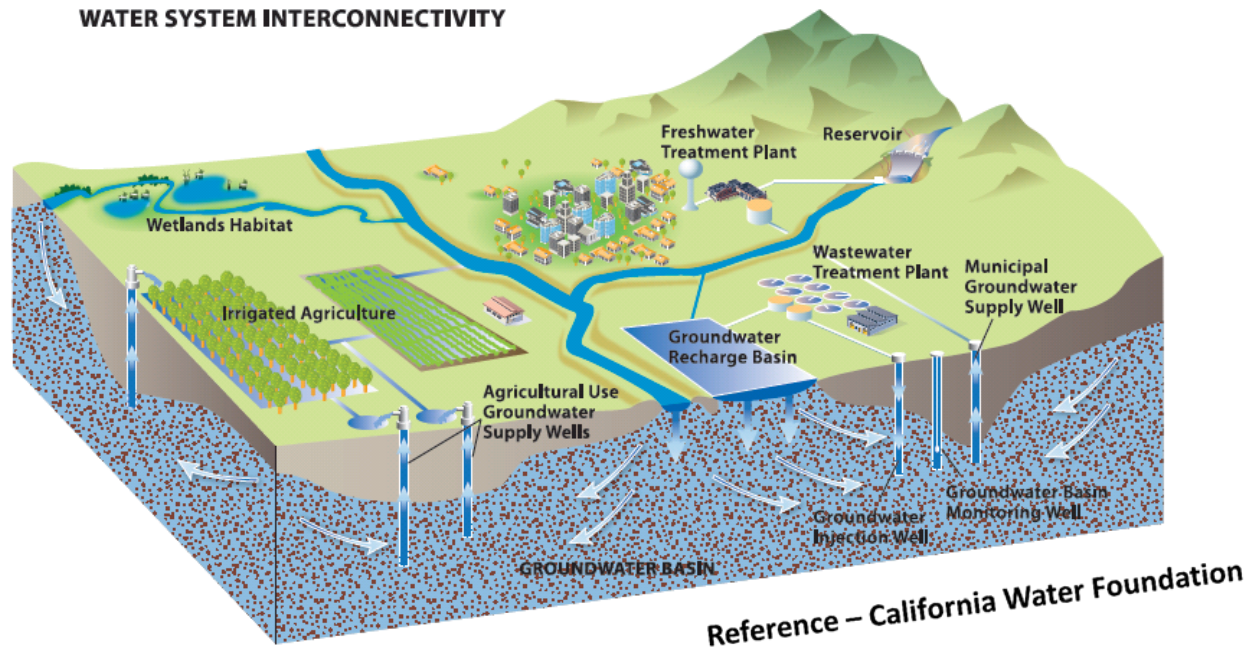


Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in Sonoma County



Jay Jasperse

September 11, 2015

Chief Engineer & Director of Groundwater Management
Sonoma County Water Agency

Presentation Overview



- **Existing groundwater management programs**
- **The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)**
- **Initial SGMA implementation activities in Sonoma County**

