.07, is approximately 25,300 acres (Figure 1).

The Yucaipa Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency (Yucaipa SGMA) was formed as the GSA for the Yucaipa Subbasin in 2017 through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) entered into by local water purveyors, municipalities, and regional water management entities.

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<b>Yucaipa-GSA Member Agencies</b>
<b>Purveyors</b>
South Mesa Water Company
South Mountain Water Company
Western Heights Water Company
Yucaipa Valley Water District
<b>Municipalities</b>
City of Redlands
City of Yucaipa
<b>Regionals</b>
San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency

The Yucaipa SGMA completed the initial phase of stakeholder engagement (Phase 1) in June 2017 and provided the required documentation for GSA formation, which is available to the public through the DWR Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Portal (<https://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsa/print/349>).

The City of Calimesa submitted a written Notice of Withdrawal dated November 19, 2018 and the Yucaipa SGMA subsequently acknowledged the withdrawal of the City of Calimesa from the Yucaipa SGMA at the January 23, 2019 meeting.

### 2.1 Yucaipa SGMA and GSA Decision Making Process

The roles and responsibilities of the Yucaipa SGMA were further clarified in the By-Laws adopted in May 2018. Each of the Member Agencies appoints one principal representative and one alternate representative to the Yucaipa SGMA Board. All Board meetings are public meetings subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act. Each Board member has one vote and a simple majority of 51% of the voting parties is required to pass an item. A majority of the Board is considered a quorum for purposes of meeting and decision-making.

### 3 YUCAIPA SUBBASIN GSP

The DWR has designated the Yucaipa Subbasin as a high-priority basin based on population size and growth, reliance on groundwater for public water supply, and long-term declines in groundwater levels. The Yucaipa Subbasin is not designated as critically overdrafted, therefore a GSP must be developed by January 31, 2022. This GSP will detail a pathway to sustainable groundwater management by 2042 in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Yucaipa SGMA has initiated the process of developing a GSP (Yucaipa GSP) for the Yucaipa Subbasin that will define a course of action to achieve sustainable groundwater management within 20 years of plan adoption. The Yucaipa GSP will identify local undesirable results and identify management actions to minimize undesirable results as well as milestones to ensure progress. A groundwater monitoring program will be developed and implemented to track improvement within the basins leading to sustainable management. The Yucaipa GSP will be re-evaluated and refined, as needed, and submitted to DWR every five years in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

### 4 PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This Public Outreach and Engagement Plan (Plan) has been developed as a communication tool to help stakeholders understand the importance of participation in groundwater sustainability planning and lay the framework of how stakeholders can actively engage in the Yucaipa-GSA planning effort. In 2018, DWR released [a guidance document for GSP Stakeholder Communication and Engagement](#) that details best practices including the development of Communication and Engagement Plans to increase transparency in the GSP development process.

The Yucaipa SGMA will prepare a GSP in accordance with The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act that will guide future management decisions including the amount of ground water that can be pumped from the subbasin without causing undesirable results, and the development of new projects to enhance water resource management.

The Yucaipa SGMA discussed overarching goals for outreach and engagement at the April 24, 2019 Board Meeting. The primary goals during the GSP development process included:

1. Maintaining transparency throughout the GSP development process,
2. Developing a common understanding among stakeholders of the Yucaipa subbasin needs, and

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3. Exceeding the state requirements for outreach and engagement.

This Plan is intended to be a guiding framework that will be updated as needed to maintain transparency throughout the GSP development and implementation process.

### **5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Yucaipa SGMA encourages members of the public to participate in the GSP development and implementation process through attending public meetings, providing comments on the draft GSP, and communicating directly with member agency staff and Board members.

#### **5.1 Meeting Opportunities**

The Yucaipa SGMA Board holds quarterly regular meetings the fourth Wednesday in January, April, July, and October to conduct routine business matters. During the development of the GSP, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will meet approximately monthly as needed. All Board and TAG meetings are open to the public and each meeting agenda includes an item where members of the public can speak to the Board. All meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Yucaipa SGMA website (<https://yucaipasgma.org>).

