Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

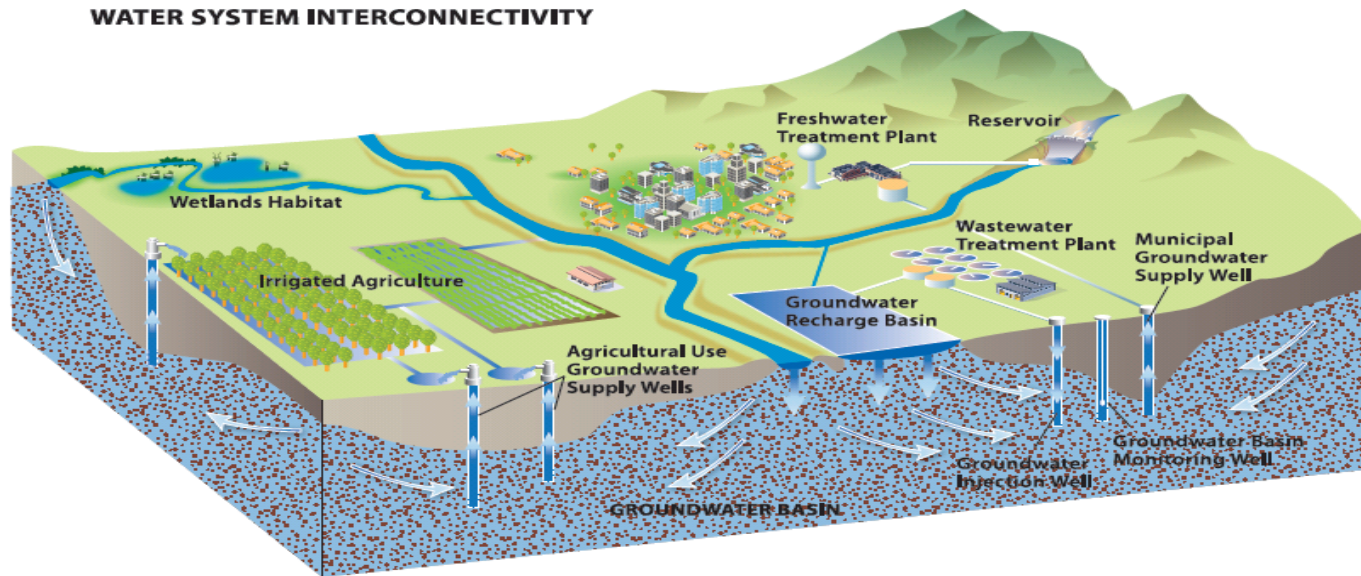WATER SYSTEM INTERCONNECTIVITY

Formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)

An Opportunity for Improved Groundwater Management Collaboration

Mound Basin Stakeholder Information Meeting
June 1, 2015

Presentation Overview

- The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
- The groundwater management planning process
- New Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)
- Land use & groundwater management collaboration (GSA's)

Representatives from:
City of Ventura - County of Ventura
United Water Conservation District

SGMA Framework for Sustainability

- Emphasis on local control
- 20 years to achieve sustainability goal
- State intervention only if locals do not act
- Comprehensive State policy initiative including:
  - Water conservation
  - Water recycling
  - Water storage
  - Safe drinking water
  - Wetlands/watershed restoration

What is Sustainable Groundwater Management?

Now defined in Water Code §10721

Management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results.

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels indicating a *significant and unreasonable* depletion of supply
- Reductions in groundwater storage
- Seawater intrusion
- Degraded water quality
- Land subsidence
- Surface water depletions that have adverse impacts on beneficial uses

Steps to Groundwater Sustainability

Step one

Local agencies must form local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) in high- and medium-priority basins within two years

Step two

GSA's in high- and medium-priority basins must adopt groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) within five to seven years, depending on whether in critical overdraft

