

WHAT IS A GSA?

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires the creation of new groundwater management entities or “Groundwater Sustainability Agencies” (GSAs). These GSAs are tasked with assessing conditions in their local basins and adopting local management plans or “Groundwater Sustainability Plans” (GSPs). Each high and medium priority groundwater basin must be managed in its entirety by one or more GSAs in a coordinated manner. A single local agency whose service area encompasses an entire basin could elect to be the sole GSA (e.g., the County). Alternatively, multiple local agencies could come together to form a single GSA; or a basin could be managed by multiple GSAs who each manage separate portions of a basin using either a single GSP or coordinated GSPs.

WHO CAN FORM GSAS?

Any local public agency or combination of local public agencies overlying a groundwater basin, which has water supply, water management or land use responsibilities, may form a GSA. Additionally, a water corporation regulated by the Public Utilities Commission or a mutual water company may participate in a GSA through a memorandum of agreement or other legal agreement. SGMA leaves the decision of which local agency(ies) should be GSAs to the local interests. If an area over a basin is not within the management area of a GSA, the local county is allowed the option of opting into the role as a GSA.

WHAT POWERS AND AUTHORITIES DO GSAS HAVE?

GSAs are empowered to utilize a number of new management tools to achieve the basin’s sustainability goal. For example, GSAs may

ACRONYMS:

DWR	California Department of Water Resources
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (<i>State law went into effect Jan. 1, 2015</i>)

conduct investigations, determine the sustainable yield of the groundwater basin, require registration of groundwater wells, mandate annual extraction reports from individual wells, impose limits on extractions, implement capital projects, assess fees for groundwater management, and enforce the terms of a GSP. What authorities each GSA assumes is one of the key decisions in both forming a GSA and implementing a GSP.

WILL PRIVATE WELL OPERATORS BE REPRESENTED?

Private landowners are not eligible to be a GSA. While the legislation does not give private pumpers a direct governance opportunity, they are key players in successful groundwater management. How private pumpers will have a voice in informing GSA decisions and actions is an important consideration in establishing the GSA governance structure.

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES IN PASO BASIN:

Local Agencies: City of Paso Robles, County of San Luis Obispo, County of Monterey, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Heritage Ranch Community Services District and San Miguel Community Services District

Proposed Water Districts (if formed): Estrella-El Pomar-Creston, Shandon-San Juan

Mutual Water Companies: Green River Mutual Water Company, Mustang Springs Mutual Water Company, Santa Ysabel Mutual Water Company, Spanish Lakes Mutual Water Company, Walnut Hills Mutual Water Company and Rancho Salinas Mutual Benefit Water Company

HOW WILL THE GSA BE FUNDED?

GSAs have the authority to levy fees on basin users to support implementation of the SGMA, subject to the same procedural requirements used by other local agencies. GSAs and basin users will also be able to pursue funding under the Proposition 1 Water Bond – available on a competitive basis to be used for the development and implementation of GSPs and planned actions/ projects.

WILL STAKEHOLDERS BE ENGAGED IN FORMING THE GSA?

SGMA requires each GSA to establish and maintain a list of all people interested in groundwater issues including preparation of the GSP. Collaboration and stakeholder involvement will be key to the successful implementation of SGMA.

So, how can you get involved? Here are a few key actions you can take:

- 1) **Visit our SGMA website & sign up for the email list to receive workshop invitations & receive critical updates:**

<http://slocountywater.org/sgma>

- 2) **Attend public workshops and participate in discussions.**
- 3) **Help us identify and reach out to other stakeholder groups, such as agricultural organizations, domestic well owners, public water systems, environmental groups, business or development organizations, etc. that may not be participating yet.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

SGMA Legislation

<http://groundwater.ca.gov/legislation.cfm>

GSP Requirements

<http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/gsp.cfm>

DWR Bulletin 118 Description of Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin

<http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/bulletin118/basindescriptions/3-04.06.pdf>

San Luis Obispo County Water Resources: Groundwater Basin News and Information

<http://slocountywater.org/sgma>

SGMA TIMELINE

June 30, 2017:	Deadline to form a GSA
<i>June 30, 2017:</i>	<i>State can begin to put basins on probation who have not formed GSAs</i>
<i>July 1, 2017:</i>	<i>Basins in a probationary basin must report extractions to the State Water Board</i>
January 31, 2020:	GSP required for Paso Basin
<i>January 31, 2020–2022:</i>	<i>DWR completes evaluation of all GSPs</i>
January 31, 2040:	Basins must implement GSP planned actions & achieve sustainability