

SGMA 101

Santa Margarita Basin GSA
December 13, 2017

Derrik Williams



Objectives and Outline

Understanding the background, purpose, and basics of developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) under SGMA

1. California groundwater management history
2. What is SGMA?
3. Who does SGMA Apply To?
4. Groundwater Sustainability Plans

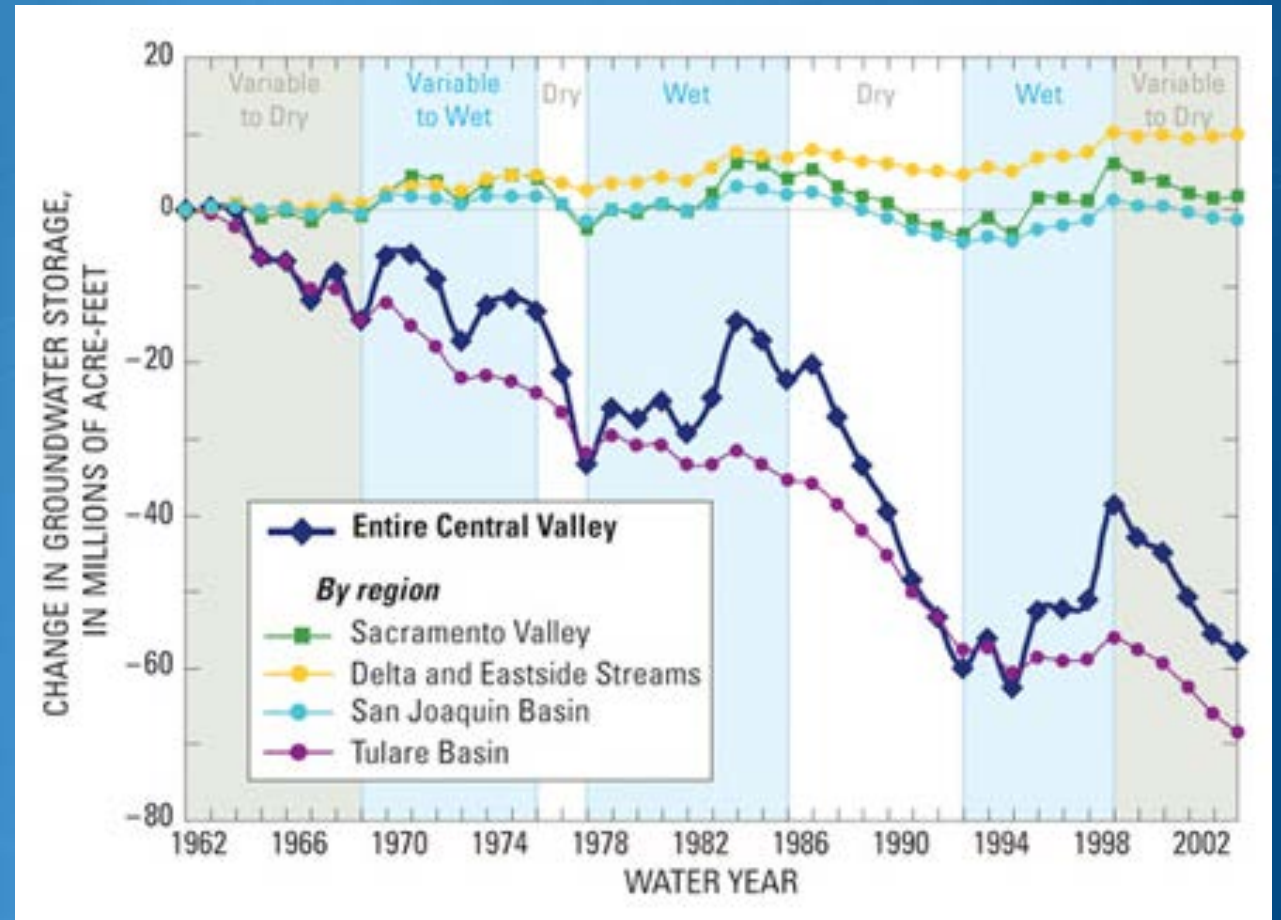
Groundwater Management History

- State Water Resources Control Board
 - Managed surface water use since 1914
 - Very limited authority to manage groundwater use
 - Results in two separate water management systems
- Groundwater in California historically managed by:
 - Groundwater Management Plans (AB3030/SB1938)
 - Adjudications (Seaside Basin)
 - Special districts (Pajaro Valley WMA, Santa Clara VWD)
 - Potential County police authority

