



SAN GORGONIO PASS
WATER AGENCY
A California State Water Project Contractor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tara Mulally

tara@cvstrat.com, 510-300-5843

Latino Elected Officials Participate in Insightful Salton Sea Tour

Additional Visit to Coachella Mobile Homes Sheds Light on Water Scarcity

BEAUMONT, CA (February 27, 2025) – San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA) Board Treasurer Robert Ybarra recently joined 12 Latino elected officials from across California to tour the Salton Sea. Treasurer Ybarra walked the shoreline to learn more about the local habitat, including playa erosion, water toxins, and reduced flows from the Colorado River. This trip supports his role on the SGPWA Board as he works to secure strong water supply resources in the Pass area.

Treasurer Ybarra took part in the excursion as a Water Education for Latino Leaders (WELL) fellow. His tour included mayors, city council members, county supervisors, school board members and water board members. The group also visited a nearby Coachella mobile home park where the Coachella Valley Water District mitigated water scarcity issues, engaging with residents and a U.S. Department of Agriculture official.

“I am grateful for the insight I have gained on this trip to the Salton Sea and surrounding communities,” Treasurer Ybarra said. “It is a perspective that I will carry back to the SGPWA Boardroom as I help make decisions about Pass area water challenges. Whether it is a family in Imperial County or Riverside County, everyone deserves access to reliable water.”

WELL is a non-profit statewide organization with a 13-year track record of educating 1,600 local elected leaders from Latino communities. The Latino community is widely underrepresented in California’s water policy-making circles. Latinos represent 40 percent of California’s population but less than 4 percent of elected water officials. This WELL delegation was the first of two cohorts joining in-person educational and training courses in 2025.

As Board Treasurer at SGPWA, Ybarra represents the region from Cabazon to Calimesa/Yucaipa. He was initially appointed to the Board in 2021. He is President and CEO at Precision Material Handling Inc. and proprietor of several local small enterprises.

Learn more at www.sgpwa.com.

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About San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency

Formed in 1961, SGPWA is a State Water Contractor that serves a 225-square-mile area of western Riverside County. The service area includes the cities of Calimesa, Beaumont, and Banning, and the communities of Cherry Valley, Cabazon, and the Banning Bench. In addition to importing State Water

1210 Beaumont Avenue | Beaumont | CA 92223
P: 951.845.2577 | F: 951.845.0281 | www.sgpwa.com

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Project (SWP) water from Northern California to augment local groundwater sources, the Agency builds local system infrastructure, participates in water transfers, partners in statewide water projects and collaborates on regional water reliability and conservation efforts.