California’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: Building on Success

Bay Planning Coalition

Expert Briefing: The 2014 Water Bond & Groundwater Legislation

Feb. 27, 2015 • David Bolland, ACWA Special Projects Manager
About ACWA

Who We Represent . . .

+ ACWA members responsible for 90% of the state’s distributed water

Water Sources & Services

+ Federal, state and local projects
+ Surface and groundwater
+ Agricultural, urban, industrial customers
+ Wholesale, retail
California Water in 2015: Building on Success

California Water Action Plan

Proposition 1: 2014 Water Bond

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
California’s Groundwater Situation: Legislation Was Inevitable

- Groundwater levels in many basins on downward trend for decades
- Reduced surface allocations from SWP and CVP
- Subsidence “hot spots”
- Local contamination issues
- Deepening drought

Legislation was inevitable - if we didn’t control it, others would
California’s Groundwater Challenge: Protecting Local Control

- March 2009 ACWA Groundwater Management Policy Principles
- April 2011 ACWA Groundwater Framework
- ACWA Board Task Force created November 2013
- ACWA Board approves Task Force recommendations unanimously on March 28, 2014 and publishes “Recommendations for Achieving Groundwater Sustainability” in April to help inform pending legislation
Groundwater Legislation

- Three Bills
  AB 1739 (Dickinson)
  SB 1168 (Pavley)
  SB 1319 (Pavley)

- Signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown on Sept. 16, 2014

- Sets path to sustainable, locally controlled groundwater management

- “Once-in-a-century” accomplishment
The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA)

- Requires the formation of new Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)
- Requires Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) in high and medium basins
- Authorizes management tools for local agencies
- Defines time frame for accomplishing goals
- Creates state “backstop” if locals fail to act effectively
### Time Frame for SGMA Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/30/2017</td>
<td>Formation of GSAs</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/31/2020</td>
<td>Completion of GSPs in critically overdrafted basins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/31/2022</td>
<td>Completion of GSPs in all other basins</td>
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<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.
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
Local Agencies Are Getting to Work

- Evaluating current conditions and management plans
- Identifying information gaps and capacity needs
- Considering governance structures and forming partnerships
- Laying the groundwork to form GSAs
Action at the Local Level

**Yolo County Basins**
Planning forum with local farm bureau to determine GSA structure and basin needs

**Modesto Basin**
Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association considered as potential GSA

**Kaweah Basin**
Tulare County Water Commission working with Board of Supervisors

**Kern County Basins**
Kern County Groundwater Authority formed 2014 to act as “coordinating GSA”

**Coachella Valley Basins**
Regional Water Management Group with 5 water agencies cooperating
Local Examples: Yolo County Basins

Water Resources Association of Yolo County (WRA):

- Ongoing regional monitoring and real-time sensors
- Countywide groundwater model and subsidence monitoring network
- Current AB 3030 Plan
- Planning forum with local farm bureau to determine GSA structure and basin needs
Local Examples: Modesto Basin

Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association (STRGBA):

- Includes majority of local agencies in Modesto Basin
- Promotes coordinated groundwater management
- Serves as CASGEM Monitoring entity
- Ongoing planning and technical studies
- STRGBA considered as potential GSA
Tulare County Water Commission working with Board of Supervisors:

+ 9 local entities are part of the Kaweah River Basin IRWM
+ 17 local ID’s, cities & counties in AB3030 Plan
+ 31 public/private water suppliers are members of water rights association
+ Current efforts serving as model for GSA governance options
Local Examples: Kern County Basins

Kern County Groundwater Authority formed in 2014:

+ Covers 100% of land; 95% of GW pumping in Kern
+ Ongoing technical studies to inform GSPs
+ Planning workshops in January-March 2015
+ Kern County Groundwater Authority to act as “coordinating GSA”
Local Examples: Coachella Valley Basins

Regional Water Management Group with 5 water agencies formed in 2008:

- Cooperating groundwater management agencies perform groundwater replenishment, metered water production, Water Resources investigations, land surface elevation studies
- Implementing elements of local Water Management Plans
- Agencies cooperatively fill CASGEM monitoring role
Comprehensive Water Solutions

BUT even with effective, locally controlled groundwater management, we MUST:

- Increase efficiency and local resource development, statewide
- Fix the Delta, once and for all
- Develop new surface storage and operate it conjunctively with our groundwater basins
Contact & More Information

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