AB3030/SB1938 Groundwater Management Plans

A Good Start at Local Groundwater Management, but...

- Voluntary
- Local agencies lack some authorities for strong oversight
- No state oversight of progress
- Limited definition of what constitutes acceptable groundwater management



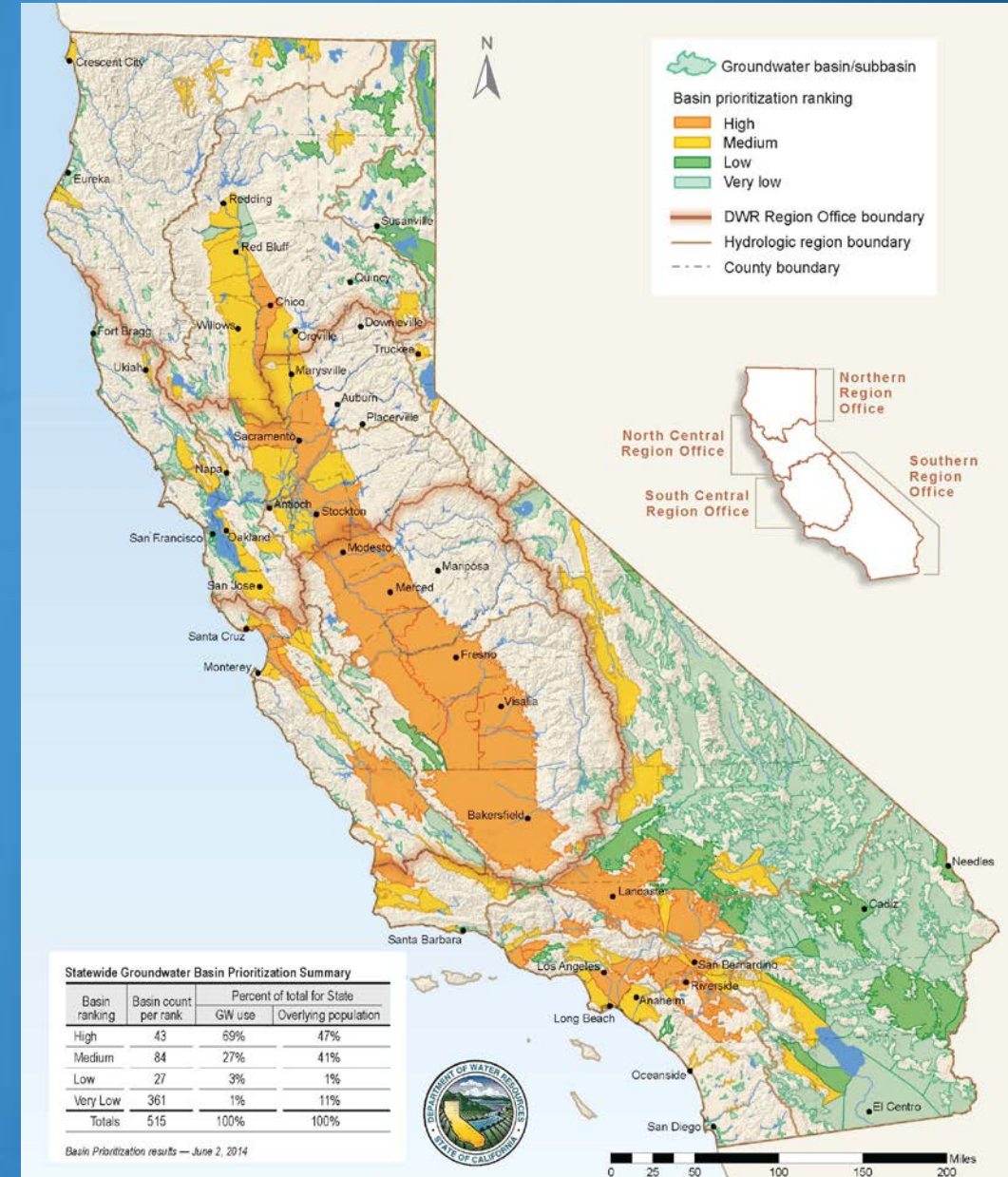
The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Passed in September 2014

