

Now Accepting Applications: Well Owner Alternate on the Board of Directors

Deadline to Apply: 5 p.m. Wednesday, June 24, 2026

The [Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency](https://www.smgwa.org) (Agency or SMGWA) is seeking a volunteer to fill **one opening for the Well Owner Representative Alternate Director** on the Board. The Agency is seeking candidates that are passionate about our community's future and the sustainability of the Basin. The time commitment is approximately 5 – 10 hours per quarter, including evenings. The term is for 3 years. Directors agree to complete trainings (e.g., ethics; fiscal/financial) and filings required of California public officials (e.g., Statement of Economic interests – Form 700). 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. Application forms are available on the website ([SMGWA.org](https://www.smgwa.org)).

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants 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. A map of the Basin is available at: www.smgwa.org/Maps. All applications will be reviewed for eligibility.

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) to achieve sustainability in the Basin by 2042. The Agency Board adopted the initial Basin GSP in November 2021. As required by SGMA, the Basin GSP was approved by the California Department of Water Resources in April 2023. Current priorities are focused on the five-year GSP periodic evaluation as required by SGMA and implementing GSP projects that will result in long-term Basin sustainability.

Private Well Owners in the Basin

Private wells owners are individuals or businesses with a groundwater well operated independently of any water agency that supplies water for domestic use, livestock, irrigation, or commercial use. A well serving up to four residential connections is considered a private domestic well. There are roughly 1,100 parcels served by private domestic wells. There are 13 small water systems that rely upon groundwater to serve approximately 1,000 residents. To ensure that the concerns and interests of well owners in the Basin are represented, the Board of Directors includes seats reserved for private well owners or small public water systems located in the Basin.

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 representatives of private well owners or small public water systems within the boundaries of the Agency. 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 all its powers, including those granted through SGMA, as identified in the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement.
- Direct 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 assessments of the GSP.
- Review data and coordinate groundwater pumping to the extent possible to meet demand and avoid exacerbating undesirable impacts.
- 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, such as 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.

Role of the Alternate Director

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 can effectively represent the interests of community members reliant upon water from private domestic wells or small water systems in the Basin and are willing to educate the community, Board members, and the Agency about the water interests of the constituents they represent. An ideal candidate will have a demonstrated ability to work with others in a collaborative setting. They will have knowledge and experience that will benefit the Agency and the implementation of the GSP. They will have the means and motivation to communicate with the community they are representing. Candidates with current knowledge of the Basin and its needs or who are committed to learning about the Basin, the Agency, and the GSP are preferred. The Agency is seeking candidates that are 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.

Selection Process

Private well owners may choose their representative by a method of self-selection. 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 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, then the Board may make the selection and appointment as described in the Bylaws (Section 2.3).

Board Committee Evaluation and Board Approval

A Board Committee has been formed to facilitate the solicitation and appointment process as set forth in its Bylaws. The Committee may recommend the rejection of an application if the applicant fails to meet the qualifications or if an applicant fails to attend a meeting of applicants called for the purpose of nominating an applicant to fill the vacancy. If the applicants do not self-select a candidate, then the Committee will report its findings and forward all the applications to the Board for consideration.

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 appoints that candidate assuming they are eligible for the position. The appointment is anticipated to occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

Application Deadline and Appointment Timeline

- June 1: Open application period and publicly notify opportunity to apply
- June 24: Close application period. Applications must be received by **5PM on Wednesday, June 24, 2026**
- June 29 – August 8: Applicant meeting and self-selection period
- August 27: Appointment of new Well Owner Representative Alternate at the Agency Board meeting

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): [Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement](#)
- 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:								
<p>Do you own, manage, or are served by a private or shared domestic well; a small private water system well; or an irrigation well used for commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, or agricultural purposes within the Basin*?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I receive all my water from a municipal water supplier.</p> <p>If you answered no to the above question, you are not eligible to be a Well Owner representative.</p> <p>*Interactive Map searchable by address on the Department of Water Resources GSA Map Viewer: Santa Margarita Basin 3-027</p>								
<p>Identify the type of private well configuration best describes you as a groundwater user: (Check all that apply)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Private well for domestic use (single family home) </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shared private well for domestic use (up to 4 homes) </td> <td style="width: 34%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Small water system with 5-14 connections Name of water provider: </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Small water system with 15-199 connections Name of water provider: </td> <td style="padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Private Well for commercial, institutional, industrial, or recreational uses Please describe: </td> <td style="padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Private well for agricultural use Please describe: </td> </tr> </table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Private well for domestic use (single family home)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared private well for domestic use (up to 4 homes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small water system with 5-14 connections Name of water provider:	<input type="checkbox"/> Small water system with 15-199 connections Name of water provider:	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Well for commercial, institutional, industrial, or recreational uses Please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Private well for agricultural use Please describe:
<input type="checkbox"/> Private well for domestic use (single family home)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared private well for domestic use (up to 4 homes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small water system with 5-14 connections Name of water provider:						
<input type="checkbox"/> Small water system with 15-199 connections Name of water provider:	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Well for commercial, institutional, industrial, or recreational uses Please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Private well for agricultural use Please describe:						
<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe:								
<p>Is your well used for irrigation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please estimate how many acres that you irrigate.</p>								

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

Do you acknowledge and agree to comply with the following legally required obligations applicable to California public officials?

These obligations include:

- Filing [Form 700: Statement of Economic Interests](#) upon appointment, annually during service, and upon leaving office
- Completing mandatory trainings for public officials (ethics training (AB 1234); fiscal and financial training (SB 827)). These trainings will be made available at no charge to Directors.

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