

# California's New Groundwater Law – The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

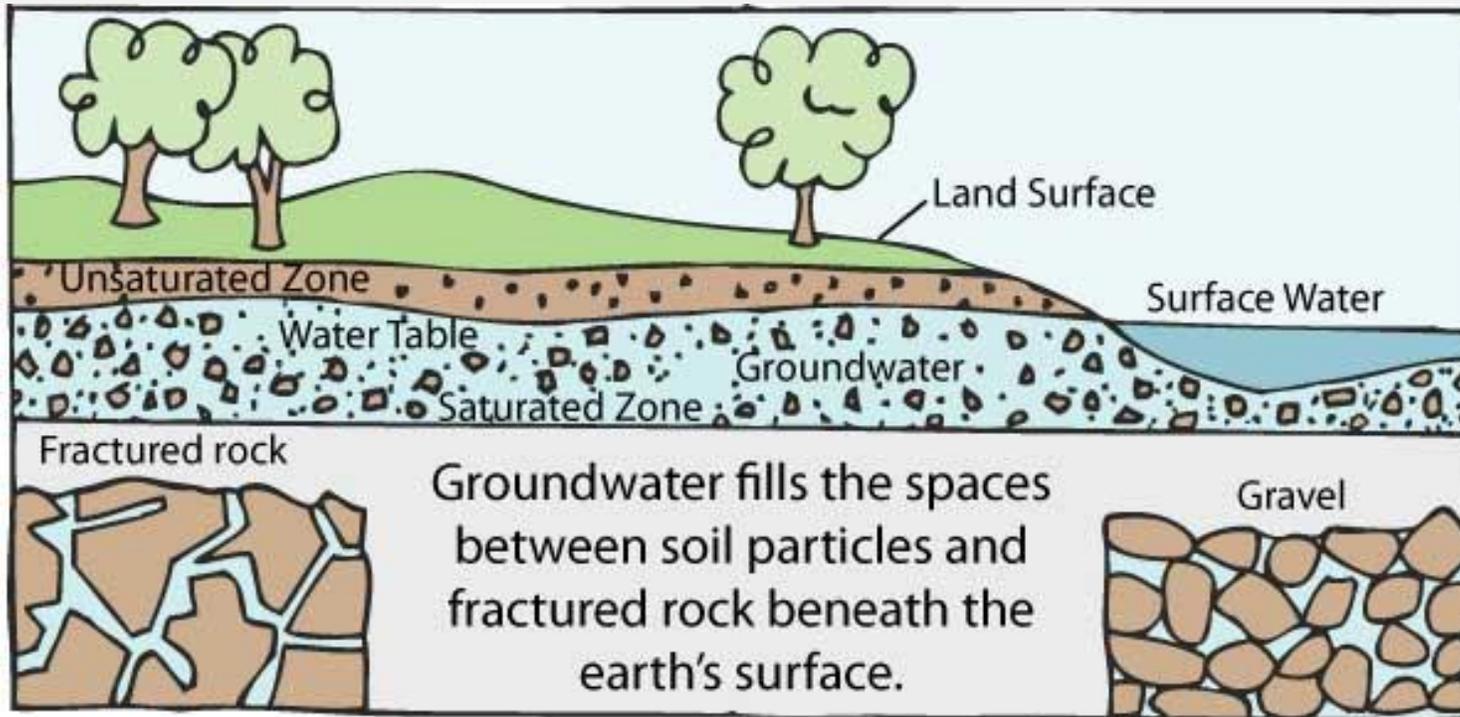


Groundwater Sustainability Plan Workshop 2.0  
October 27, 2018



# GROUNDWATER MATTERS

On average Californians get **40%** of their 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 – includes many of our small school districts

# HOW COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS USE GROUNDWATER



# HISTORICAL GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

- Previously, groundwater management was voluntary in certain areas of the state
- Groundwater levels have been declining due to over-pumping, less surface water, and not enough recharge
- The drought (2012-2016) had an unprecedented impact on our state.
- Dry wells
- Subsidence



# CALIFORNIA'S SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT (SGMA)



- Three-bill package: SB 1168 (Pavley), AB 1739 (Dickinson), SB 1319 (Pavley)
- Signed by Governor Brown on September 16, 2014
- Objective: Ensure the long-term reliability of our groundwater resources and connected surface water resources requiring “sustainable” management
- Core Principle: Local control

