

# Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

**Priority basins.** Requires all groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) that are also subject to critical conditions of overdraft to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan or coordinated groundwater sustainability plans by January 31, 2020.

Requires all other groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan or coordinated groundwater sustainability plans by January 31, 2022.

**Basin boundaries.** A local agency may request that the DWR revise the boundaries of a basin and would require the DWR, by January 1, 2016, to adopt methods and criteria to be used to evaluate the proposed revision.

**State authority when local plan is absent.** Authorizes the State Water Resources Control Board to designate a basin as a probationary basin if the Board makes certain determinations. Authorizes the board to develop an interim plan for a probationary basin if the board, in consultation with the DWR, determines that a local agency has not remedied a deficiency that resulted in designating the basin as a probationary basin within a certain timeframe.

## Definitions:

**“Condition of long-term overdraft”** means the condition of a groundwater basin where the average annual amount of water extracted for a long-term period, generally 10 years or more, exceeds the long-term average annual supply of water to the basin, plus any temporary surplus.

**“Groundwater sustainability agency”** means one or more local agencies that implement the act. (Mono County Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District is exclusive local agency within its boundaries, but may opt out.)

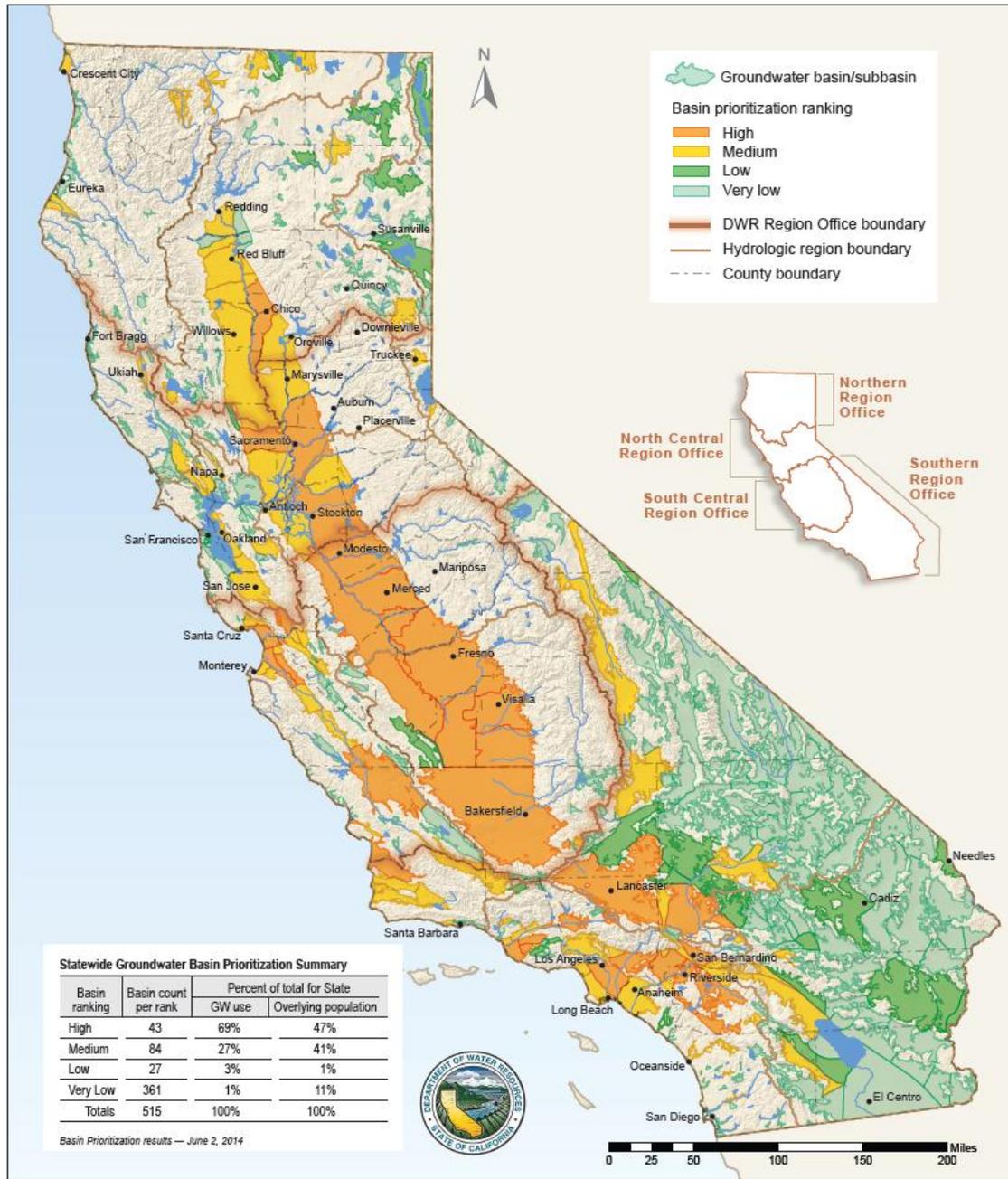
**“Groundwater sustainability plan”** means a plan of a groundwater sustainability agency proposed or adopted pursuant to act.