##### **5.1.1 Public Notices**

Board meetings and workshops are noticed in accordance with the Brown Act. In addition to publicly noticing meetings on the Yucaipa SGMA website, the Yucaipa SMGA maintains a list of interested parties and distributes electronic agenda information and newsletters via email. Newsletters include notices of Yucaipa SGMA Board meetings and other updates including updates on the progress of the GSP development and implementation. Interested parties can subscribe to the list that receives email notifications through the “subscribe” link at the bottom of the website home page (<https://yucaipasgma.org>).

#### **5.2 Collaborative Opportunities**

The Yucaipa-SMGA has taken an inclusive approach to groundwater management, making space on the Board for each of the local entities with water supply, water management, and or land use responsibility in the Yucaipa Subbasin that wanted to participate in the GSA. The Board understands that each interested party has an established relationship with their local water supplier that should continue through the development and implementation of the GSP. Each Board member is appointed by the

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member agency and represents the constituents in their jurisdiction. In addition to the Yucaipa SGMA Board member agencies, representatives from the City of Calimesa, the County of Riverside and the County of San Bernardino participated in the formation of the Yucaipa SGMA and are committed to continued involvement as representatives of their stakeholder interests. Due to this uniquely inclusive Board structure, Yucaipa SGMA views each Board member and stakeholder representative as an ambassador of their own jurisdiction, representing their interests in the Yucaipa SGMA meetings.

### Purveyors

#### 5.2.1 South Mesa Water Company

The South Mesa Water Company (South Mesa) is a mutual water company, formed in 1912, with approximately 4 square miles within the service area including portions of both the City of Calimesa and the City of Yucaipa. Water supplied by South Mesa is currently 100% groundwater. The South Mesa service area is approximately 90% residential with some industrial uses, several schools, and some small parks. South Mesa engages directly with shareholders through the annual shareholder meeting and updates as needed. South Mesa engages with shareholders through their website, regular Consumer Confidence Reports, social media platforms and information available at the South Mesa office. Many shareholders also pay their bills in person and converse regularly with South Mesa staff.

#### 5.2.2 South Mountain Water Company

The South Mountain Water Company (South Mountain) is a mutual water company with groundwater production in the Yucaipa subbasin. The City of Redlands owns majority shares and operates the two wells owned by South Mountain. The business activities of the company are conducted by Bear Valley Mutual Water Company.

#### 5.2.3 Western Heights Water Company

The Western Heights Water Company (WHWC) serves approximately 4.53 square miles including parts of the City of Yucaipa and the City of Redlands. Approximately 90% of WHWC customer demand is domestic with approximately 10% industrial and commercial use. WHWC currently has sufficient groundwater supply for 100% of the potable water demand, but purchases 25% imported water to offset groundwater demand. WHWC shareholders engage in decision making through participation in WHWC Board meetings.

### 5.2.4 Yucaipa Valley Water District

The Yucaipa Valley Water District (YVWD) is a special district that was formed in 1971 and supplies local groundwater, treated imported water, and recycled water. The Yucaipa Valley Water District service area is approximately 40 square miles and includes portions of the City of Calimesa and the City of Yucaipa. Approximately 78% of the water use in the YVWD is residential with approximately 22% commercial, industrial and institutional. The YVWD engages with customers through their local office, website and consumer confidence reports. YVWD also published some notices in the local newspaper as appropriate.

### Municipalities

#### 5.2.5 City of Redlands

The City of Redlands was incorporated in 1888 and currently serves water to local businesses and more than 75,000 residents in Redlands, Mentone, parts of Crafton Hills, San Timoteo Canyon, and a small portion of San Bernardino. The City of Redlands supplies originate as surface water, groundwater and imported water. The City of Redlands provides ongoing communication with stakeholders through their website and social media. Important water-related information is distributed with consumer confidence reports and bills as appropriate.