# PREVENT UNDESIRABLE RESULTS



Surface Water  
Depletion



Reduction  
of Storage



Degraded  
Quality



Seawater  
Intrusion

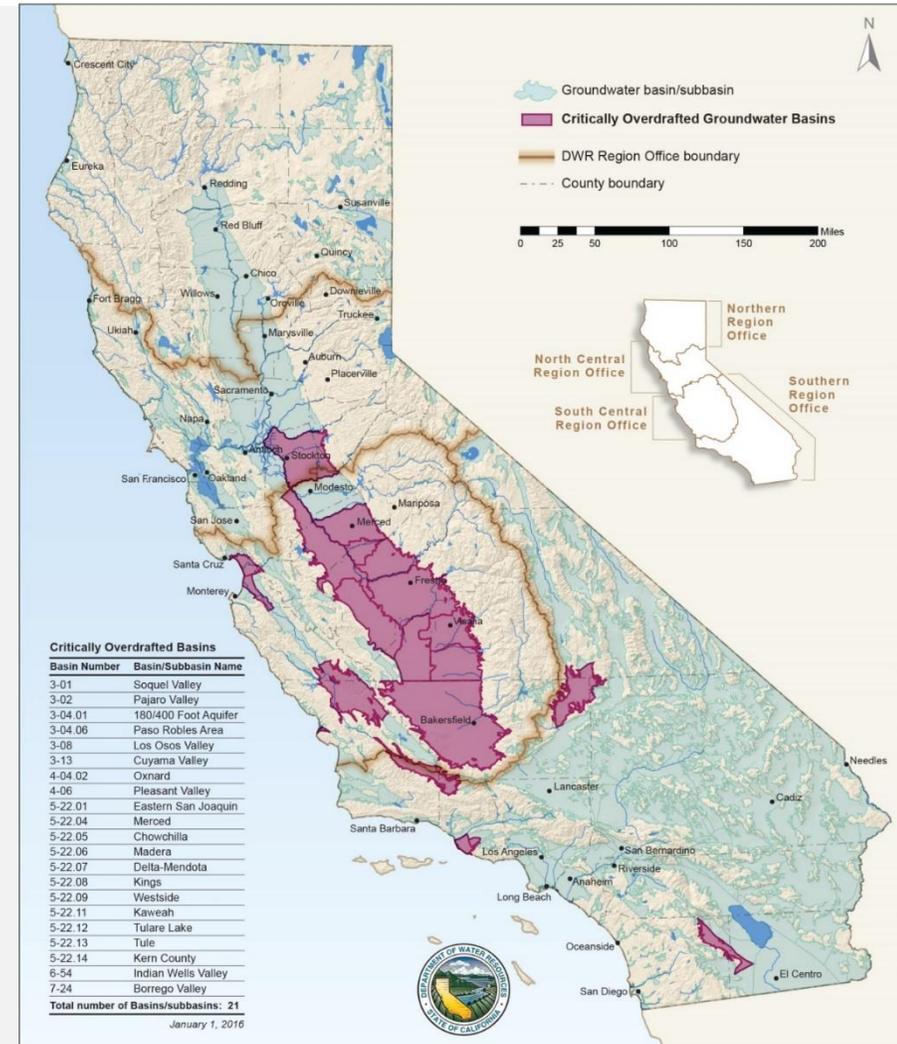
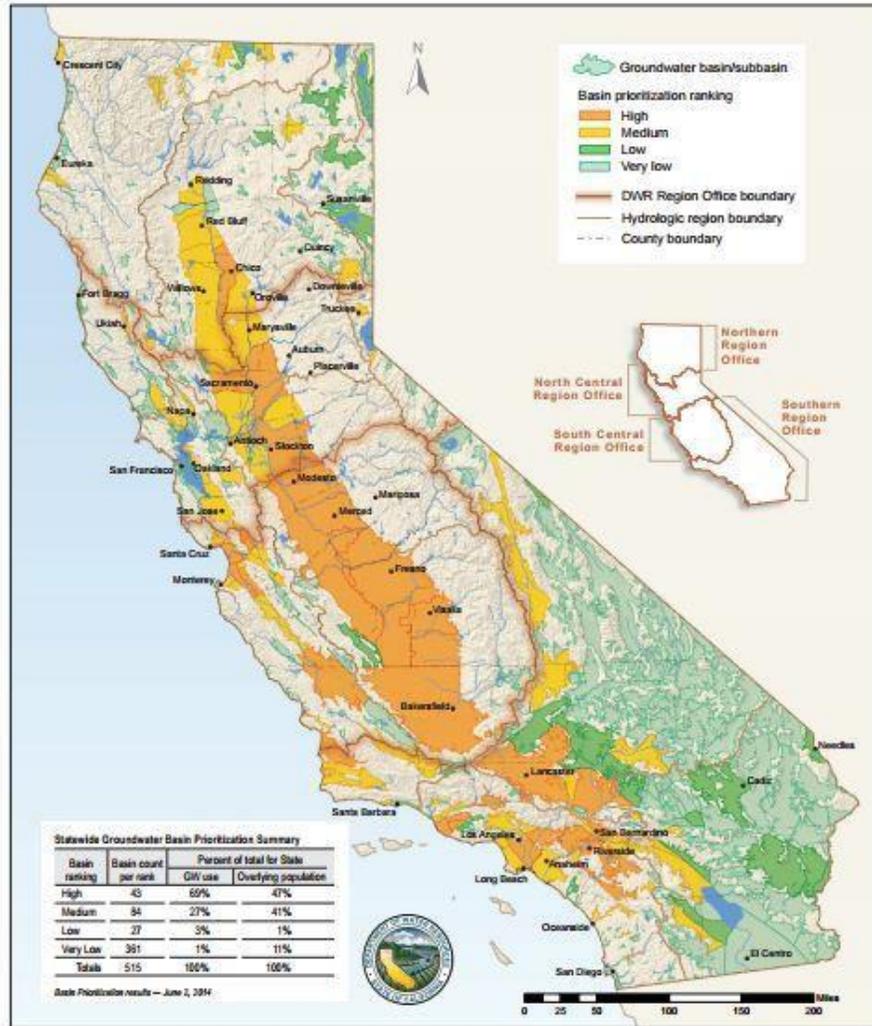


