Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

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ACWA Legislative Advocate
It Has Been a Big Year for California Water

- Governor Outlines California Water Action Plan
- Water Bond Headed to November 2014 Ballot
- Comprehensive Groundwater Legislation Passed and Signed by the Governor
- Key Steps toward Advancing Comprehensive Plan
The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

- “Once in a century” accomplishment
- Most controversial issue in California water today
- Sometimes leadership is hard, but we have to lead
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

- Three Bills
  - AB 1739 (Dickinson)
  - SB 1168 (Pavley)
  - SB 1319 (Pavley)
- Commits state to sustainable groundwater management
- Promotes local control
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

- Requires GW sustainability plans in high- and medium-priority basins
- Authorizes management tools for local agencies
- Creates state “backstop”
- Defines time frame for accomplishing goals

Highly consistent with ACWA’s policy recommendations
New Local Management Tools

- Requires creation of groundwater sustainability agencies

- Empowers GSAs to:
  - Register groundwater wells
  - Measure extractions
  - Require reports
  - Manage extractions
  - Assess fees

- Exempts preparation of local groundwater sustainability plans from CEQA

- Establishes “sustainability goal” over time to guide management
# Time Frame for Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1/2017</td>
<td>Formation of GSAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/31/2020</td>
<td>Completion of GSPs in critically over drafted basins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/31/2022</td>
<td>Completion of GSPs in all other basins</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-year implementation period</td>
<td>Implementation of GSPs under local management</td>
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Checking these boxes shields local managers from state intervention
What if the Locals Don’t “Check the Boxes”?

Probationary Basins

Undesirable Results, Based on “Significant and Unreasonable” Standard

- Lowering groundwater level
- Seawater intrusion
- Degraded water quality
- Land subsidence
- Depletions of interconnected surface water

| Long-term overdraft condition | Significant depletions of interconnected surface waters |
## The “Backstop” State Board Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After</th>
<th>Cause of Intervention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 30, 2017</td>
<td>No GSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, 2020</td>
<td>In critically over drafted basins, no GSP or GSP is inadequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, 2022</td>
<td>In other basins, no GSP or GSP is inadequate and basin is in long-term overdraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, 2025</td>
<td>GSP is inadequate and significant depletions of interconnected surface waters</td>
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</tbody>
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In all triggering events, intervention is the result of a failure by the locals to create a GSA and/or adopt and implement a GSP.
Water Board Interim Plans for Probationary Basins

- Locals have 180 days to respond to “probationary status” determination

- Water board may develop an interim plan
  - IPs apply only to subarea in non-compliance
  - No IPs for ‘interconnectedness’ until after 1/1/2025
  - State fees to support water board activities limited to noncomplying subareas
“Never Let a Good Crisis Go to Waste”

- SGMA will profoundly change the statewide debate
- ACWA policy: SGMA must be part of a comprehensive program
- What needs to happen to assure sustainable groundwater and healthy local economies?
We Have a Lot of Work to Do

A Partial List

- Educate
- Outreach to members/others
- Follow-up legislation
- Rulemaking
- Creation of GSAs
- Finalizing GSPs
- Visioning statewide success