

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

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**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
NOVEMBER 17, 2015**

SGMA Background

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The legislature finds and declares as follows:

The people of the state have a primary interest in the protection, management, and reasonable beneficial use of the water resources of the state, both surface and underground, and the integrated management of the state's water resources is essential to meeting its water management goals

SGMA Background

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- California Senate Bills 1168 (Pavley), 1319 (Pavley), and Assembly Bill 1739 (Dickinson)
- Signed into law by Governor Brown September, 2014
- Took effect January 1, 2015
- Applies to all medium and high priority basins as defined by DWR in Bulletin 118
- County is the presumptive party of responsibility to comply with the legislation

Requires local agencies to manage groundwater in “*a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results.*”¹

1) California Water Code Section 10721(u)

Important SGMA Dates

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January 1, 2016	DWR Regulations for Basin Boundary Revisions Due
March, 2016	Basin Boundary Adjustment Applications Due
June 1, 2016	DWR Regulations for GSPs Due
June 30, 2017	Deadline for GSA Formation
January 31, 2020	GSPs Due for “Critically Overdrafted” Basins
January 31, 2022	GSPs Due for Non-Critical basins
January 31, 2040 - 2042	Basins Must Achieve Sustainability

Basin Priority

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- Defined by DWR based on the following criteria:
 - Population
 - Number of public and private wells
 - Irrigated acreage
 - Reliance on groundwater as a primary source
 - Groundwater impacts including:
 - ✦ Overdraft
 - ✦ Land subsidence
 - ✦ Water quality degradation



Sustainable Management

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- Defined as the avoidance of “undesirable results” including:
 - Chronic lowering of Groundwater levels
 - Significant and unreasonable reduction in Groundwater Storage
 - Significant and unreasonable degradation of water quality
 - Land subsidence due to collapsing of aquifer pore space
 - Surface water depletions that have significant and unreasonable impacts on beneficial uses
- Formal Regulations expected June 1, 2016

Sustainable Management Participation Requirements

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- Participation in SGMA is not required from the following:
 - The Federal Government
 - Recognized Indian Tribes
 - Previously Adjudicated Basins
 - Those Basins designated as low priority by the Department of Water Resources (DWR)

De minimis extractors:

Those domestic well users producing less than 2 AF/year.

May be Exempt from:

- Metering requirements of a GSP
- Regulatory Pumping Fees
- Reporting extractions to the State



Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA)

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- Local agency or combination of agencies that overlie a high or medium priority basin that is responsible for implementing the requirements of SGMA
- Any local agency that has water supply, water management, or land use authority within the groundwater basin can become a GSA
- The County Water Agency, and County P&D likely needed in any GSA



Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA)

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- GSAs may have significant planning, financial, regulatory, and enforcement powers but do not have the ability to determine water rights
- Flexibility in structure but may employ a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Must solicit and consider the input and interests of a variety of stakeholders within the basin

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA)

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GSA tools for managing groundwater sustainability:

- Require registration of wells
- Require measurement of groundwater extraction
- Require annual extraction reports
- Impose extraction limits on individual wells
- Assess fees to implement local GSP's
- Request revisions to basin boundaries; establish new subbasins

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)

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- Results in “sustainable conditions” within 20 years
- Must be approved by 2022 (2020 for critically overdrafted basins)
- Previously adjudicated basins are exempt from requirements
- GSP must include technical information regarding:
 - Hydrogeological conditions of the aquifer
 - Historical and projected water demands
 - Potential areas of recharge
 - Measureable objectives and milestones toward sustainability
 - A monitoring and management plan
- Must be consistent with County General Plan
- GSP must receive State Approval

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)

