To: TVGMD Board of Directors

From: Andy Puhvel, Hammil Valley Resident applying for Director position on the TVGMD Board of Directors

My name is Andres J. Puhvel, and I am applying to be on the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management Board of Directors. I am 50 years old, married with two children, and am self-employed as a full-time property manager and part-time climbing instructor. I have my B.A. in History and an M.A. in Education, both from UC Santa Cruz.

My permanent residence for the past 20 years has been our property in Hammil Valley. During these years I have witnessed my well water depth drop dramatically 2+ feet per year. To be precise, my well water level has dropped from 121 feet to 168 feet in the 19 years since we had our well dug. We live in the center of Hammil Valley where the most alfalfa is grown. I have studied the varying factors which go into aquifer depletion and recharge and am convinced that our aquifer’s depletion is due to overpumping from the massive scale of agriculture being grown in Hammil Valley. I am interested in being on the Board in order to stop the rapid depletion of our aquifer.

I am currently the Co-Chairperson for the TVGMD Advisory Board and have attended TVGMD Board meetings regularly for over a year. I have participated in many discussions and proposals which the board has considered during this busy past year, and have followed all of the local and state legislative progress which has been made since SIGMA was enacted in 2016. I have been an active community voice during the process separating the OVGA from the TVGMD, and am very well-informed about most of the local factors affecting the quest to preserve the groundwater in the Eastern Sierra. In addition to this, I am very familiar with the TVGMD Enabling Statutes and Board procedures including the Brown Act and other protocols necessary for holding meetings.

The Eastern Sierra is a special place. The extremely unique natural wonders and dramatic mountain-meets-desert landscape are almost unrivaled anywhere on earth. The fact that the Tri-Valley areas of Chalfant, Hammil, and Benton are quickly becoming uninhabitable due to rapid aquifer depletion for the sole purpose of agricultural monetary benefit to a few ranch owners seems unjust and unnecessarily destructive. For this reason, I am applying to be on the TVGMD Board of Directors in order to ensure the groundwater is here for our children and future generations.

Thank you for considering me for this position.

Sincerely,

Andres J. Puhvel