Step three

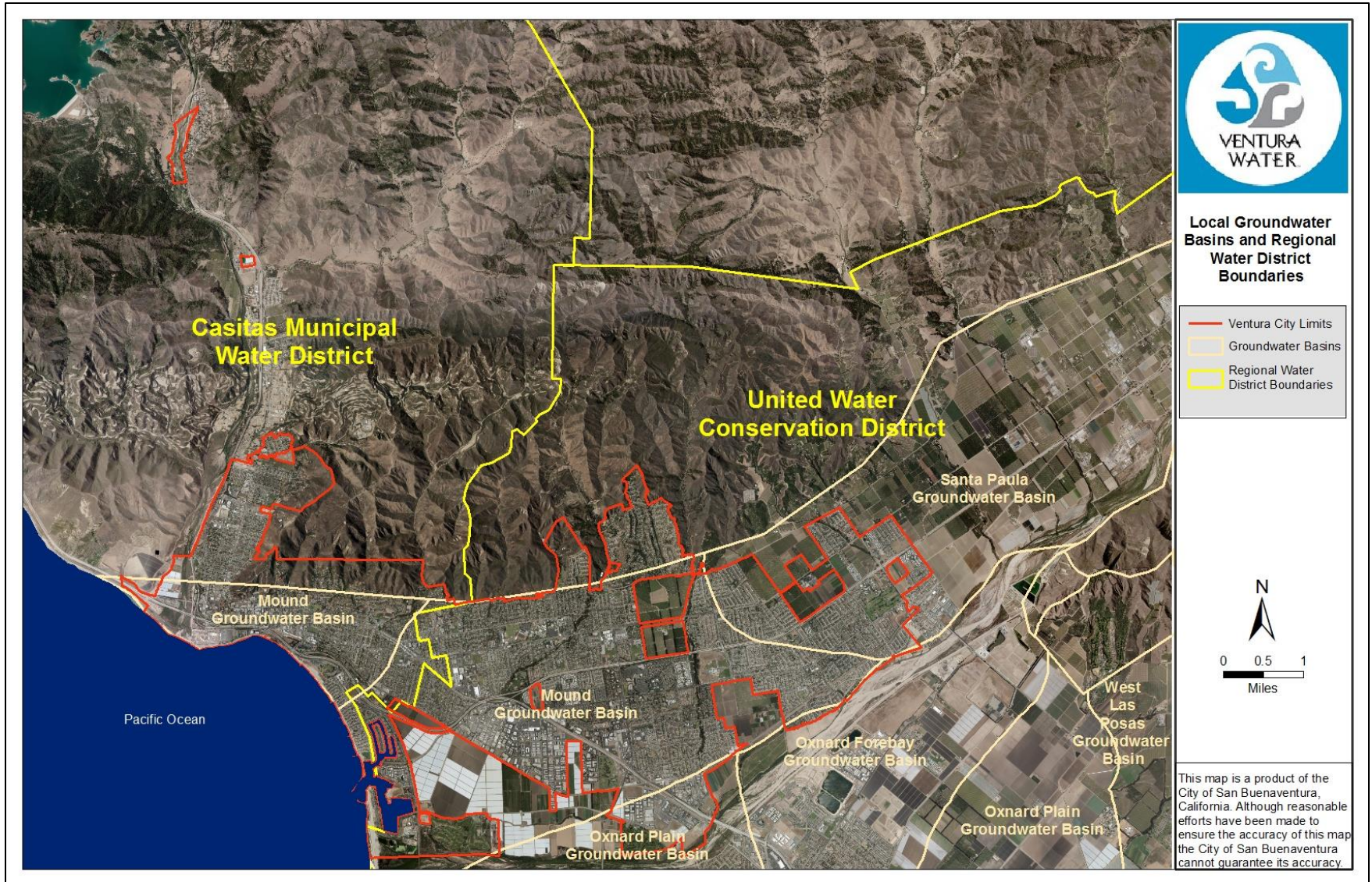Once plans are in place GSA's have 20 years to fully implement them and achieve the sustainability goal
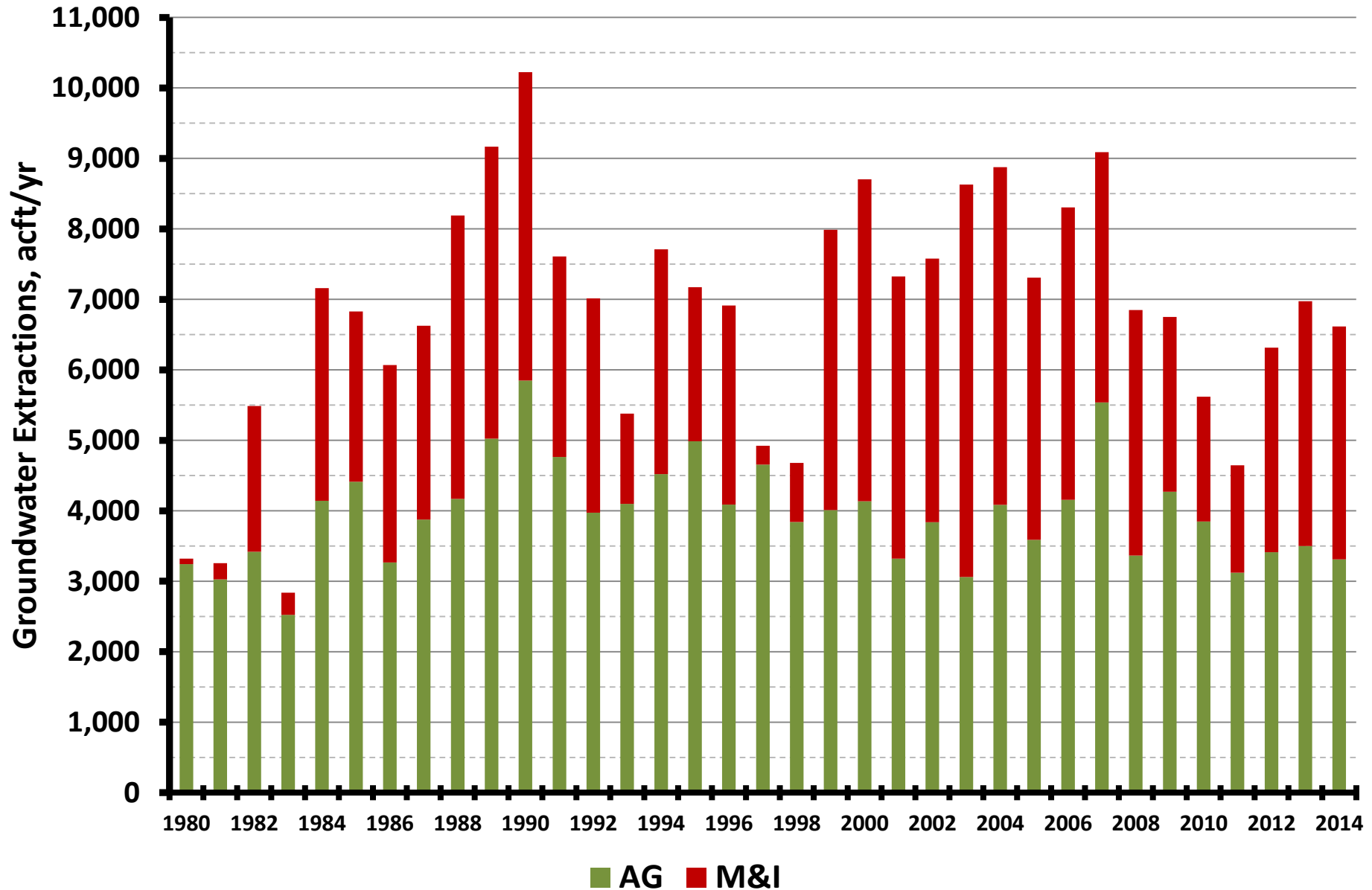
Key Implementation Dates