A compromise between one faction wanting State regulation of groundwater rights, and one faction insisting on local management.

- Locally driven
 - Groundwater is best managed locally, but this comes with responsibilities
 - Local definition of what constitutes sustainability
 - Locally agreed to plans for achieving sustainability
- State backstop
 - State can temporarily take over groundwater management if a basin fails to meet certain requirement or milestones in SGMA

Who Does SGMA Apply To?

- There are 515 groundwater basins in the State
- SGMA applies to the 127 “high and medium priority” basins
- The Santa Margarita Basin will be ranked in early 2018. We expect a medium ranking
- Rankings are NOT indicators of groundwater management success or failure

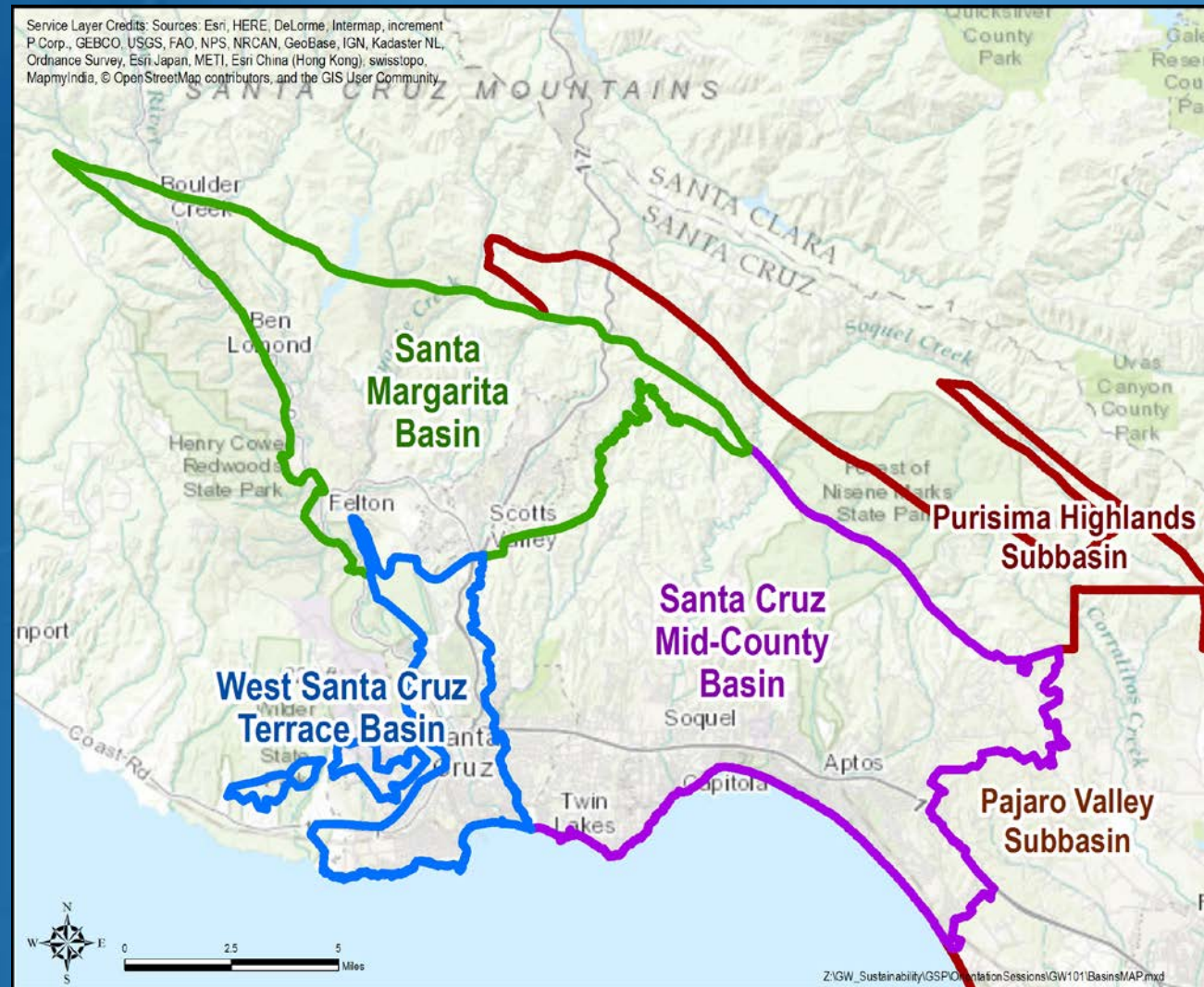


Who Does SGMA Apply To?

- 21 basins in California are critically-overdrafted
- 3 local basins are listed as critically overdrafted, due to threat of seawater intrusion
 - Santa Cruz Mid-County
 - Pajaro Valley
 - Parts of Salinas Valley
- We do not expect the Santa Margarita Basin will be listed as critically overdrafted



Local Basins



SGMA is Implemented by New Agencies

- Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA)
- GSAs are locally defined, but must comprise existing public agencies with water or land use authority
 - San Lorenzo Valley Water District
 - Scotts Valley Water District
 - County of Santa Cruz
 - Potentially others
- GSAs must take public input, and acknowledge the needs of all the “beneficial uses and users” of groundwater

SGMA forces Local, Cooperative Groundwater Management

- Santa Margarita GSA board of directors is designed to include the broad range of interests
 - San Lorenzo VWD
 - Scotts Valley WD