Groundwater Plays Important Role in Building Resiliency

Alexander Valley Study
completed 2006

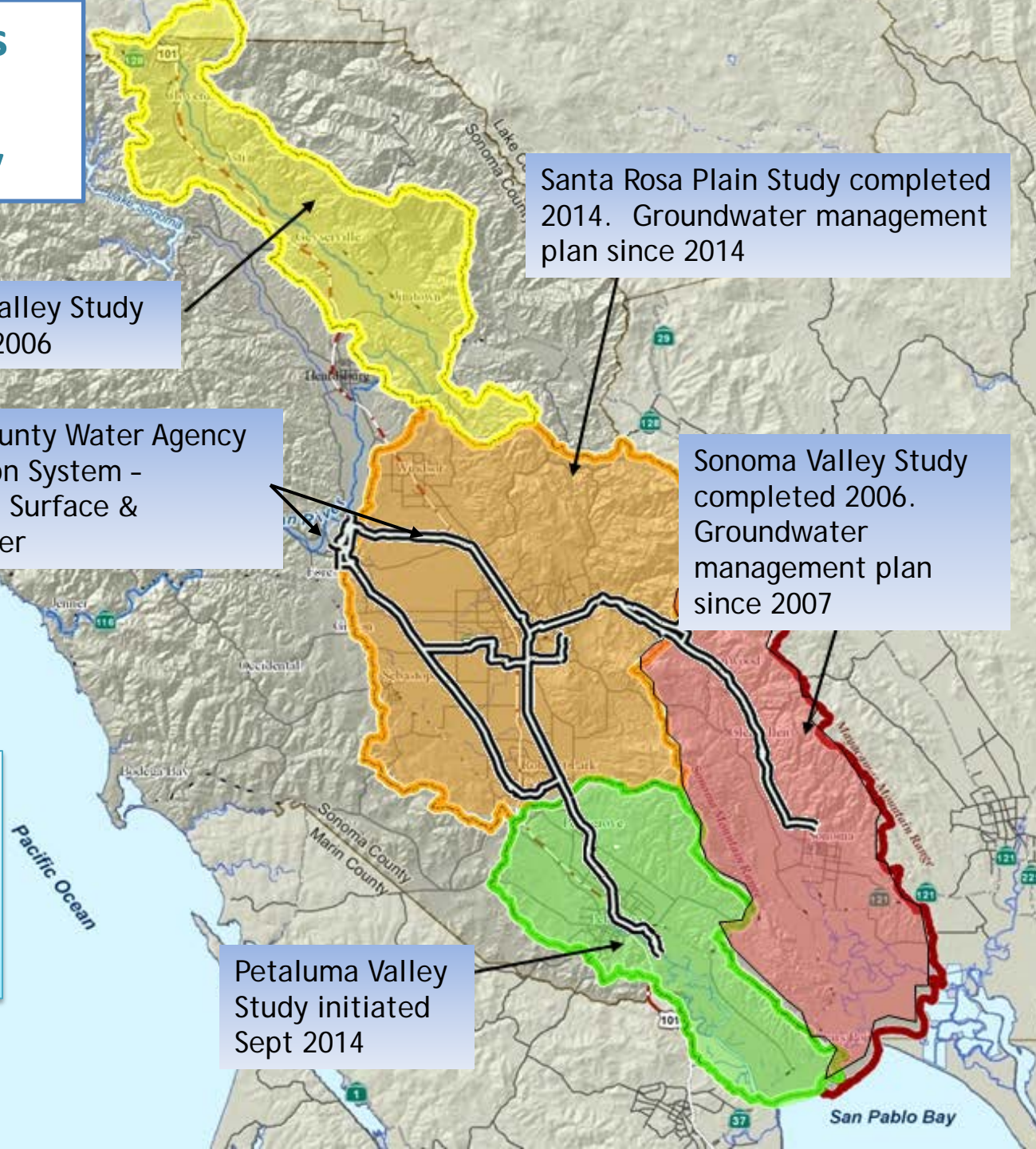
Sonoma County Water Agency Transmission System - Connecting Surface & Groundwater