Date	Action
June 30, 2017	Formation of GSAs
Jan. 31, 2020	Completion of GSPs in critically overdrafted basins
Jan. 31, 2022	Completion of Plans in all other high/medium priority basins
20 years after adoption of plan	High- and medium-priority basins achieve sustainability

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

Local Groundwater Basins

Groundwater Extractions from Mound Basin

Forming Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (by June 2017)

- Any *local agency* or combination of agencies overlying basin may elect to be a GSA
- *Local agency* is any public agency that does at least one of the following:
  - Water supply
  - Water management
  - Land use
- Counties are the default GSA in "unmanaged" areas
- Can be more than one GSA in basin
- Public Process

New Management Responsibilities Under SGMA

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) are responsible for:

- Maintaining basin groundwater sustainability
- Submittal of annual reports to the Department of Water Resources including
  - Groundwater elevation data
  - Annual aggregated groundwater extraction data
  - Surface water supply used and available for groundwater recharge or in-lieu use
  - Total water use
  - Change in groundwater storage
- Conduct periodic review and assessment of the GSP, evaluating and responding to changing conditions
- Conduct public hearings regarding GSP adoption or amendment

GSA Authorities

"…may perform any act necessary or proper to carry out the purposes…" of this act, including, for example:

- Adopt rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions;

- Develop groundwater sustainability plan;

- Propose and collect fees;

- Monitor compliance and enforcement;

- Investigate, appropriate, and acquire surface water, surface water rights, groundwater, and groundwater rights into the GSA;

- Registration of groundwater extraction facilities (wells)

- Reporting of groundwater extractions to GSA;

- Provide for voluntary fallowing program;

- Transport, reclaim, purify, desalinate, treat, or otherwise manage and control polluted water, wastewater, or other waters for subsequent use;

- Impose well spacing restrictions on new wells;