 - County of Santa Cruz
 - City of Scotts Valley
 - City of Santa Cruz
 - Mt. Hermon Association
 - Small water systems and private well owners

No one interest can control groundwater management in the basin

SGMA forces Local, Cooperative Groundwater Management

- Plans must address the needs of all “groundwater uses and users”
 - Environmental uses
 - Municipal uses
 - Private well owners
 - Tribal interests
 - Etc.
- Basins with multiple plans must coordinate their plans

GSAs Get New Authorities

- Raise funds
 - Regulatory fees
 - Taxes on land, pumping, etc.
- Buy, trade, or sell water
- Register wells
- Require pumping be measured and reported
- Control well spacing
- Regulate pumping amounts
- Do whatever “necessary and proper” to carry out SGMA’s purposes

GSAs are not required to do any of these

The GSAs Must Develop Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP)

- The Santa Margarita Basin will be required to develop a GSP by **January 31, 2022**
- DWR Info on GSPs:
http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/pdfs/GSP_Emergency_Regulations.pdf

GSP Contents

1. Admin. Info
2. Basin Setting
3. Sustainable Management Criteria
4. Monitoring Networks
5. Projects & Management Actions
6. Implementation

SGMA Timeline



What is Sustainability?

All hinges on
avoiding
undesirable
result



A Sustainable
Management
Criteria Best
Management
Practice
document is
currently out for
public review.

GSP Ultimate Goal

According to the California Constitution, the waters of the State shall be , “... put to beneficial use to the fullest extent of which they are capable... in the interest of people and for the public welfare”.

In other words

- Manage sustainably
- Avoid waste
- Promote the economy, society, and the environment

Questions