#### 5.2.6 City of Yucaipa

The City of Yucaipa was incorporated in 1989 and currently has over 58,000 residents. Water service in the City is provided by YVWD, South Mesa, and WHWC. South Mountain has water facilities, including water wells, within the City of Yucaipa, but does not currently provide water services in the City. The entire City of Yucaipa is within the service area of the SBVMWD. The City of Yucaipa has several commissions and committees, including the Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Trails and Open Space Committee, that enable citizens to participate in the governance process. The City of Yucaipa regularly holds public meetings where members of the general public can voice concerns or issues. The City also engages with stakeholders through social media, the city website and newspaper publications as appropriate.

### Regionals

#### **5.2.7 San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District**

The San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District was formed in 1954 as a regional water agency. The San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District is a wholesale water supplier that imports water through the State Water Project, manages groundwater stored within the District boundaries, and coordinates delivery of imported water to local water retail agencies.

#### **5.2.8 San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency**

The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA) was established in 1961 and supplies State Water Project water to retail water agencies. The SGPWA engages with stakeholders through semi-monthly public Board meetings and workshops. SGPWA provides regular updates on the website and through social media.

### Stakeholders

#### **5.2.9 City of Calimesa**

The City of Calimesa was incorporated in 1990 and currently has over 8,000 residents. Water service in the City is provided by South Mesa and YVWD. The entire City of Calimesa is within the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency service area. The City has several active commissions and provides opportunities for public comment at all City Council and Commission meetings. The City also engages with stakeholders through their website and social media.

#### **5.2.10 County of Riverside**

The County of Riverside was formed in 1893 and covers nearly 7,300 square miles including 28 cities. The County provides information and updates on a centralized website as well as social media.

#### **5.2.11 County of San Bernardino**

The County of San Bernardino was formed in 1854 and covers 20,000 square miles including 24 cities. The County provides information and updates on a centralized website as well as social media.

### 5.3 Opportunities for Tribal Communities

According to the DWR Water Management Planning Tool, as of January 2019, there are no tribal trust lands within the Yucaipa Subbasin as shown in Figure 2. Although there are no federally recognized tribes, Indian land currently or historically held in Trust by the United States Government or smaller Reservation areas within the Yucaipa Subbasin, the Yucaipa SGMA encourages participation from all stakeholders including tribal communities within the watershed.

### 5.4 Disadvantaged Communities

There are several communities within the Subbasin that DWR has mapped as Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) and Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDAC) based on median household income within community census tracts, blocks, and places as shown in Figure 3. The majority of the areas designated as DAC and SDAC are within either the City of Yucaipa or the City of Calimesa. Members of these communities are represented on the Yucaipa SGMA by both their City representative and their water supplier.

### 5.5 Stakeholder Email List

The Yucaipa SGMA maintains a list of stakeholders interested in the GSP process, known as the *List of Interested Parties (List)*. Electronic newsletter, meeting notices, and notices of GSP documents are sent electronically to the List. There are currently over 100 individuals subscribed to the List. The List is continuously updated with individuals that request in writing to be placed on the list of interested parties or subscribe through the Yucaipa SGMA website.

### 5.6 Online Resources

The Yucaipa SGMA has created a website ([www.YucaipaSGMA.org](http://www.YucaipaSGMA.org)) that includes general information, relevant documents, a calendar of meetings and important events, as well as the agendas and minutes for all Yucaipa SGMA meetings.

### 6 CONTACT US

This document serves as a tool for facilitating public engagement in the GSP development process. It is designed to be a living document that is updated as needed to reflect current mechanism of engagement. Yucaipa SGMA will continue to use the communication tools outlined in this document as necessary through the implementation phase of the GSP.