**“Sustainable yield”** means the maximum quantity of water, calculated over a base period representative of long-term conditions in the basin and including any temporary surplus, that can be withdrawn annually from a groundwater supply without causing an undesirable result.

**“Undesirable result”** means one or more of the following effects caused by groundwater conditions occurring throughout the basin:

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels indicating a significant and unreasonable depletion of supply if continued over the planning and implementation horizon.
- Significant and unreasonable reduction of groundwater storage.
- Significant and unreasonable seawater intrusion.
- Significant and unreasonable land subsidence that substantially interferes with surface land uses.
- Surface water depletions that have significant and unreasonable adverse impacts on beneficial uses of the surface water.

# CASGEM Groundwater Basin Prioritization



**Reporting use.** Provides authority to a groundwater sustainability agency to require registration of a groundwater extraction wells, to require that groundwater extraction be measured, and to regulate groundwater extraction.

**Goals.** Requires that plans include prescribed components to achieve sustainable groundwater management to avoid undesirable results, such as chronic depletion of groundwater, water quality degradation, or subsidence. Each plan must include requisite monitoring and management for the basin over a 50-year planning horizon, and plans must articulate measurable objectives to be achieved every five years. DWR will review the plans and will have the power to request changes to a submitted plan.

**Exemptions.** Extractors of less than 2 acre-feet per year are exempt. Does not apply to adjudicated basins (LADWP land subject to Inyo/LA Water Agreement is considered adjudicated).

**Regulation of groundwater pumping.** Groundwater sustainability agencies may regulate groundwater extraction and have the authority to:

Impose spacing requirements on new groundwater well construction to minimize well interference and impose reasonable operating regulations on existing groundwater wells to minimize well interference, including requiring extractors to operate on a rotation basis.

Control groundwater extractions by regulating, limiting, or suspending extractions from individual groundwater wells or extractions from groundwater wells in the aggregate, construction of new groundwater wells, enlargement of existing groundwater wells, or reactivation of abandoned groundwater wells, or otherwise establishing groundwater extraction allocations.

Authorize temporary and permanent transfers of groundwater extraction allocations within the agency's boundaries.

**Fees**. A groundwater sustainability agency may impose fees, including, permit fees and fees on groundwater extraction or other regulated activity, to fund the costs of a groundwater sustainability program, including preparation, adoption, and amendment of a groundwater sustainability plan, and investigations, inspections, compliance assistance, enforcement, and program administration, including a prudent reserve. De minimis extractors are not subject to fees.

## Implementation Timeline:

1/31/2015	DWR must complete basin prioritization according to revised criteria
1/1/2016	DWR must adopt methods and criteria to be used to evaluate proposed revisions to basin boundaries.
6/1/2016	DWR must adopt regulations for groundwater sustainability plans
1/1/2017	Deadline for a local agency to submit an alternative to groundwater sustainability plan
6/30/2017	SWRCB may designate a basin as probationary if there is no groundwater sustainability agency, and no alternative or pending approval.
1/31/2020	SWRCB may designate a basin as probationary if basin is high or medium priority and is subject to critical conditions of overdraft, not managed under a GWSP, or, if there is a GWSP in place, DWR has determined that the plan is inadequate or not being implemented in a manner that would likely achieve sustainability goals.
1/31/2022	SWRCB may designate a basin as probationary if basin is high or medium priority <b>but is not</b> subject to critical conditions of overdraft, ... (as above)
1/31/2025	SWRCB may designate a basin as probationary if: high or medium priority and DWR determines that a GWSP is inadequate or not being implemented in a manner likely to achieve goals, and the SWRCB determines that the basin is in a condition where groundwater extraction could result in significant depletions of interconnected surface waters.