



Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency
Seeks Well Owner Representative Alternate Director
Applications due by 4 p.m. December 15, 2025

The [Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency](#) (Agency or SMGWA) is seeking a volunteer to serve as **the Well Owner Representative Alternate Director** on the Agency Board. To be eligible, candidates must either own, manage, or be served by: 1) a private or shared domestic well; 2) a small water system well; or 3) an irrigation well used for commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, or agricultural purposes. This well must be located within the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin (Basin). Following this public solicitation process, the Agency is anticipated to approve the appointment at the February 26, 2026 meeting of the Board of Directors. The time commitment is estimated to average about 5 – 10 hours per quarter; the term is for 3 years. The Board currently meets on the fourth Thursday of the month on a quarterly basis (February, May, August, October), beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Scotts Valley.

About the Agency

The SMGWA is a Groundwater Sustainability Agency formed as a Joint Powers Authority in 2017 under California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014. The Agency is responsible for groundwater management in the Basin. As required by SGMA, the Agency is responsible for developing and implementing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP or Plan) to achieve sustainability in the Basin by 2042. The Agency Board adopted the initial Basin GSP on November 17, 2021. As required by SGMA, the Basin GSP was reviewed and approved by the California Department of Water Resources on April 27, 2023. Current priorities are focused on implementing GSP projects that will result in long-term Basin sustainability and conducting the initial five-year GSP evaluation required by SGMA.

Board Composition

To ensure broad representation of Basin interests, the Board is composed of representatives of groundwater users.

The governing Board of the SMGWA includes 11 members:

- Two directors from each of the Joint Powers Authority member agencies (Scotts Valley Water District, San Lorenzo Valley Water District, and County of Santa Cruz), each of whom are appointed by their respective elective bodies. Each agency has one alternate director.
- One director each from the City of Scotts Valley, the City of Santa Cruz, and Mount Hermon Association. Each agency has one alternate director.
- Two well owner representatives that are members of the public that represent well owners in the Basin. To be eligible, these representatives must either: own, manage, or be served by a private or shared domestic well; or a small water system; or an irrigation well used for commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, or agricultural purposes within the Basin. An alternate director is also appointed.

Board Responsibilities

The Board of Directors oversees and directs the following efforts to be carried out by the Agency:

- Adopt rules, regulations, policies, bylaws and procedures for the effective operation of the Agency.
- Approve the annual budget and fiscal audits of the Agency.
- Approve actions necessary for the Agency to exercise its powers, including those granted through SGMA, as identified in the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement.
- Direct staff and approve actions necessary for successful implementation of the Basin GSP.
- Receive and authorize submission of annual reports on GSP implementation progress and oversee and approve five-year periodic evaluations of the GSP.
- Undertake ongoing and comprehensive efforts to collect, maintain, and share groundwater data with respect to water levels and quality.
- Undertake cooperative research and resource management initiatives that are regional in scope and disseminate information resulting from these activities.
- Recommend joint efforts to the respective governing bodies which are of regional benefit, e.g. conjunctive use, recharge within shared portions of the Basin, etc.
- Jointly pursue groundwater management studies, hydrological modeling and technical studies and pursue grants available from the State of California planning or projects.
- Communicate with their constituencies and represent the viewpoints and concerns of the constituencies that they represent, while acting in the interest of the overall Basin.

Eligibility

Candidates must either own, manage, or be served by: 1) a private or shared domestic well; 2) a small water system well; or 3) a well used for commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, or agricultural purposes. This well must be located within the Basin.

Role

The Alternate Director serves as back-up to the two Well Owner Directors on the Board. If a Well Owner Director is unable to attend a Board meeting, the Alternate can participate as the acting (voting) Director. In the event of a Well Owner Director vacancy (for example, in the event of a resignation) the Alternate Director may fill the vacancy of the departing Director if the Well Owner Alternate is willing to do so. The Alternate Director may not participate in Board meeting discussions if the two Well Owner Directors are present and participating. The Alternate Director is expected to regularly attend Board meetings and maintain regular communications with the two Well Owner Directors.

Desired Candidate Characteristics, Qualities, and Skills

The Agency is seeking candidates that are passionate about our community's future and the sustainability of the Basin. An ideal candidate will have knowledge and experience that will benefit the Agency in the implementation of the GSP. The Agency is seeking candidates that can effectively represent the interests of community members reliant upon water from private domestic wells or small water systems. Candidates should be open to learning about, and working with, people whose interests may conflict with their own and are willing to make educated compromises that are respectful of competing viewpoints. All Board

members agree to operate under the Guiding Principles outlined by the SMGWA Board and adhere to the Code of Conduct, Bylaws, and Joint Powers Authority that outline the goals and operation of the Agency.

Application Deadline and Review Process

Application forms are available on the website (SMGWA.org), and notice sent through the email list and a press release. **Applications are due by 4PM on December 15, 2025.** All applications will be reviewed to confirm eligibility. A Board Committee will oversee the process.