For additional information regarding the Yucaipa SGMA and the GSP, please contact:

Bob Tincher, Deputy General Manager - Resources

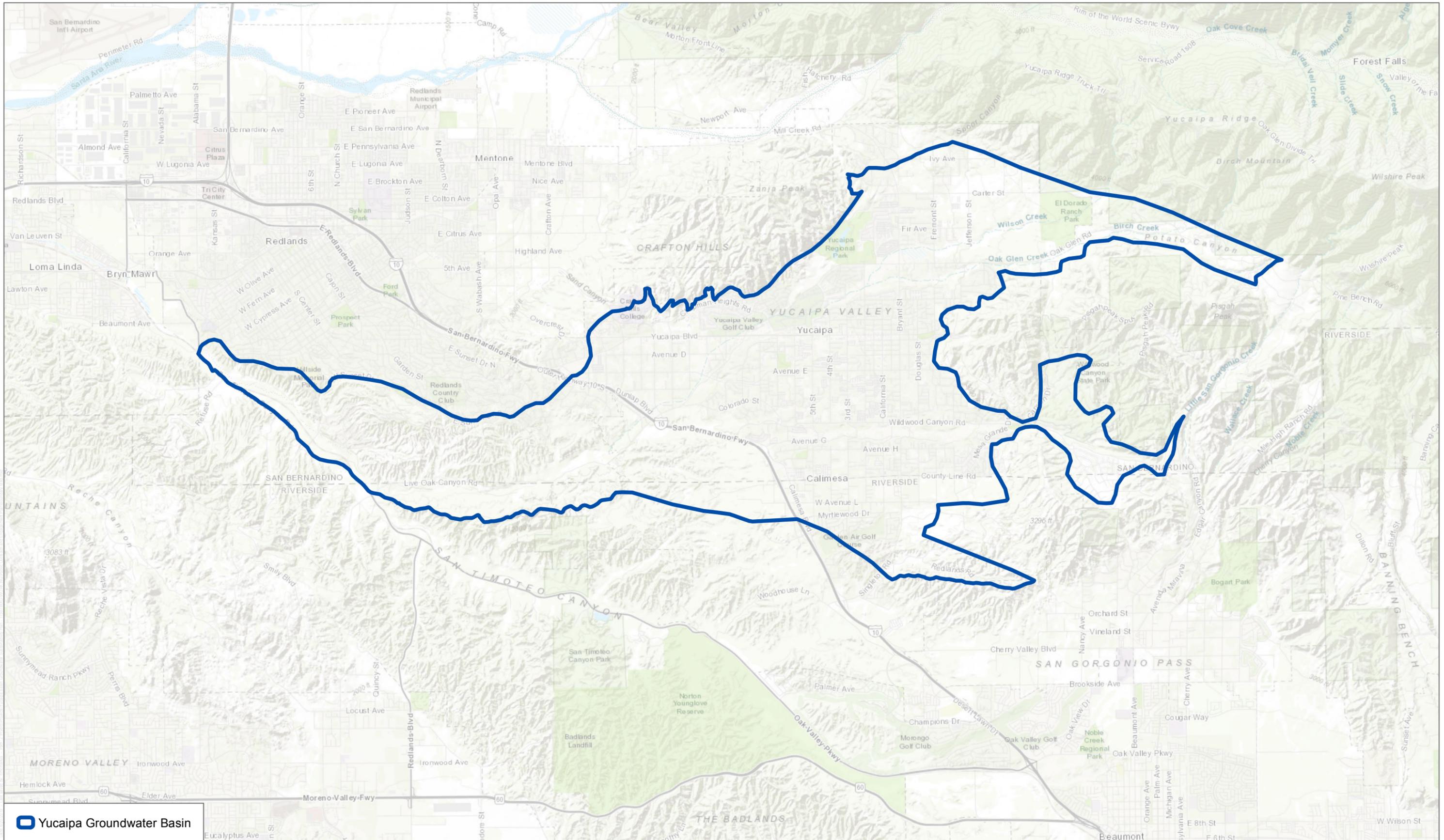
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San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
380 East Vanderbilt Way,  
San Bernardino, California 92408