Santa Rosa Plain Study completed 2014. Groundwater management plan since 2014

Sonoma Valley Study completed 2006.
Groundwater management plan since 2007

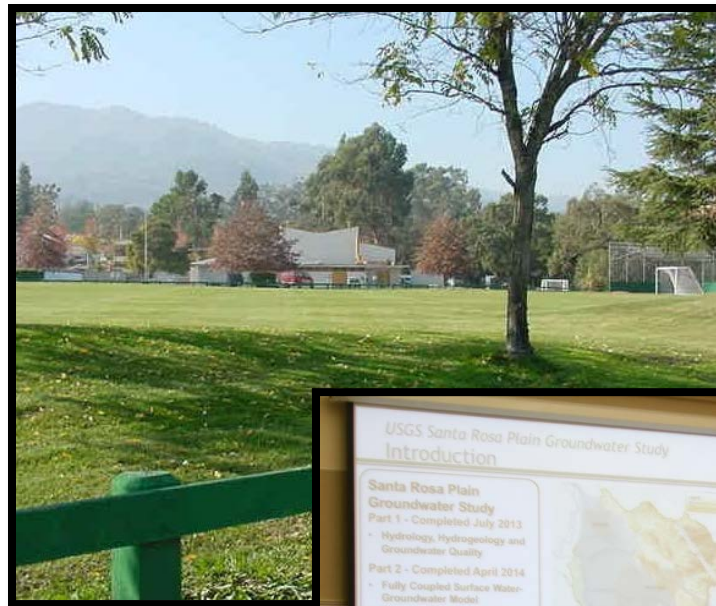
Petaluma Valley
Study initiated
Sept 2014

Overarching Goal: Proactive Management of Surface Water & Groundwater Resources to Promote Reliability for All Users



Existing Sonoma Valley & Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Management Plans are Non-Regulatory

- Voluntary & collaborative
- Focus on recharge, monitoring, conservation & groundwater protection
- Qualitative Basin Management Objectives
- Basins eligible for state funding
- Strong foundation for SGMA



Groundwater Management Under SGMA

Many Things Will Change

- No longer voluntary
- Measurable objectives that will achieve sustainability
- New authorities granted to Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)
- State review of local Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)
- State intervention now possible

SGMA in Sonoma County: Where?

Three medium priority basins:

- Sonoma Valley
- Petaluma Valley
- Santa Rosa

Implementation is
elective but encouraged in
low/very low priority
Bulletin 118 basins



SGMA Steps to Groundwater Sustainability

Step one

Form
Groundwater
Sustainability
Agency

June 30, 2017

Step two

Develop
Groundwater
Sustainability
Plan

January 31, 2022
(for medium
priority basins)

Step three

Achieve
Sustainability
20 years after
adoption of
plan*

* DWR may grant up to two, five-year extensions on implementation upon showing of good cause and progress

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies: Who?

- Local agency or combination of local agencies
- “Local agency” is any public agency that does one of the following:
 - Supplies water
 - Manages water
 - Controls land use
- Counties are the default GSA in “unmanaged” areas
- Can be more than one GSA in basin

Robust Public Process

GSA must consider “*all interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater*” including:

- Agriculture
- Domestic users
- Public & private water systems
- Tribes
- Environmental users
- Disadvantaged communities
- Others



What is Sustainable Groundwater Management?

Sustainability:



Prevent
“Undesirable Results”

Lowering of
Groundwater
Levels

Reduction in
Groundwater
Storage

Seawater
Intrusion

Water
Quality
Degradation

Land
Subsidence

Depletions of
Surface
Water

New Groundwater Sustainability Plans

Plan Requirements:

- 50-year planning horizon
- 20 years to reach sustainability
- Physical description of basin
- Measurable objectives
- Interim milestones
- Monitoring & management
- Plan exempt from CEQA

