

**The Sustainable  
Groundwater  
Management Act  
(SGMA)**

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GROUNDWATER  
MANAGEMENT ACT  
OF 2014 =

*LA LEY DEL MANEJO  
SOSTENIBLE DEL AGUA  
SUBTERRÁNEA DEL  
2014 =*

**SGMA**

# Why do we care about groundwater?

On average California gets 40% of its water from groundwater. During droughts, that number can go up to 60%

In the Central Valley we are even more dependent on groundwater than the state as a whole

90% of central valley residents rely on groundwater for at least part of their drinking water supply

Most unincorporated communities are 100% reliant on groundwater

# Why did we pass SGMA?

Previously only voluntary management in certain areas of the state  
Groundwater levels have been declining for decades due to  
overuse Over pumping of groundwater, or overdraft combined  
with the drought had an unprecedented impact on our state

- Rapidly declining groundwater levels causing a “race to the bottom”
- Dry wells
- Subsidence

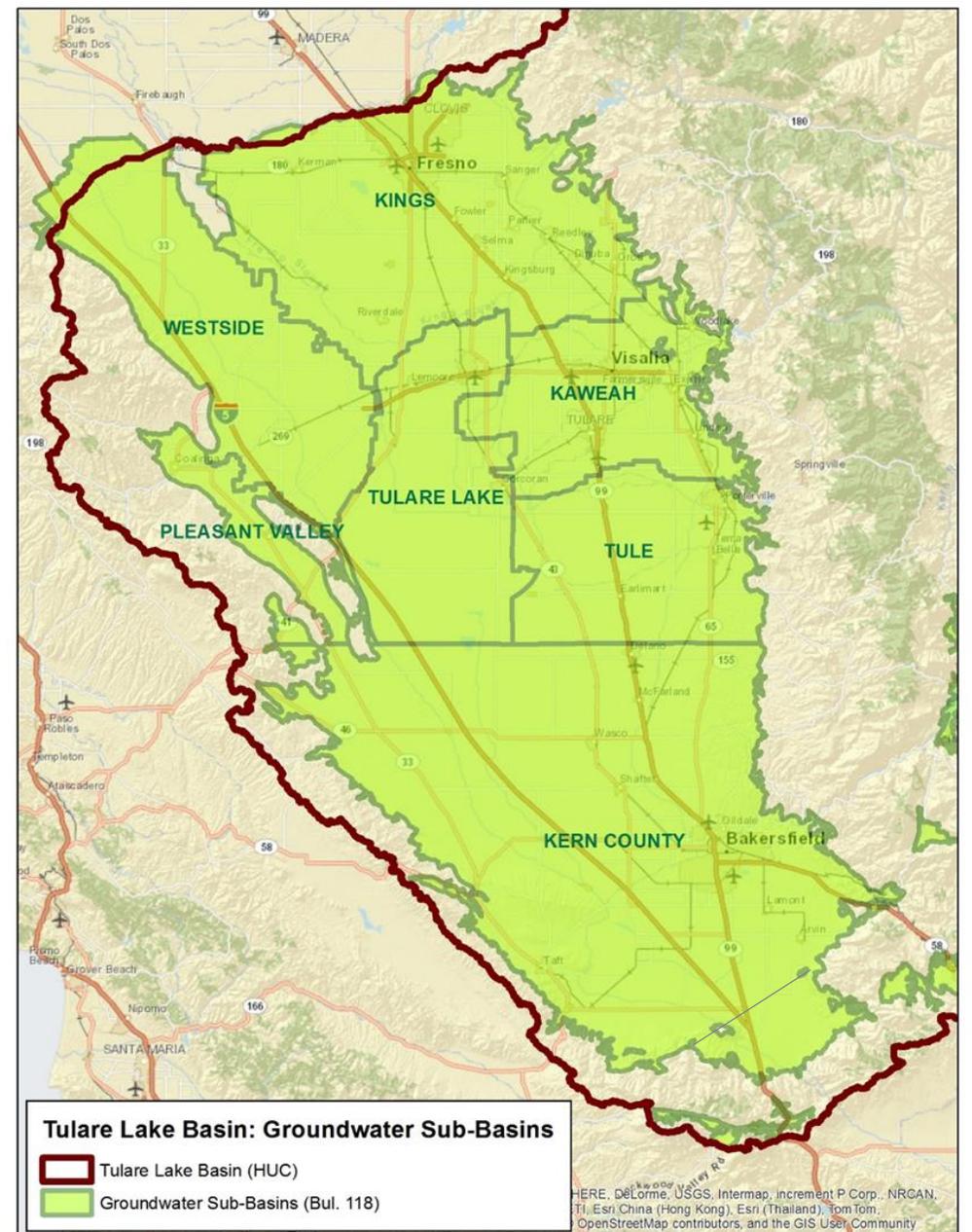
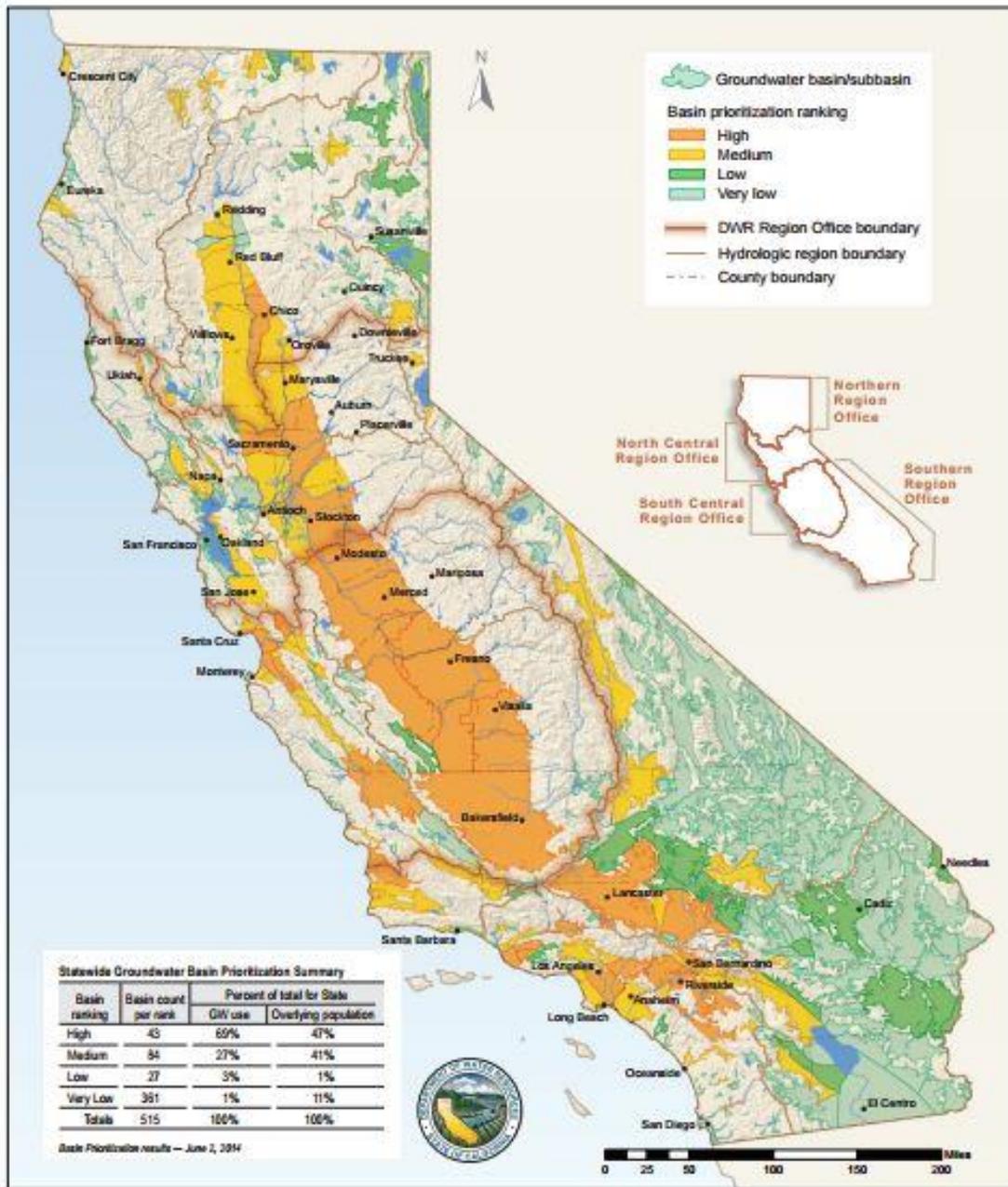
# What is SGMA?