Process for Self-Nomination

Upon the close of the application period, if there are more eligible applicants than the number of positions available, the applicants will be notified of the opportunity to act as a group to nominate the candidate by reaching agreement among themselves for some applicants to withdraw their applications so that the remaining number of applications is the same as the number of positions available. Applicants shall be given the names and contact information of the other applicants and shall be allowed at least twenty (20) days but no more than forty (40) days to meet and confer and seek agreement on which applicant shall become the group representative. Withdrawal of an application may be done electronically by email, or by submitting a request to withdraw signed by the applicant at the Agency office. If after 40 days, the number of applications is greater than the number of positions available, the procedure for selection described below will be followed.

Board Committee Evaluation

The Agency will follow the procedure for the appointment of well owners set forth in its Bylaws (Section 2.3). The Board Committee will evaluate applications to determine whether and how a candidate meets the desired characteristics. The Committee may hold interviews with the top candidates from the screening process. The Committee will report its findings to the Board, who will then appoint the Well Owner Representative Alternate.

Appointment

Appointment the Well Owner Representative Alternate shall be made by a unanimous vote of the Member Agency Directors in compliance with Section 6.3.7 of the Joint Powers Agreement. If the well owner applicants have self-nominated their candidate, as described above, the Board will approve the appointment of that candidate assuming they are eligible for the position. The appointment is anticipated to occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board on February 26, 2026.

Application Submittal

Please submit applications via email to admin@smgwa.org. You may also submit by mail or hand deliver to Scotts Valley Water District, 2 Civic Center Dr, Scotts Valley, CA, 95066. Scotts Valley Water District, a member of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency, serves as the principal office for the Agency.

Questions

Please direct questions about the application via email to admin@smgwa.org or by phone at (831) 216-8414.

Information and Reference Documents

- Website: www.smgwa.org
- Meeting information: Agendas, Meeting Packets, Presentations, Recordings ([Meeting Dashboard](#))
- Guiding Principles: [Guiding Principles](#)
- Code of Conduct: [Code of Conduct](#)
- Bylaws: [Bylaws](#)
- Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA): [Second Amended and Restated Bylaws](#)
- Groundwater Sustainability Plan: www.smgwa.org/GroundwaterSustainabilityPlan
- Guide to the [Ralph M. Brown Act](#)
- [Understanding Our Water Educational Series](#) (Recordings)
- Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency - [Private Well Owners](#)



Application for Well Owner Representative - Alternate Director

First Name:	Last Name:	
Mailing Address:		
City:	Zip Code:	
Phone:		
Email Address:		
Current or Past Occupation/Profession:		
Community Interests and Activities:		
Do you own, manage, or are served by a private or shared domestic well; a small water system well; or an irrigation well used for commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, or agricultural purposes within the Basin*? ☐ Yes ☐ No, I receive all my water from a municipal water supplier. If you answered no to the above question, you are not eligible to be a Well Owner representative. *Interactive Map searchable by address on the Department of Water Resources GSA Map Viewer: Santa Margarita Basin 3-027		
Identify the type of private well configuration best describes you as a groundwater user: (Check all that apply)		
☐ Private well for domestic use (single family home)	☐ Shared private well for domestic use (up to 4 homes)	☐ Small water system with 5-14 connections Name of water provider:
☐ Small water system with 15-199 connections Name of water provider:	☐ Private Well for commercial, institutional, industrial, or recreational uses Please describe:	☐ Private well for agricultural use Please describe:
☐ Other. Please describe:		
Is your well used for irrigation? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please estimate how many acres that you irrigate.		

Application for SMGWA Well Owner Representative - Alternate Director (continued):

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of this Agency?

Describe your knowledge of the Basin's groundwater sustainability issues as well as knowledge of the issues faced by private well, small water system, or mutual water company/system:

Application for SMGWA Well Owner Representative - Alternate Director (continued):

Describe your qualities/skills/characteristics that would make you an effective representative of private well owners in the Basin:

Describe your prior community engagement or service (e.g., Board member or volunteer) and/or prior participation in multi-party or community collaborative processes:

Application for SMGWA Well Owner Representative - Alternate Director (continued):

Are you able to commit to attending regular board meetings? Currently, the Board meets quarterly (4x/year) in the evening (starting at 6pm) at Scotts Valley Water District. Meetings are typically 1.5 to 3 hours long.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you understand and agree to adhere to the Board's [Guiding Principles](#) and [Code of Conduct](#) policies?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you previously attended a meeting of the SMGWA Board of Directors?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you read the [Executive Summary](#) of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If not selected for the current opening, would you like this application to be considered for the next opening (note: the next solicitation is anticipated to occur in approximately two years)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

When there is a future opening, do you have a preference to serve as a Director or Alternate Director?

☐ Director ☐ Alternate Director ☐ Either