Land  
Subsidence



Lowering  
GW Levels

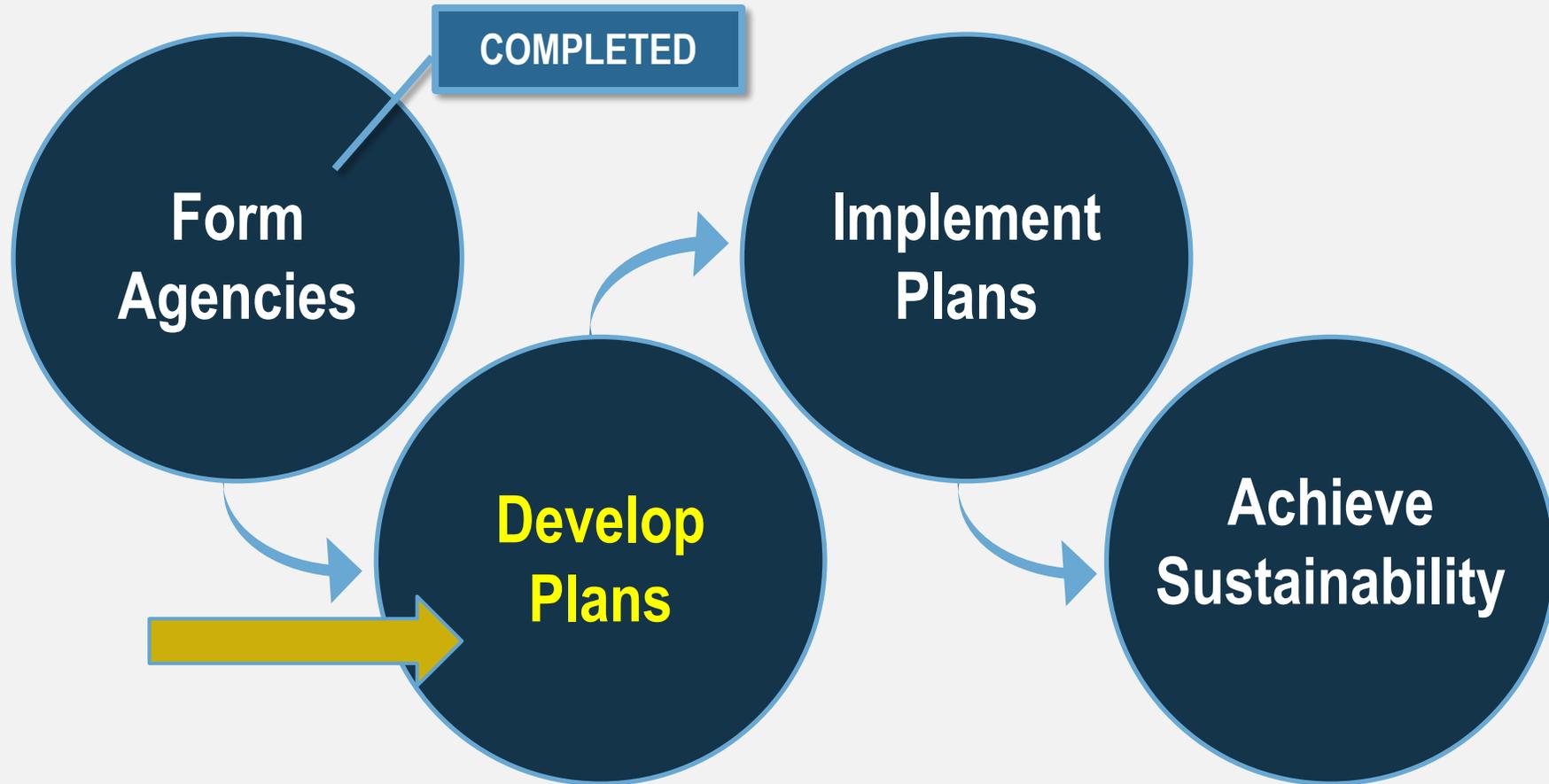
# WHO MUST COMPLY WITH SGMA?