Three bill package (SB 1168 (Pavley), AB 1739 (Dickinson), SB 1319 (Pavley))

Signed by governor Brown September 16, 2014

Objective: Ensure the long-term reliability of our groundwater resources and connected surface water resources by requiring “sustainable” management

Core principle: Local Control



# Whose interests are at stake?

- (a) Holders of overlying groundwater rights (ag and domestic);
- (c) Public water systems;
- (d) Local land use planning agencies;
- (e) Environmental users of groundwater;
- (f) Surface water users;
- (h) California Native American tribes;
- (i) Disadvantaged communities, including, but not limited to, those served by private domestic wells or small community water systems.

# How will we implement sustainable management?

Three steps for implementation:

1. Form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)
2. Develop Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)
3. Implement GSPs to achieve sustainability

# Step One: Forming GSAs

A GSA is one or more public agencies that chooses to assume groundwater management responsibilities endowed with new powers including:

- Determine what level of use is sustainable for the sub-basin long term
- Regulate groundwater use to comply with the established limits
- Regulate, limit or suspend groundwater use and new well permitting
- Undertake enforcement actions to ensure compliance
- Impose fees and assessments on groundwater extraction

More than one GSA can be formed in a basin, however, GSAs must cover the entire area of the basin leaving no areas unmanaged.

**GSAs must be formed by June 30, 2017**

# Step Two: Develop GSPs

Each medium and high priority basin will develop a plan to meet the sustainability goal

If there are multiple GSAs in a basin, the GSAs can collaborate to write one single plan, or each GSA can write its own plan so long as the GSAs establish a coordination agreement for implementing multiple plans.

**GSPs must be written by January 31, 2020 (2022 if not in critical overdraft)**

# Step Three: Implement GSPs

After submitting its GSP, a GSA has twenty years to reach sustainability.

DWR will review all plans every five years to assess progress and recommend corrective actions as needed.

**Sustainability must be reached by 2040 (2042 if not in critical overdraft)**

# GSP Requirements

- Description of the plan area and basin setting
  - Hydrogeological conceptual model
  - Groundwater conditions
  - Water budget
  - Management areas (if desired)
- Sustainability criteria
  - Sustainability goal
  - Undesirable results
  - Minimum thresholds
  - Measurable objectives
- Projects and management actions
  - Monitoring plan

# Coordination

## Inter-basin Coordination (multiple GSAs within one basin)

- Sustainability under SGMA is defined at the basin level
- If locals choose to develop more than one GSP they must develop a coordination agreement that ensures all of the GSPs collectively will meet the sustainability requirement
  - Single point of contact for the basin
  - Procedures for information sharing, coordinated data management and conflict resolution
  - Demonstrate use of same data and methodologies including a coordinated water budget and a shared sustainable yield

## Intra-basin Coordination (GSAs coordinating with GSAs in neighboring basins)

- Optional except: One basin can't negatively impact the plan of another

# How will communities be involved?

- Voting members
- Shared voting representation
- Advisory board/committee members
- Interested parties

# Stakeholder Engagement Requirements

Public hearings at key junctures

GSAAs must comply with the Brown Act

Agencies must notify “interested” persons of notices regarding plan preparation, meeting announcements, and availability of draft plans, maps, and other relevant documents.

Any person may request, in writing, to be placed on the list of interested persons.

GSAAs must “consider” all beneficial users

GSAAs must “encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population”