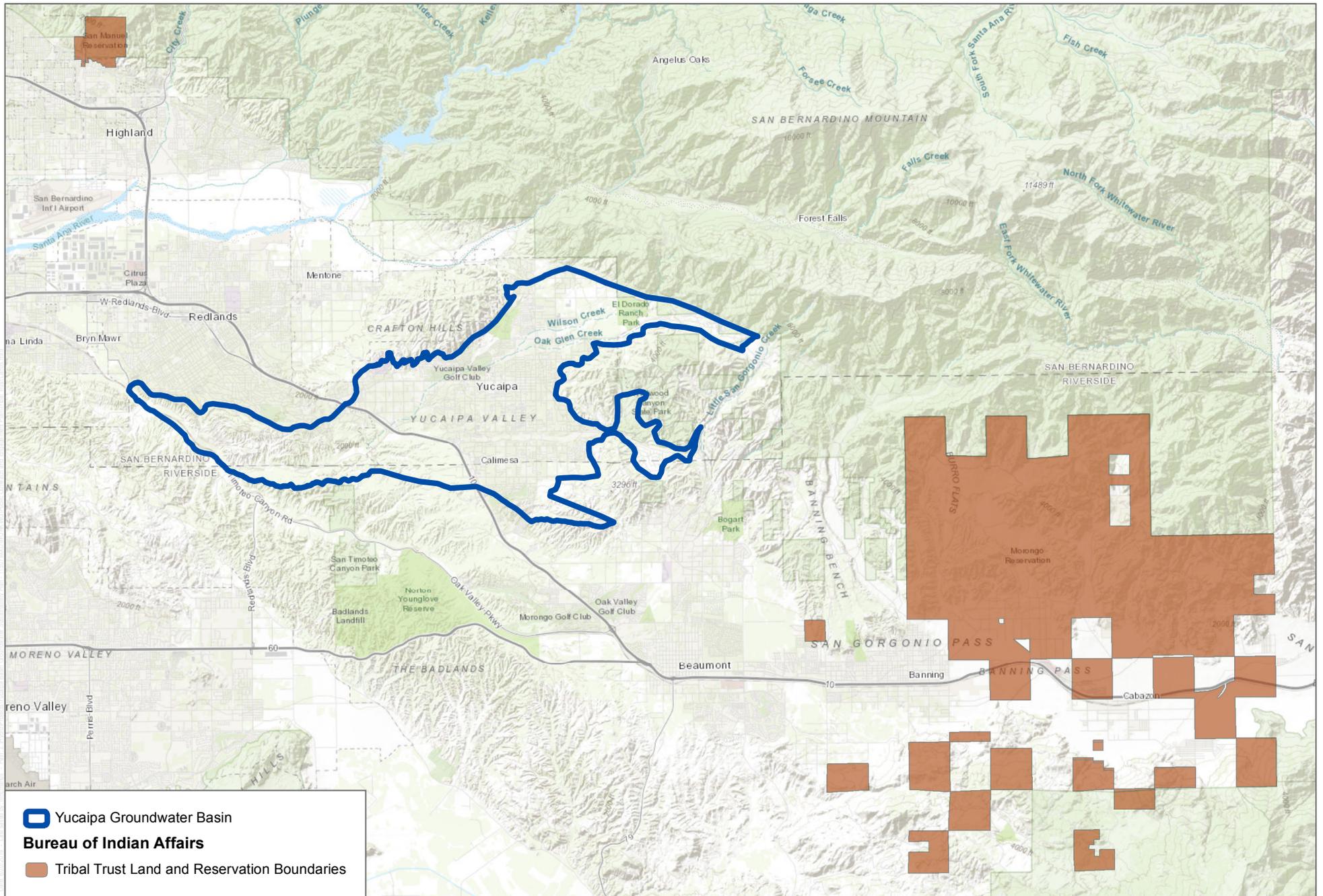
**Website:** [www.YucaipaSGMA.org](http://www.YucaipaSGMA.org)



SOURCE: ESRI, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, ESRI Japan, METI, ESRI China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community; DWR