# WHOSE INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE?

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

# SGMA DESIGN



# MULTIPLE GSAS IN A SUBBASIN

- More than one GSA can be formed in a sub-basin.
- However, GSAs must cover the entire area of the sub-basin leaving no areas unmanaged.
- All GSAs were approved in July, 2017

# POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GSA



# DEVELOPMENT OF GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

- GSPs must contain important information
- GSP will serve as the roadmap to achieve sustainability
- GSAs will need to develop GSPs with stakeholder input

# GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

- 1. Description of the plan area and basin setting:** Groundwater conditions, Water budget, Hydrogeological conceptual model, Management areas
- 2. Sustainability criteria:** set sustainability goal, set minimum thresholds for undesirable results, set measurable objectives
- 3. Projects and management actions:** projects, management actions, mitigation measures, monitoring plan

# WATER BUDGETS

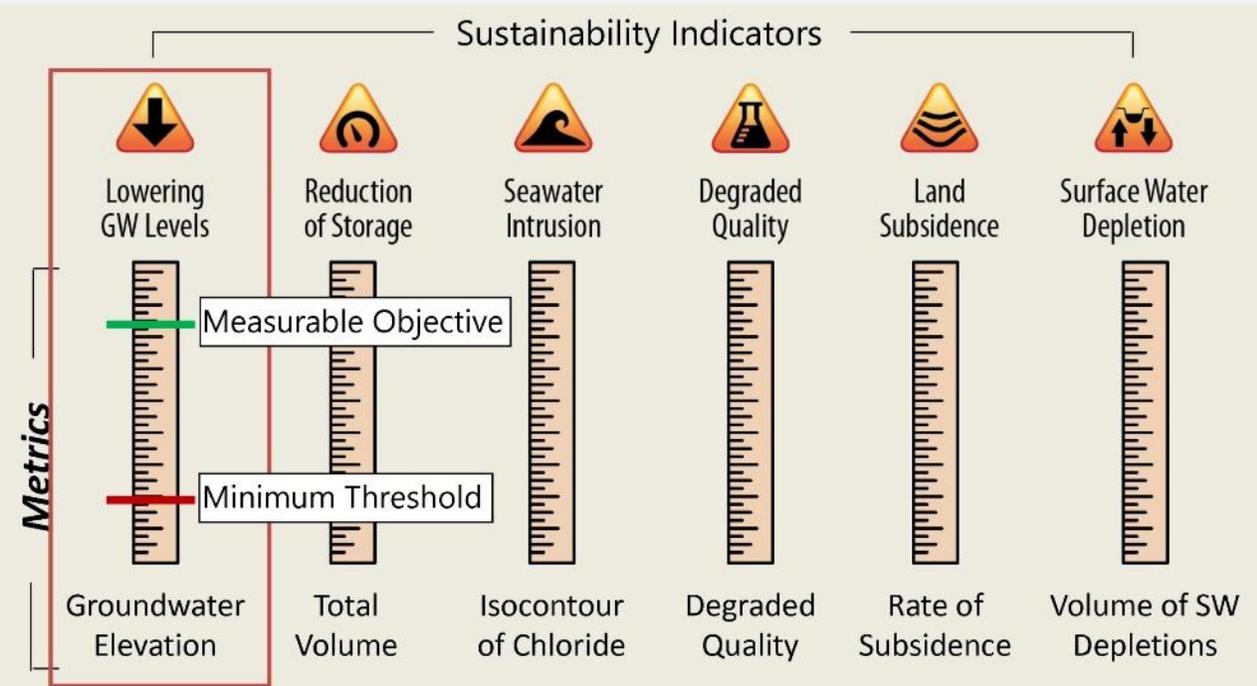


# SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA

## MEASUREABLE OBJECTIVES AND MINIMUM THRESHOLDS

Prevent “Undesirable results that are significant and unreasonable”

At this time, the only undesirable result that we can be certain doesn't apply to your GSA area is Seawater intrusion.



# SUSTAINABILITY IS DEFINED LOCALLY

- SGMA requires GSAs to define sustainability using two concepts:
  - **Measurable objectives** are aspirational goals. Technically, you should achieve them by 2040 (or 2042 if not critically overdrafted).
  - **Minimum thresholds** are to be avoided. If they are crossed, you may be out of compliance with your plan and violating the obligation to reach sustainability.

# GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SETTING MOS AND MTS

- Cannot harm sustainability in a neighboring basin
- Cannot continue to be in long-term overdraft
- Cannot deplete surface water

# MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND PROJECTS



# MULTIPLE GSPS

- If there are multiple GSAs in a sub-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.

# GSP SUBMITTAL AND APPROVAL BY DWR

- GSPs must be written by **January 31, 2020 (or January 31, 2022 if the basin is not critically overdrafted)**
- DWR Possible Plan Determinations
  - Adequate
  - Conditionally Adequate (minor deficiencies that can be corrected within 180 days)