- Impose reasonable operating regulations on existing wells to minimize well interference, including requiring operating on rotation basis;

- Control groundwater extractions of new, existing, reactivated wells; and

- Authorize temporary and permanent transfers of groundwater extraction allocations.
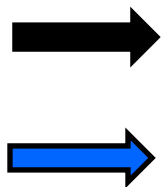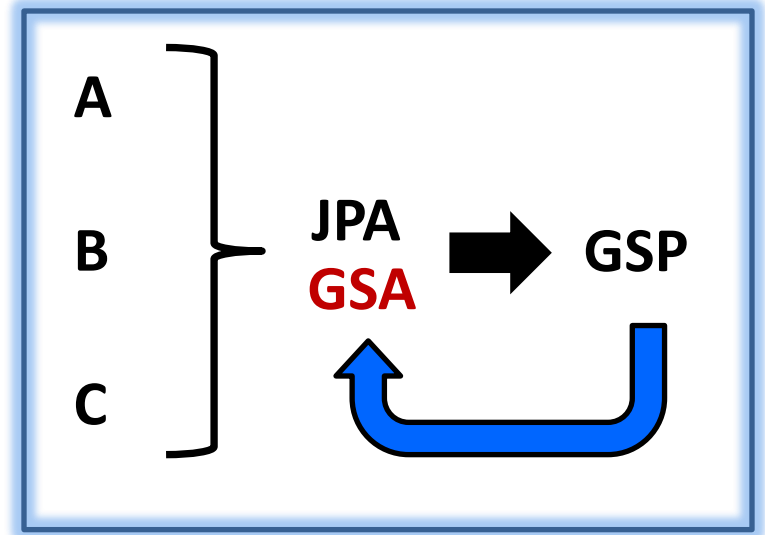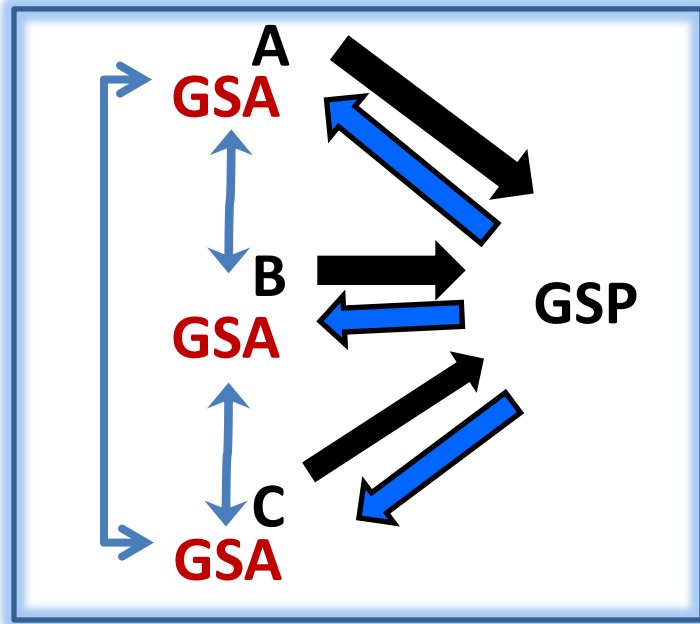
New *Groundwater Sustainability Plans*

Options for new Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

- Create single GSP covering entire basin

- Multiple GSAs in one basin may prepare separate Plans, but must coordinate and use common data and methods

- Multiple GSAs group together as JPA / MOU / other legal arrangement and create single GSP

- DWR will review multiple GSPs together

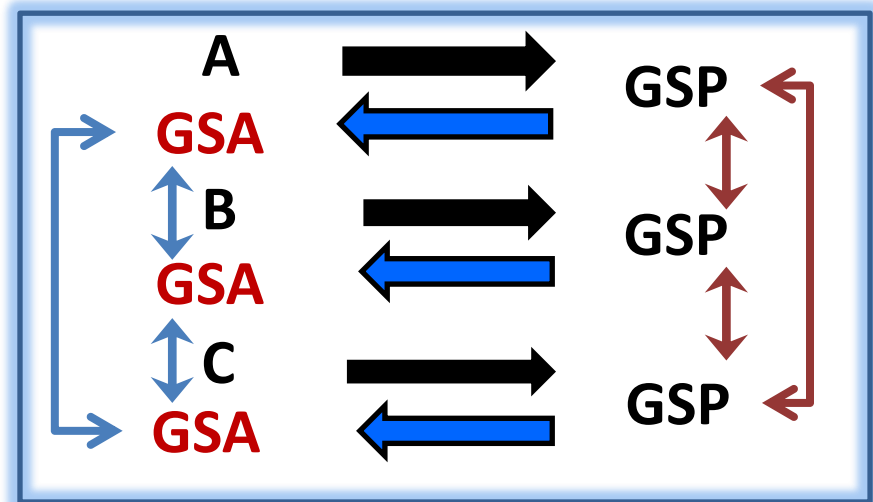- May be possible to use existing plan as "Alternative" under SGMA

