

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Readiness Evaluation



Basin Definition

In Bulletin 118, DWR has identified 515 groundwater basins in the State on the basis of physical (geologic and hydrogeologic) and geopolitical boundaries. Through the DWR's CASGEM program, each of these groundwater basins has been categorized as very low, low, medium or high priority to align with the implementation of the CASGEM Program and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. As part of SGMA requirements, these basin boundaries may be revised to better align with existing technical data and to facilitate GSA formation and GSP implementation.

Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Formation

Any local agency or combination of local agencies overlying a groundwater basin may form a GSA by JPA, MOA, or other legal agreement. Key to GSA formation are:

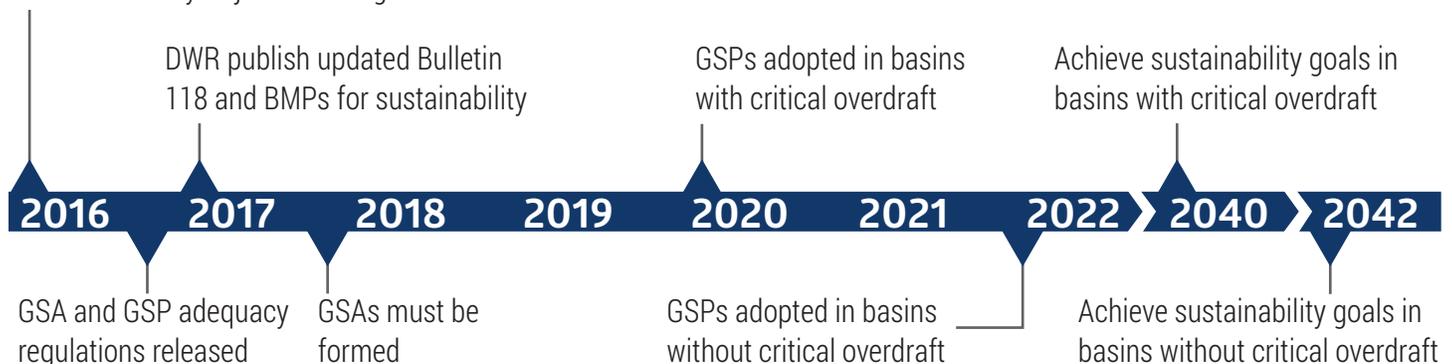
- A public hearing must be held in the county or counties overlying the basin prior to GSA formation
- Other coordination and notification requirements apply.
- For basins where no agency forms a GSA, the county becomes the assumed GSA.
- Multiple GSAs in a single basin are allowed under the law; however, they must be coordinated and meet all requirements for achieving sustainable groundwater management within the entire groundwater basin
- Non-compliance may result in state intervention.

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Development

The SGMA requires that GSAs develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans.

- GSPs must be completed for all medium and high priority groundwater basins.
- GSP must be completed by January 31, 2020 for basins in critical overdraft.
- GSPs must be completed by January 31, 2022 for all other medium/high priority basins.
- Multiple GSPs can be developed in the same basin, but they must meet specific coordination, data, and monitoring requirements for overall basin compliance.
- Each GSP has a number of required elements including physical description, measureable objectives, planning and implementation horizon, various monitoring protocols, consideration of applicable county and city general plans, and other groundwater quality and quantity criteria.
- Annual reporting and evaluation of the effectiveness of GSP implementation is also required.

Basin Boundary Adjustment Regulations released



Basin Definition

Does the Bulletin 118 definition of your subbasin or basin boundary need to be revised?

- If yes, do you have the technical documentation that will be required to support your proposal (hydrogeologic or hydrologic justification, political justification, other)?
- If yes, do you have the consensus from existing basin stakeholders relative to what the new basin/subbasin boundaries should be?

GSA Formation

Is there an existing organization/entity that can and should form the basis for a GSA?

IF YES

- Do the existing participants meet the requirements as a local public agency (per Section 10723)?
- Should the GSA be expanded to include other stakeholders or entities (i.e. groundwater users outside established water service areas, land use)?
- Does the existing organization cover the entire basin/subbasin? If not, what are the plans to expand coverage for the entire basin or coordinate with other GSAs in the basin?
- Does the current governing mechanism need to be revised to meet SGMA requirements (JPA, MOA or other legal agreement)?

IF NO

- What are the proposed boundaries for the GSA?
- Who will be the governmental organization(s) that will form the GSA (per SGMA, the GSA must be formed by one or more local agencies, where a local agency means a local public agency that has water supply, water management or land use responsibilities within the basin).
- What governing mechanism will be used for GSA formation (i.e. JPA, MOA, other legal entity)?
- What will the GSA look like? How will it incorporate other entities in the basin that are not local public agencies (i.e. NGOs, overlying land users, tribes, agricultural organizations)?

Taking Stock of Your Readiness for GSP Development

Is there an existing document or plan that can and should form the basis for a GSP?

IF YES

- What GSP requirements are met by the existing management document?
- What sections will be need to be prepared to meet the GSP requirements?
- What data will be required to create these news section
- Do these data exist? If not, what are the plans to gather and analyze these data?
- What analyses will need to be conducted to meet the GSP requirements (i.e. do you have a good basin description and water balance?)

IF NO

- Understand what the requirements will be for the GSP
- Do you have any studies, analyses, documents that you can use as a base for development of GSP sections?
- What data do you need in order to complete these sections?
- What data do you have? Are these data good?
- What are your plans for obtaining needed data?
- How are you going to fund obtaining these data?

For All Situations

- What level of management efforts will be needed to achieve sustainability?
- Are there water quality issues that may affect the ability to bring the basin into sustainability?
- How will these efforts be funded?
- What tools are needed to develop and/or implement the GSP (i.e. groundwater flow model)?
- Plans to position for outside (grant) funding to offset cost of GSP development

What Structure will you need for Outreach?

- How are you going to implement your GSP? What committees/subcommittees/advisory committees will be needed?
- Will the GSP need to be coordinated with other GSPs for the groundwater basin? If so, how will this coordination be achieved?
- What is the financial structure going to be to obtain the funds necessary to implement the GSP?