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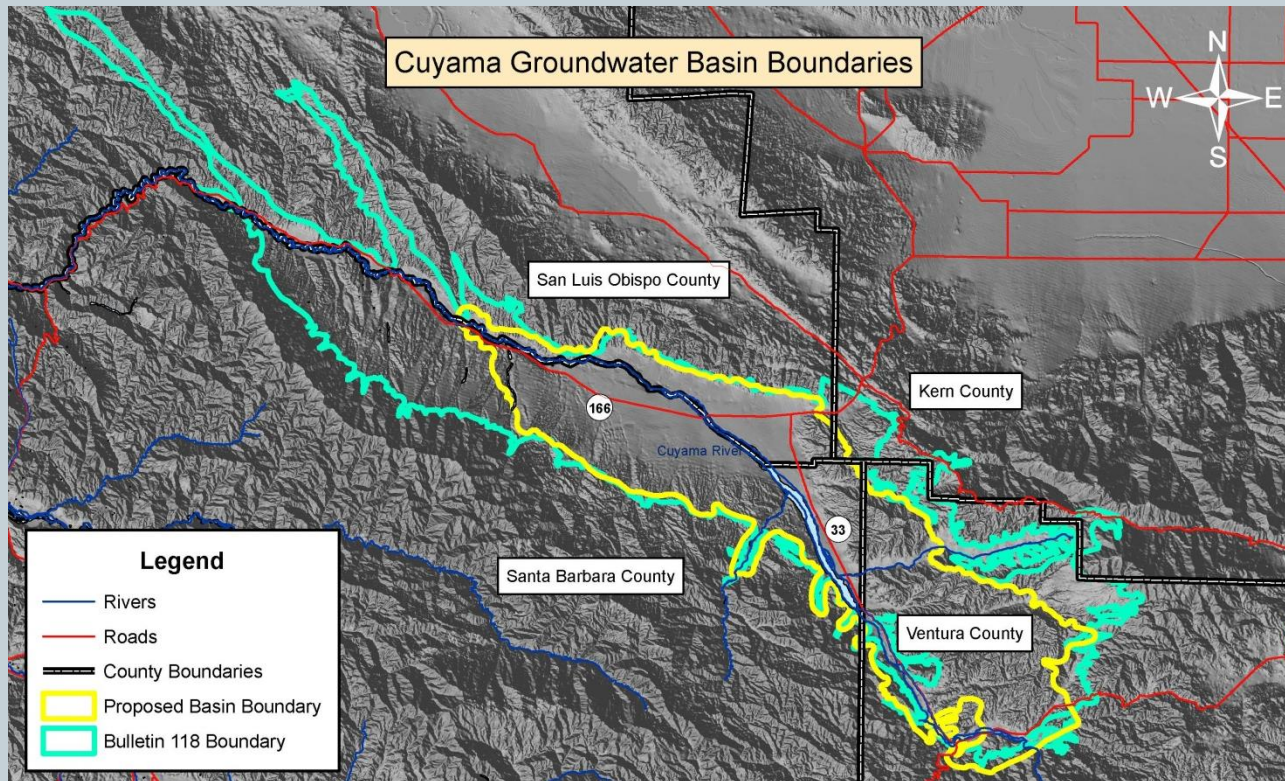
State Review and Intervention:

- May intervene if GSA not formed
- May intervene if GSP is inadequate
- Can designate basin as “probationary”
- Local agency must respond within 180 days
- May impose interim plan until local GSA develops adequate GSP

Basin Boundary Revisions

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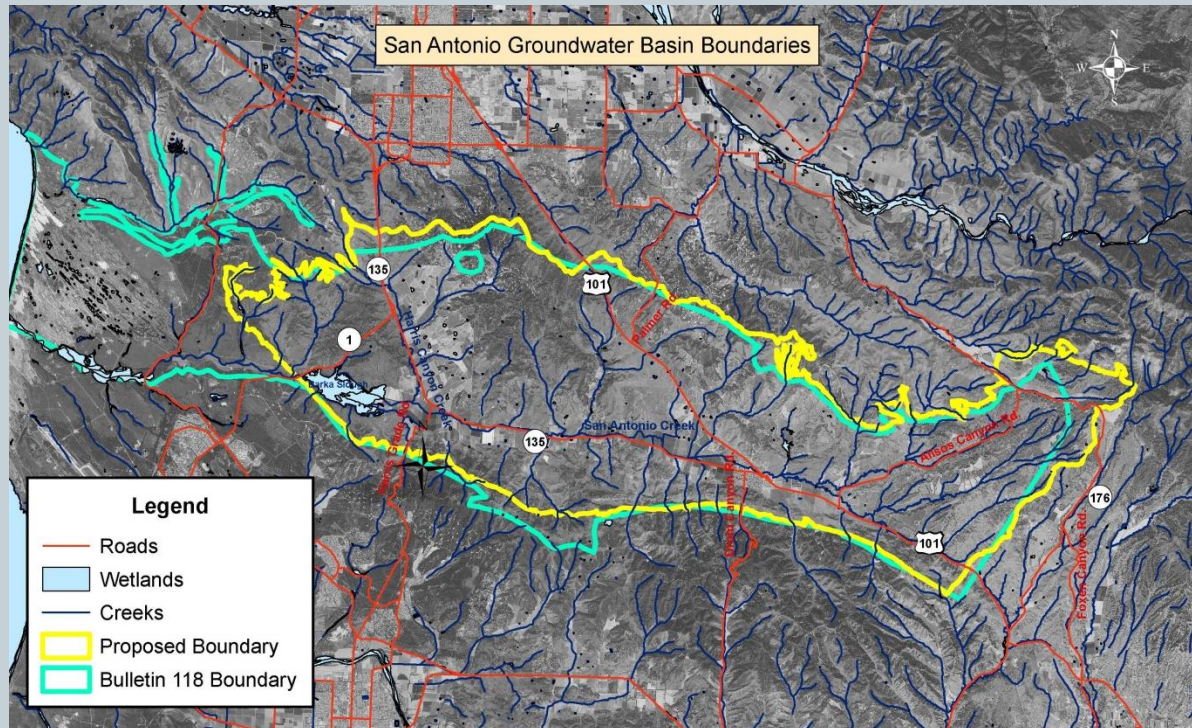
- SGMA process for revising Basin Boundaries from those shown in DWR Bulletin 118, update 2003
- Two types of basin boundary modifications
 - Jurisdictional – Increases the ease of sustainable management with regard to overlying jurisdiction
 - Scientific – Based on geologic or hydrologic conditions that define the Basin