Example GSA Formation Options

GSP Creation

Implementation & Enforcement

Memorandum of Understanding

Parties: City of Ventura, County of Ventura, and United Water Conservation District

Purpose of MOU: *"...establish a framework for discussion among the Agencies with respect to identifying and agreeing upon the respective duties and responsibilities of the Agencies for establishing a Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Mound Basin, and a timeline for conducting those discussions and forming a GSA."*

"The Agencies shall identify the roles and responsibilities of each Agency as they relate to the activities and expenses associated with the formation of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Mound Basin..."
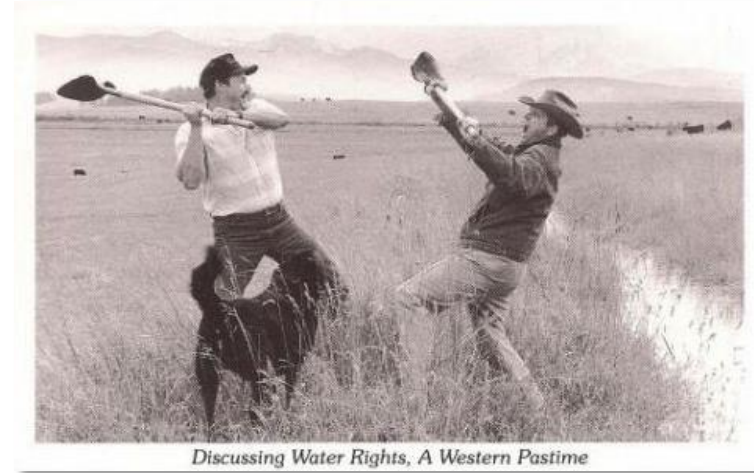
New *Groundwater Sustainability Plans*

Plan Requirements

- 50-year planning horizon; 20 years to reach sustainability

- Measurable objectives/interim milestones to reach sustainability goal

- Physical description of basin

- Groundwater-surface water interaction

- Historical and projected data on demands and supplies. Major technical components include, for example:

  - ✓ Water supply sources (SW & GW) / Water demand (M&I, AG, ENV) / WQ / Beneficial water use / Environmental water use / GW pumping / GW recharge / GW elevations / Subsidence / Land use changes / Monitoring & enforcement pgms / Management alternatives / BMOs / Sustainable yield

- Monitoring and management provisions

- Description of how Plan affects other GSPs

- GSP adoption is exempt from CEQA

What About Water Rights?

- Neither the SGMA nor Groundwater Sustainability Plans alter existing groundwater or surface water rights

- However, like other property rights, water rights can be regulated

Discussing Water Rights, A Western Pastime

- *"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]

Overarching Goal: Collaboration Results in Improved Coordination

- Planning agencies and groundwater managers will utilize consistent and coordinated information about land use and groundwater

- GSP process will improve consistency between general plans, specific plans, urban water management plans and groundwater sustainability plans

What's Next?

- Follow-up Legislation
- Development of rules and guidelines by DWR
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Hearing for GSA Formation
- GSA Operational

State's Roles

- Department of Water Resources
  - Defines the Basins and their Status
  - Provide Technical Support
- State Water Resources Control Board
  - Intervene if no GSA or no GSP
  - Create an interim plan where there is none
  - Regulates deficiencies

Resources

- Full version of SGMA statute and other resources
  www.opr.ca.gov/docs/s_groundwater.php

- DWR Groundwater Information Center
  www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/

- ACWA's Groundwater Sustainability Page
  www.acwa.com/content/groundwater/groundwater-sustainability

- California Water Foundation Information / Recommendations on Groundwater Sustainability
  www.californiawaterfoundation.org

QUESTIONS?

Legend

- 2014-1 Active Wells
- Groundwater basins - UWCD
- Santa Paula basin settlement boundary
- Floodplain
- Highways- 4lane
- Roads- arterials

DWR basins
- LOWER VENTURA RIVER
- MOUND
- OXNARD
- SANTA PAULA
- Rail

0   0.5   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Miles

Legend

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- City of Ventura
- Groundwater basins - UWCD
- Santa Paula basin settlement boundary
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