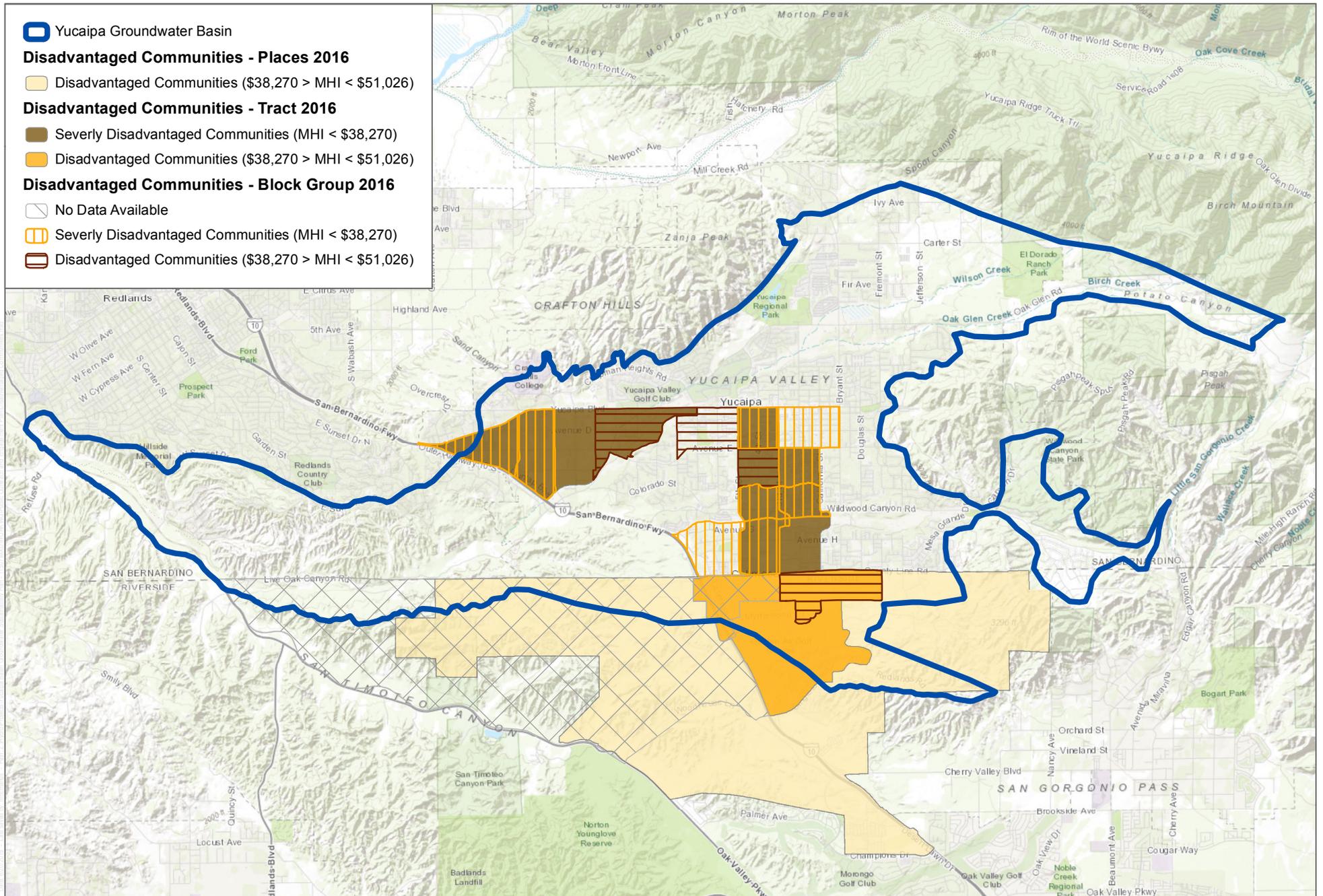
**FIGURE 1**  
Boundary Map



**FIGURE 2**

**Tribal Trust Lands**

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SOURCE: ESRI, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, ESRI Japan, METI, ESRI China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community; DWR 2019

Note: MHI = Mean Household Income



**FIGURE 3**

**Disadvantaged Communities**

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*This plan was paid for in part by a grant from the California Department of Water Resources through the Proposition 1 Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant Program.*



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