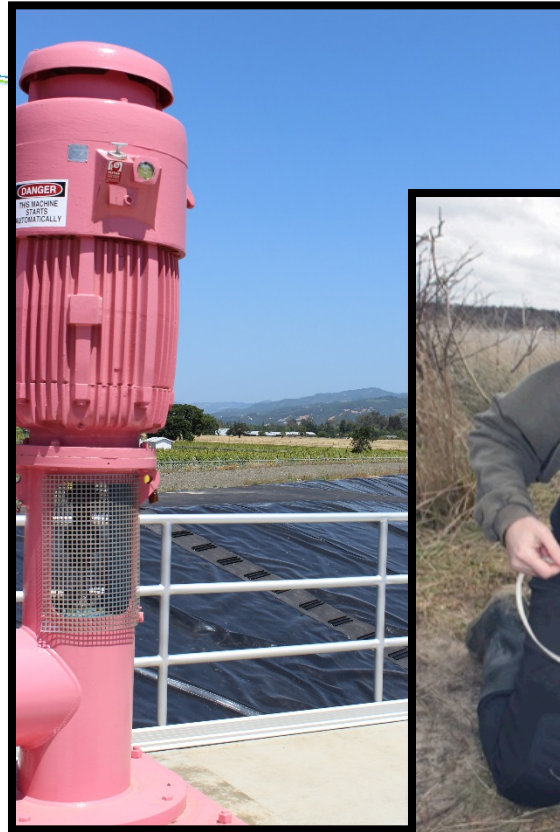


New Management Authorities Under SGMA

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies have authority to:

- Conduct studies
- Register & monitor wells
- Require extraction reporting
- Regulate extractions
- Implement capital projects
- Assess fees to cover costs

Some exemptions for smaller private well owners



New Management Responsibilities Under SGMA



GSAs are responsible for:

- Maintaining basin groundwater sustainability
- Conducting public hearings regarding sustainability plan adoption or amendment
- Submittal of annual reports
- Periodic review of sustainability plan

What About Water Rights?

*“It is the intent of the Legislature to preserve the security of water rights in the state **to the greatest extent possible consistent with the sustainable management of groundwater.**”*
[Water Code §10720.1]



Discussing Water Rights, A Western Pastime

SGMA does not alter existing groundwater or surface water rights -- but like land use, water use can be regulated

The Land Use Planning Connection

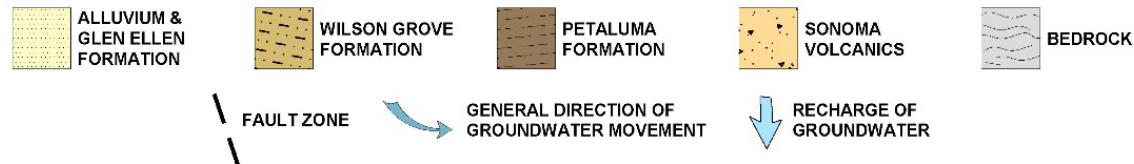
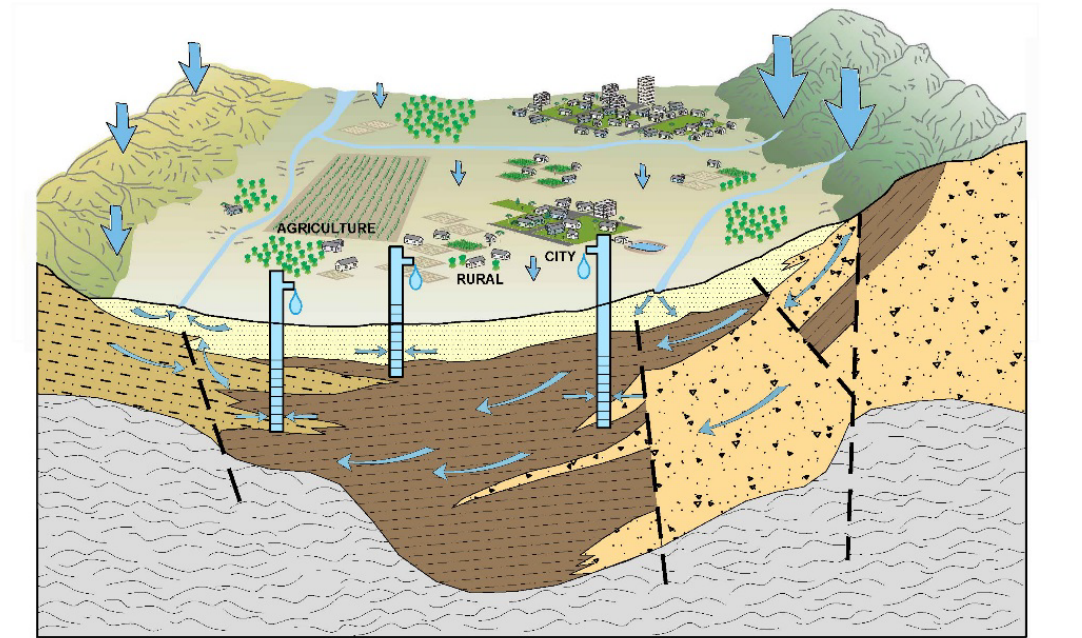
Statutory Requirements