Basin Boundary Revisions

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- Requirements:
 - Notification, consultation, and broad local support
 - Public Notice of proposed modifications
 - Resolution by the “Requesting Agency” initiating the boundary modification request process



Santa Barbara County Basins

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- **Three Basins Subject to SGMA Management**
 - Cuyama Valley Groundwater Basin
 - San Antonio Groundwater Basin
 - Santa Ynez Valley Groundwater Basin



Cuyama Valley GW Basin

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- **Overlies parts of four Counties**
 - Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Kern
- **Technical study completed**
 - Provides basis for Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- **Basin listed as “critically overdrafted” by DWR**
- **Water Agency meeting with Basin interests**
 - California Water District Formation
 - Multiple County GSA
- **Candidate for scientific boundary adjustment**
 - Adjustment supported by other 3 Counties

San Antonio GW Basin

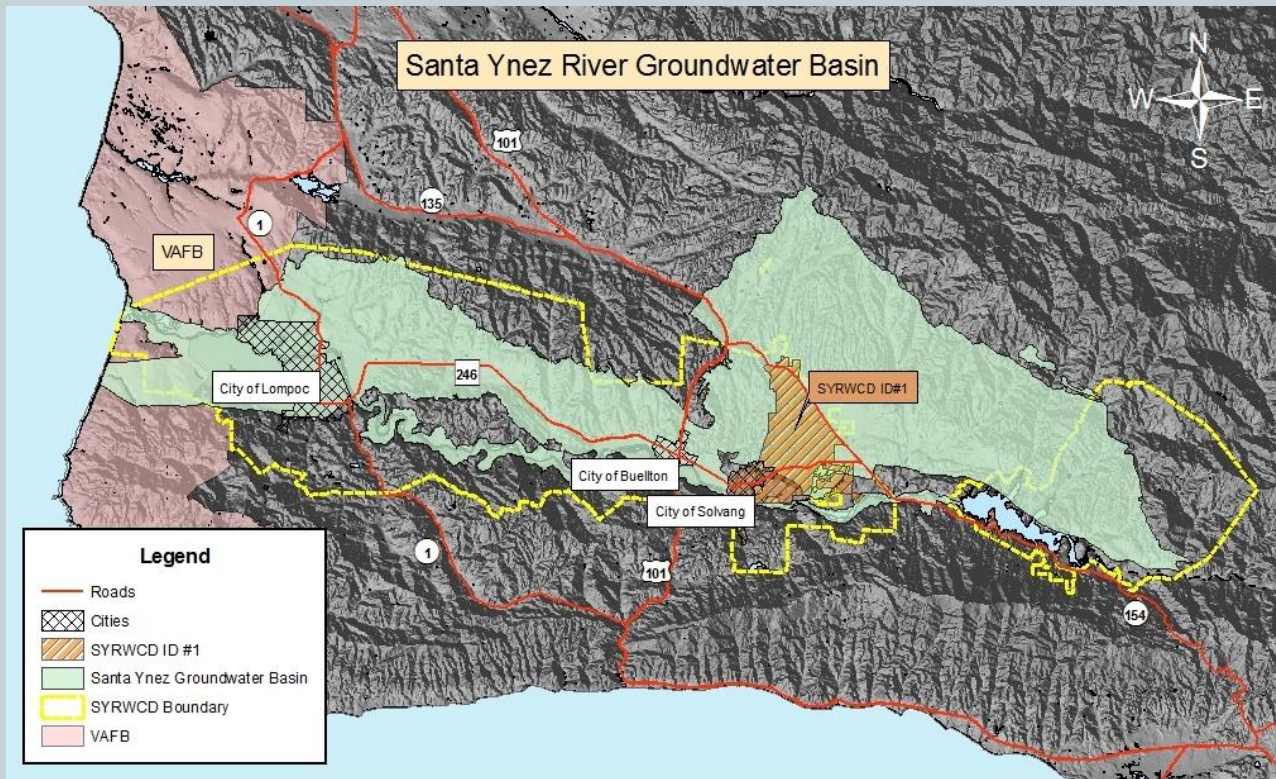
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- Technical study underway
- Consultation Committee already set up
- Water users include Vandenberg Air Force Base
 - Exempt from SGMA Requirements
- County is presumptive GSA
- Candidate for scientific boundary adjustment

Santa Ynez Valley Groundwater Basin

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- Consists of multiple sub-basins
- Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) covers most of area
- Some “white” area outside of SYRWCD
- SYRWCD likely GSA with WA as participant



Recommendations and Next Steps

Recommendations

- Receive and File Presentation on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
- Adopt the Attached Resolution Designating the Water Agency as the Responsible Agency for Boundary Modification Applications for Cuyama and San Antonio Groundwater Basins

Next Steps

- Not Requesting GSA Formation at this Time
- Staff will Return to the Board for Further Action as Necessary (GSA Formation)
- GSP Regulations Expected June 2016