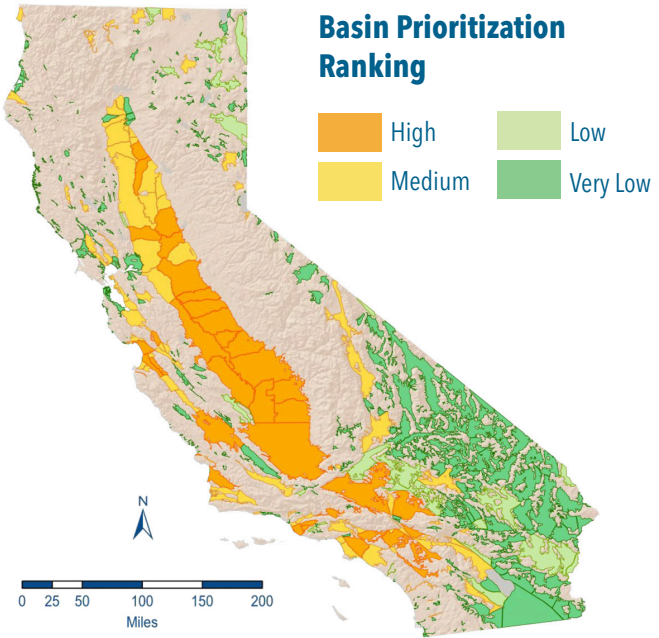




Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

The historic passage of SGMA in 2014 set forth a statewide framework to help protect groundwater resources over the long-term. The goal of SGMA is to halt overdraft and achieve locally defined sustainability goals in California's 94 high and medium priority groundwater basins over a 20-year timeframe.

Groundwater is a critical component of California's water supply, accounting for up to 60 percent of the state's total supply during drought, and 40 percent in average years. California's groundwater basins are the state's largest form of water storage - at least 850 million acre-feet capacity, compared to the 50 million acre-feet that all the major above-ground reservoirs can hold combined. As weather patterns have become more variable and extreme due to the effects of climate change, groundwater management is an essential part of California's water resilience and drought mitigation efforts. SGMA provides the framework for long-term groundwater sustainability.



Groundwater Basins (Basins)

SGMA requires all high and medium priority basins to develop Groundwater Sustainability Plans (Plans). The CA Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Bulletin 118 identifies 515 alluvial groundwater basins in California. SGMA recognizes these basins as the boundaries for groundwater management.

Low and very low priority basins are encouraged, but not required, to develop Plans. Plans provide a roadmap for how groundwater basins will reach long-term sustainability over 20 years. Groundwater basins are prioritized, based on eight components that are identified in California Water Code Section 10933(b).

In 2014, during the height of California's 2012 to 2016 drought, the State enacted historic legislation – the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act – a three-bill legislative package including AB 1739 (Dickinson), SB 1168 (Pavley), and SB 1319 (Pavley) and subsequent Regulations. For more on SGMA: water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management

DWR Assistance Resources

DWR provides a variety of assistance resources to GSAs to help them carry out local SGMA planning and implementation activities.

For more information on DWR's assistance, please visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bT4jBVilTvU

Financial Assistance

GSAs have local fee authority. Additionally, DWR has provided Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) grants:

- DWR awarded **\$150 million** to GSAs for planning
- DWR awarded **\$176 million** to GSAs for implementation
- DWR will award **~\$200 million** to GSAs in 2023 for implementation

Find information about all DWR's funding Programs:

water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/

Planning Assistance

Engagement Resources: DWR provides Facilitation Support, Technical Support, and Written Translation at no charge to local agencies.

Educational Materials: DWR has a library of publicly-accessible educational materials about groundwater, including brochures, fact sheets, [StoryMap](#) and videos: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vtr07bZKlg

Basin Points-of-Contact (POCs): DWR's Region Office staff serve as basin POCs to support local agencies. Find more information:

water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Assistance-and-Engagement

Technical Assistance

DWR continues to invest in innovative technology and expand our data collection efforts, providing valuable support to GSAs to help them manage groundwater locally, including:

- InSAR subsidence data - updated quarterly
- Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) Surveys & Data
- Groundwater level data, maps & modelling tools

For more information, please visit: water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Data-and-Tools

DWR's SGMA Program Benefits

DWR's SGMA Program supports local control of groundwater management. Successful groundwater management will help:

- improve water supply resilience
- prevent dry wells
- reduce land subsidence that can damage infrastructure
- improve water quality conditions