  - Inadequate
- If the Department of Water Resources decides that a GSP **will not sustainably manage groundwater by 2040 (or 2042 if not in critically overdrafted basins)...**
  - **The State may step in and manage the sub-basin itself!**
    - Much more expensive
    - Less local control

# GSP IMPLEMENTATION AND ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY

- After submitting its GSP, a GSA has 20 years to reach sustainability.
  - **Sustainability must be reached by 2040 (2042 for areas not in critical overdraft)**
- DWR will review all plans every five years to assess progress and recommend corrective actions as needed.
- Annual Reporting

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



# PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR GSP

You can help shape what is included in the plan by:

- Providing information about your past or present groundwater challenges
- Sharing information about your water usage and/or water well
- Sharing your vision for sustainability
- Identifying projects that can help address the groundwater conditions



# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SEVERELY DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

## ■ Self-Help Enterprises

- Outreach and Education
- Direct Community Assistance (e.g. coordination, facilitation and translation services)
- GSP Development Assistance including, Planning and Project Development
- Procurement of Professional Services

**Maria Herrera (559) 802-1676, [MariaH@selfhelpenterprises.org](mailto:MariaH@selfhelpenterprises.org)**

## ■ Community Water Center

- Outreach and Education
- GSP Development Assistance
- DAC Vulnerability Tool

**Adriana Renteria (559) 733-0219, [adriana.renteria@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:adriana.renteria@communitywatercenter.org)**

## ■ Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

- Outreach and Education
- GSP Development Assistance
- Identification of Community Water Projects
- Procurement of Professional Services (analysis)

**Amanda Monaco (559) 369-2788 ext. 1003, [amonaco@leadershipcounsel.org](mailto:amonaco@leadershipcounsel.org)**



# RESOURCES

## ■ Statewide Information

- Department of Water Resources: <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/>
- State Water Resources Control Board:  
[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/gmp/sgma.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/gmp/sgma.html)

THANK YOU!

