



**Sacramento Groundwater Authority**  
*Managing Groundwater Resources  
 in Northern Sacramento County*

5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 180  
 Citrus Heights, CA 95610

Tel: (916) 967-7692  
 Fax: (916) 967-7322  
 www.sgah2o.org

May 13, 2016

California American  
 Water

Carmichael  
 Water District

Citrus Heights  
 Water District

City of Folsom

City of Sacramento

County of Sacramento

Del Paso Manor  
 Water District

Fair Oaks Water District

Golden State  
 Water Company

Natomas Central Mutual  
 Water Company

Orange Vale  
 Water Company

Rio Linda / Elverta  
 Community Water  
 District

Sacramento Suburban  
 Water District

San Juan  
 Water District

Agricultural and  
 Self-Supplied  
 Representative

California Water Commission  
 P.O. Box 942836  
 Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Transmitted via email

Dear Chair Byrne and Commissioners Baker, Ball, Curtin, Daniels, Del Bosque, Herrera, Orth and Quintero:

I am writing to convey comments of the Sacramento Groundwater Authority (SGA) on the Proposed Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Regulations which you will be considering at your meeting of May 18, 2016. The Department of Water Resources has made significant improvements to the regulations originally released in draft February 18, 2016. Most of the major comments of SGA and other local agency groundwater managers have been adequately addressed. DWR's commitment to working with stakeholders throughout the SGMA implementation process has been and will continue to be fundamental to success.

SGA supports adoption of the Proposed GSP Regulations with one notable exception. Article 9, related to the evaluation of Alternatives, has been modified, but still extends beyond both the language and intent of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). This overreach was pointed out by numerous comments on the draft regulations.

Water Code Section 10733.6(a), states, *"If a local agency believes that an alternative described in subdivision (b) satisfies the objectives of this part, the local agency may submit the alternative to the department for evaluation and assessment of whether the alternative satisfies the objectives of this part for the basin."* As such, SGMA envisioned the possibility of an alternative pathway to the objective of sustainable groundwater management.

The proposed regulations, however, presuppose that a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (even if called by a different name) is the only path to sustainability. Section 358.2 of the proposed regulations would require an explanation of how an Alternative is "functionally equivalent" to a GSP. Similarly, DWR's evaluation of an Alternative, described in

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Re: The Proposed Groundwater Sustainability Plan  
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Section 358.6, would be based on the identical requirements as the evaluation of a GSP. These concerns could be easily addressed by the following modifications to the proposed regulations.

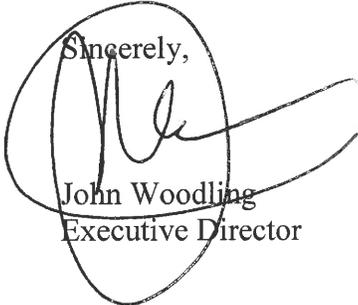
§358.2 (d) The entity submitting an Alternative shall explain how the elements of the Alternative ~~are functionally equivalent to the elements of a Plan required by Articles 5 and 7 of this Subchapter~~ and are sufficient to demonstrate the ability of the Alternative to achieve the objectives of the Act.

§358.6 (a) (3) The Alternative is complete and includes the information required by the Act and this ~~Subchapter~~ Article.

§358.6 (b) The Department shall evaluate an Alternative that satisfies the requirements of Subsection (a) ~~in accordance with Sections 355.2, 355.4(b), and Section 355.6, as applicable,~~ to determine whether the Alternative complies with the objectives of the Act. Compliance means that the Alternative is sufficiently detailed and contains data and information needed to demonstrate sustainable groundwater management has been or will be achieved for the basin.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft regulations and for your consideration of this important modification.

Sincerely,



John Woodling  
Executive Director