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 Cross-Complainant
 SEARLES VALLEY MINERALS INC.

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 COUNTY OF ORANGE

MOJAVE PISTACHIOS, LLC; et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER
DISTRICT; et al.,

Defendants.

INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER
DISTRICT,

Cross-Complainant,

v.

ALL PERSONS WHO CLAIM A RIGHT TO
 EXTRACT GROUNDWATER IN THE
 INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER
 BASIN NO. 6-54 WHETHER BASED ON
 APPROPRIATION, OVERLYING RIGHT, OR
 OTHER BASIS OF RIGHT, AND/OR WHO
 CLAIM A RIGHT TO USE OF STORAGE
 SPACE IN THE BASIN; et al.,

Cross-Defendants.

Case No. 30-2021-01187275-CU-OR-CJC

*[Related Case No. 0-2021-01187589-CU-
 WM-CXC; Related Case No. 30-2021-
 01188089-CU-WM-CXC; Related Case No.
 30-2022-01239487-CU-MC-CJC; Related
 Case No. 30-2022-01239479-CU-MC-CJC;
 Related Case No. 30-2022-01249146-CU-
 MC-CJC]*

Judge: Hon. William D. Claster
 Dept.: CX101

**JOINT STATUS CONFERENCE
 STATEMENT (9/24/2026)**

RELATED TO ROA 2113
 Date: September 24, 2026
 Time: 11:00 a.m.
 Dept.: CX101

Complaint Filed: November 19, 2019
 District Cross-Complaint: June 16, 2021
 Searles Cross-Complaint: August 17, 2021
 Phase 1 Trial Date: April 28, 2025
 Phase 2 Trial Date: June 8, 2026

SEARLES VALLEY MINERALS INC.,

Cross-Complainant,

v.

ALL PERSONS WHO CLAIM A RIGHT TO
EXTRACT GROUNDWATER IN THE
INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER
BASIN NO. 6-54 WHETHER BASED ON
APPROPRIATION, OVERLYING RIGHT, OR
OTHER BASIS OF RIGHT, AND/OR WHO
CLAIM A RIGHT TO USE OF STORAGE
SPACE IN THE BASIN; et al.,

Cross-Defendants.

AND RELATED CASES.

JOINT STATUS CONFERENCE STATEMENT

The parties that appeared and presented evidence or examined witnesses (“Phase 2 Trial Parties”)¹ during the phase 2 trial on safe yield (“Phase 2 Trial”) in this comprehensive groundwater adjudication submit this Joint Status Conference Statement (“Joint Statement”), through their respective counsel of record.

1. PHASE 2 TRIAL RE: SAFE YIELD – SPECIAL MASTER

The Phase 2 Trial to determine the safe yield of the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Basin (“Basin”) was held for a period of ten (10) court days, which commenced on June 8, 2026, and concluded on June 29, 2026.

A. At the conclusion of the Phase 2 Trial, the Court indicated its intention to appoint a special master to assist the Court with technical issues involved in the Phase 2 Trial and to make a recommendation to the Court of his or her best estimate of safe yield for the Basin. The Court ordered the Phase 2 Trial Parties to meet and confer as to the identity of the special master to be appointed and the process for the special master’s appointment.

B. The Phase 2 Trial Parties have met and conferred and provide the Court with the following update:

(1) In response to the Court’s Order Requesting the State Water Resources Control Board (“State Board”) to Recommend Special Master Candidates pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 845(c), on September 3, 2026, the State Board recommended Sam Boland-Brien, P.E., from the State Board’s Administrative Hearings Office.

(2) The TWG Parties² object to the appointment of Mr. Boland-Brien.

(3) The Phase 2 Trial Parties have met and conferred, but have not reached an agreement as to a special master for the Phase 2 Trial. The Phase 2 Trial Parties will continue to

¹ (a) City of Ridgecrest; (b) Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority; (c) Indian Wells Valley Water District; (d) Meadowbrook Dairy Real Estate, LLC; Big Horn Fields, LLC; Brown Road Fields, LLC; Highway 395 Fields, LLC; and the Meadowbrook Mutual Water Company; (e) Searles Valley Minerals Inc.; and (f) United States of America.

² The TWG Parties include Indian Wells Valley Water District; Meadowbrook Dairy Real Estate, LLC; Big Horn Fields, LLC; Brown Road Fields, LLC; Highway 395 Fields, LLC; and the Meadowbrook Mutual Water Company; and Searles Valley Minerals Inc.

1 meet and confer regarding a special master, have discussed a process for vetting potential
2 candidates, and request the Court defer appointing a special master at this time.

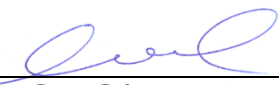
3 (4) The Phase 2 Trial Parties continue to work on a joint Proposed Order
4 Appointing Special Master Re: Phase 2 Trial.

5 (5) The Phase 2 Trial Parties have stipulated to extend the deadline for the
6 filing of Phase 2 Trial closing briefs and request that the Court order the briefs be filed no more
7 than five (5) Court days after a Special Master has been selected and appointed by the Court.

8 (6) The Phase 2 Trial Parties respectfully request that the Court schedule a
9 further Status Conference for Friday, October 23, 2026, or for the soonest available date the week
10 thereafter (October 26-30).

11 Dated: September 17, 2026

BEST BEST & KRIEGER LLP

12 By: 

13 ERIC L. GARNER
14 JEFFREY V. DUNN
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16 ALISON K. TOIVOLA

17 Attorneys for Defendant, Cross-Defendant,
18 and Cross-Complainant
SEARLES VALLEY MINERALS INC.

19 Dated: September 17, 2026

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20 By: */s/ Douglas Evertz*

21 DOUGLAS J. EVERTZ
22 EMILY L. MADUENO

23 Attorneys for Defendant,
24 Cross-Complainant, & Cross-Defendant
25 INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER
26 DISTRICT
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Dated: September 17, 2026

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Dated: September 17, 2026

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Dated: September 17, 2026

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ESTATE, LLC; BIG HORN FIELDS,
LLC; BROWN ROAD FIELDS, LLC;
HIGHWAY 395 FIELDS, LLC, and THE
MEADOWBROOK MUTUAL WATER
COMPANY

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Dated: September 17, 2026

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
JUSTICE
ADAM R. F. GUSTAFSON
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Environment And Natural Resources Division

By: /s/ Judith Coleman

JUDITH E. COLEMAN
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