LAND-USE AGENCIES		
GSA's MUST:	DIRECTED TO:	GSA's CANNOT:
Notify cities, county of hearings to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plan	Notify GSAs of any proposal to substantially amend a general plan	Supersede land use authority of cities & counties
Take into account local general plan assumptions	Review & consider any adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plan when amending the general plan	
Be consistent with general plans if adopting any regulations on groundwater extraction that affects sustainability		

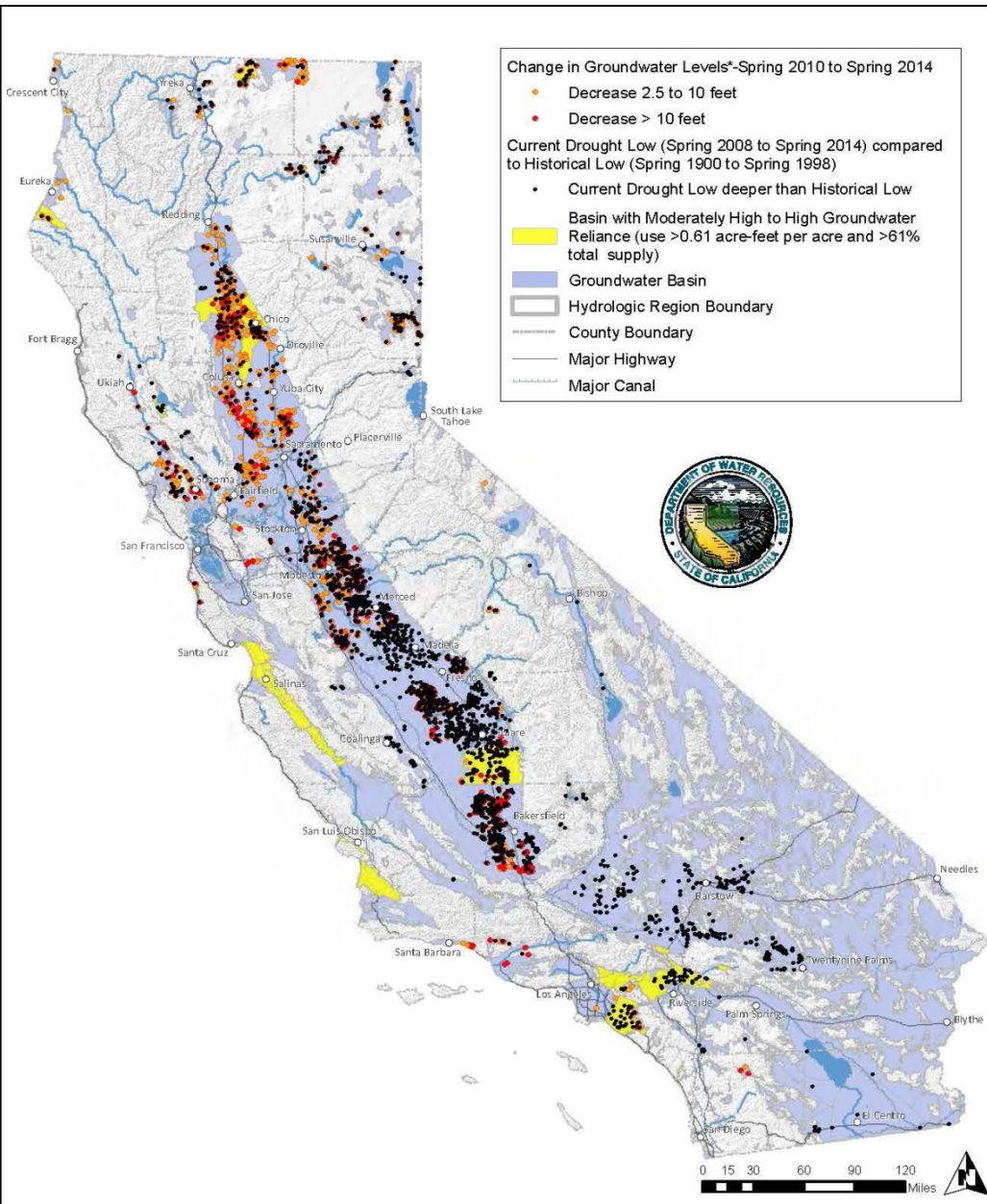
Opportunities for Integration

Land Use and Groundwater Management

- Long-range and current planning
- Well permitting
- Resource planning and permitting
- Groundwater monitoring



State Role



Moving from Existing GW Management Programs to SGMA

- Will collaboration under existing groundwater management plans continue?
- How will interested parties including rural well owners, agriculture & environmental users be represented?
- Will local agencies work together?
- How will tension between resource protection, competing water demands & water rights be resolved?
- Request state modify basin boundaries?

SGMA in Sonoma County: Workgroup Activities To Date

- Stakeholder outreach to provide information & seek input
- Draft general principles for developing GSA governance options
- Participate in statewide SGMA activities
 - Cleanup legislation & new legislative initiatives
 - Conferences & workshops
 - Funding
 - Participate in DWR, CSAC, & ACWA advisory panels
- Evaluate implications of SGMA to Sonoma County
 - Recommend initial steps to develop GSA governance options

SGMA Workgroup Outreach

Resources can be found at:
www.sonomacountywater.org/sgma

Workgroup has met
– *and will continue to meet* – with
many stakeholder
groups to inform
and seek input



GSA Eligible Agencies

Santa Rosa Plain

Cities: Santa Rosa, Cotati, Rohnert Park, Sebastopol, Windsor
County of Sonoma, Sonoma County Water Agency