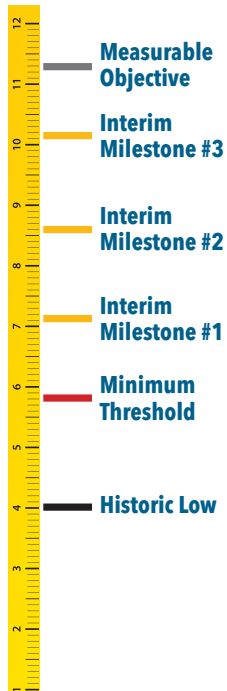
Local Groundwater Management

GSA: SGMA entrusted local, public Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) to improve groundwater management through new authorities and local control. Geology varies widely throughout California. The State recognizes that locals know their basins best and successful groundwater management is best accomplished locally. A local agency, combination of local agencies, or county may establish a GSA. GSAs have local fee authority under SGMA to fund their local activities. To find your GSA, please visit: sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/index.jsp?appid=gasmaster&rz=true

Plans: It is the GSA's responsibility to develop and implement the first-ever Groundwater Sustainability Plans. These Plans are the pathway to reaching local sustainability goals that consider all beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the basin. (A basin can be managed by an Alternative to a Plan if approved by DWR).

GSAs must develop Plans with Sustainable Management Criteria, including measurable objectives (goal), interim milestones evaluated every five years to help meet the goal, and minimum threshold (limit) that collectively ensure basin sustainability over the long-term. A basin may be managed by a single Plan or multiple coordinated Plan.

Sustainable Management Criteria



20 Year Horizon Ahead for SGMA Implementation

Local GSAs have transitioned from planning to implementation



MILESTONES

All Basins required to submit initial Plans successfully met the deadlines.

- 2017: 250+ GSAs Formed by June 2017, covering all High & Medium Priority Basins.
- 2019: DWR Approved nine Basins with Alternatives to Plans.
- 2020: All Critically Overdrafted Basins submitted their first-ever Plans.
- 2022: All other High & Medium Priority Basins submitted their Plans.

Measuring Progress

GSAs are required to submit Annual Reports to DWR, and at least every five years DWR will perform a "Periodic Evaluation" to ensure GSAs are continuing to make progress towards achieving their local basin sustainability goals. DWR expects plans to adapt over time as conditions change, especially as California experiences ongoing weather extremes, including more severe drought conditions as a result of climate change. The 20-year timeline allows GSAs time to fill data gaps in managing groundwater levels and conditions. To find your local Plans, visit: sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsp/status





Six Sustainability Indicators



**Lowering
GW Levels**



**Surface Water
Depletion**



**Degraded
Quality**



**Reduction
of Storage**



**Land
Subsidence**



**Seawater
Intrusion**

The Plans must address the six sustainability indicators defined by SGMA and listed at the left. GSAs must manage groundwater conditions to avoid undesirable results in 20 years.



Drought & SGMA

Groundwater can continue to be used during times of drought. Historically, California swings from drought to flood. Climate change makes those swings more extreme. GSAs must balance the use of groundwater in dry years with replenishing groundwater basins in wet years to continue to make progress towards achieving their sustainability goals. GSAs must consider all groundwater beneficial uses and community needs in their long-term planning and management. To read more about DWR's drought efforts, visit: water.ca.gov/Water-Basics/Drought



Projects & Management Actions

GSAAs are required to carry out projects and management actions to reach their basin sustainability goals. This can include groundwater recharge and alternative water supply projects, and demand management, such as reducing groundwater use through allocations or trading programs. SGMA is helping improve groundwater management in areas highly dependent on the resource, ensuring long-term groundwater sustainability, and supporting the state's communities, industries, agriculture, and the environment.

State Intervention (Backstop)

Under SGMA, locally-controlled basin management is the goal, but some basins may need support through the state intervention process managed by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) until the locals can sustainably manage the basin. The State Water Board may initiate this process in the following circumstances: 1) A basin or areas of a basin lacks GSA coverage; 2) A high or medium priority basin has no Plan or adequately coordinated set of Plans, or 3) The basin Plan(s) are determined by DWR to be inadequate.

For information on the State Water Board Groundwater Management Program: waterboards.ca.gov/sgma

DWR's Groundwater Management Program:
water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management
Email: **sgmps@water.ca.gov**

Visit DWR's California Groundwater Live User-Friendly Data Platform:
sgma.water.ca.gov/CalGWLIVE

Brochure last updated: April 2023