

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act – Siskiyou County



Sustainable
Groundwater Management



Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Brief Overview



- **September 2014 – Governor Brown signs legislation requiring groundwater resources be managed by local agencies**
- **SGMA establishes requirements for how groundwater basins will be managed over the long-term – through Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and Groundwater Sustainability Plans**
- **Four medium priority basins outlined in Siskiyou County**
 - Shasta Valley Basin
 - Scott Valley Basin
 - Butte Valley Basin
 - Tulelake Subbasin

SGMA Brief Overview



- **How were groundwater basins throughout California ranked?**
 - Population overlying the basin
 - Rate of current and projected growth of the population overlying the basin
 - Number of public supply wells that draw from the basin
 - Irrigated acreage overlying the basin
 - Degree to which persons overlying the basin rely on groundwater as their primary source of water
 - Any documented impacts on the groundwater within the basin, including overdraft, subsidence, saline intrusion, and other water quality degradation
 - Any other information determined to be relevant by the Department
- **Medium priority basin timeline**
 - June 30, 2017 – Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) must be established for each basin
 - January 31, 2022 – Groundwater Sustainability Plans must be established for each basin

Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Formation



- **GSA's will be responsible for developing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for each basin**
- **How will the GSA's be formed**
 - **County to outreach within the Shasta, Scott and Butte Valley Basins**
 - ✦ **Public outreach meetings will continue in November and will occur through January 2017**
 - **Determine what will be the best path forward for Siskiyou County**
 - ✦ **Agreements between the County and other eligible, interested parties to form GSA's**
 - ✦ **Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to serve as the GSA**
 - **Potential GSA holds public hearing**
 - **Within 30 days after hearing GSA applies to DWR to be GSA for Basin**
 - **DWR will post GSA formation notice for 90 days**
 - **If after 90 days no other agency submits notice, the GSA will be determined to be the GSA for the Basin**

What happens if a GSA is not formed?



- If by June 30, 2017, a GSA has not formed or a GSA has not submitted their intent to DWR, the State Water Board will intervene and manage groundwater extraction activities
- The Water Board has discretion to assess fees for their involvement – proposed fees
 - Base filing fee - \$100 per well
 - Unmanaged area rate (for those areas not covered by a GSA) – \$10 per acre-foot per year if metered, \$25 if not metered
 - Probationary basin rate (as determined by the Water Board) - \$40 per acre-foot per year
- If a GSA is not eventually formed and the Water Board must be involved in Groundwater Sustainability Plan formation, the Water Board will charge fees for plan formation and associated environmental processes (CEQA)
 - Locally developed GSA's exempt from CEQA for GSP development

GSA Formation



- **Tulelake Subbasin**

- Tulelake Irrigation District (TID) taking initiative to form GSA for the Subbasin
- TID is working with Siskiyou and Modoc Counties and the City of Tulelake to enter into MOU to cover entire subbasin



Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP)



- A GSP must be developed by the GSA's for each of the medium priority basins in Siskiyou County
- GSA must encourage the involvement of “*diverse social, cultural, and economic elements...*”
 - This may be accomplished by appointing an advisory committee consisting of interested parties
- Multiple requirements must be implemented into the GSP – detailed requirements can be found on the County of Siskiyou's Natural Resources webpage
- GSA's will need to determine how they will acquire the expertise needed for GSP development
 - Hydrology
 - GIS
 - Facilitation services

GSP's and Undesirable Results



“Sustainable groundwater management mean the management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results”

Six Undesirable Results

- Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels
- Reduction of Groundwater Storage
- Seawater Intrusion
- Water Quality Degradation
- Land Subsidence
- Depletion of Interconnected Streams

GSP's



- Once the GSP is developed the GSA will submit it to DWR for review and approval
- DWR will post GSP to website for a 60 day comment period
- DWR must evaluate GSP within two years of its submission, after which DWR will issue an assessment of the GSP
 - DWR may approve or provide recommendations

Funding for GSA' and GSP development



- **County funding opportunities**
- **Potential grants to support GSP development**
- **GSA's have the ability to assess fees for GSA work and GSP development – These fees would need to be developed and implemented by the GSA**



Next Steps



- **Coordination and outreach within the Shasta, Scott and Butte Valley basins (November 2016 – January 2017)**
 - Outreach structure
- **Hold public hearing**
 - March 2017
- **Submit intent to DWR**
 - March/April 2017
- **Continue to work with TID on their GSA formation**

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