Petaluma Valley

City of Petaluma, North Bay Water District, County of Sonoma,
Sonoma County Water Agency

Sonoma Valley

City of Sonoma, Valley of the Moon Water District, North Bay
Water District, County of Sonoma, Sonoma County Water Agency

SGMA in Sonoma County: Possible GSA Governance Options

Disaggregated: Separate basin-specific GSAs

- Most direct, simplest form of representation
- Possible funding competition between basins
- Less efficient administration & regional issues

Centralized: One county-wide GSA

- Coordinate regional issues (e.g., land use, well permitting, data)
- Maximize administration efficiencies, reduce competition among basins
- Possibly cumbersome GSA board representation

Hybrid: Use county-wide resources with basin-specific management decisions

- Realize benefits of both disaggregated & centralized structures
- Multi-layered, potentially complex structure

Note: The Act allows for multiple GSAs and/or multiple GSPs for each basin, but requires “coordination agreement”

General Principles for Developing GSA Governance Options

- Local agencies work together to identify a unified and equitable approach to governance
- Reinforce local management principles by ensuring that management decisions are made at the local level
- Find opportunities for sharing resources and management expertise across basins to avoid redundancy and reduce management costs.
- Build upon successful water management efforts
- Involve community stakeholders
- Provide a robust and transparent outreach program for well owners and the general public

GSA Formation – Current & Near-Term Activities

- GSA eligible agencies working with facilitator to identify appropriate GSA structure
- Public/stakeholder outreach is ongoing
- Discussing basin boundary issues & possible requests for modifications
- Briefing Boards of Directors/Supervisors/City Councils in October
- Conducting public meetings in each SGMA basin in November
- Deadline for GSA formation – June 30, 2017