



AGENDA STAFF REPORT

Control: 26001011

MEETING DATE: 04/28/2026

LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION: Board of Supervisors

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS All Districts

DISTRICT(S):

SUBMITTING OC Public Works

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:

DEPARTMENT CONTACT Jose Arriaga, 714-955-0101

PERSON(S): Damara Trumbauer, 714-955-0128

SUBJECT: Approve Weed Management Area Memorandum of Understanding

CEO CONCUR Concur	COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW Approve agreement to form	CLERK OF THE BOARD CONSENT CALENDAR 3 Votes Board Majority
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Budgeted: N/A	Current Year Cost: N/A	Annual Cost: N/A
Staffing Impact: No		Sole Source: No
Current Fiscal Year Revenue: N/A	Funding Source: N/A	County Audit in Last 3 years: No
Levine Act Review Completed? N/A		
Prior Board Action: N/A		

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Authorize the Orange County Agricultural Commissioner or designee to execute the Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area Memorandum of Understanding by and among public agencies, special districts and nonprofit organizations in Southern California, pursuant to California Food and Agricultural Code Section 7272, with a term through December 31, 2030.
2. Authorize the Orange County Agricultural Commissioner or designee to execute amendments to the Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area Memorandum of Understanding, provided such amendments do not create a financial obligation or materially increase risk to the County of Orange.

SUMMARY:

Approval of the Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area Memorandum of Understanding will allow the County of Orange to continue participating in regional, multi-agency efforts to coordinate invasive weed management activities and maintain eligibility for state funding to prevent the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive non-native plants within the Santa Ana River and Orange County watersheds.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area (SAROCWMA) is a cooperative partnership that coordinates invasive weed management activities across public and private lands within the Santa Ana River watershed in Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The SAROCWMA focuses on reducing the spread of and removing newly emerging invasive weed populations and educating land managers and the public through an integrated pest management approach.

Noxious weeds are aggressive, non-native species that outcompete native vegetation, destroy wildlife habitat, damage

flood control infrastructure and increase wildfire risk. Noxious weeds are difficult and expensive to control, requiring communication and coordination among land managers to prevent new infestations and manage existing populations. Species of primary focus include, but are not limited to, the arundo donax (giant reed), perennial pepperweed, tamarisk (salt cedar), castor bean, tree tobacco and yellow star thistle.

California Food and Agricultural Code Section 7272 authorizes the establishment of weed management areas to coordinate local, regional and statewide efforts to prevent, detect and control noxious and invasive weeds. Participation in a weed management area is a prerequisite for eligibility for funding from the Noxious Weed Management Account administered by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The statute requires that weed management areas operate pursuant to a mutually developed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among participating entities. The proposed MOU establishes a cooperative framework for coordination and information sharing; it does not involve funding exchanges or create fiscal obligations among the participating entities. Each party maintains responsibility for its own actions, omissions and insurance coverage.

The County of Orange (County), through the Office of the OC Agricultural Commissioner (Commissioner), has participated in SAROCWMA coordination activities by attending meetings, providing regulatory input, assisting with interagency coordination and delivering annual continuing education presentations related to pesticide use enforcement laws and regulations.

A key contribution has been the coordination role of the Commissioner between SAROCWMA members and state agencies, including CDFa, which has supported Early Detection and Rapid Response efforts and helped land managers align priorities. These collaborative efforts have slowed the spread of invasive weed populations and reduced long-term control costs for County agencies, municipalities and property owners.

The proposed actions would provide the Commissioner with limited delegated authority to execute the SAROCWMA MOU and to approve administrative amendments that do not create any financial obligation or materially increase risk to the County. This delegation will streamline administrative processing, support continued interagency collaboration and maintain eligibility for state weed management funding opportunities.

Compliance with CEQA: This action is not a project within the meaning CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 and is therefore not subject to CEQA, since it does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. The approval of this agenda item does not commit the County to a definite course of action regarding a project since the action authorizes approval of a weed management area MOU. This proposed activity is therefore not subject to CEQA. Any further action connected to this approval that constitutes a project will be reviewed for compliance with CEQA.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

N/A

STAFFING IMPACT:

N/A

REVIEWING AGENCIES/DEPARTMENTS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area Memorandum of Understanding

Attachment B - California Food and Agricultural Code Section 7272