Public Webinar:
Draft Groundwater Management and Drinking Water Well Principles and Strategies

ACTION #11 IN THE APRIL 21, 2021 EXECUTIVE DROUGHT PROCLAMATION

AGENDA

I. Opening Remarks ……10 minutes

II. Draft Drinking Water Well Principles and Strategies Overview……35 minutes
   - Clarifying questions and comments throughout

III. Formal Public Comment……40 minutes

IV. Closing……5 minutes

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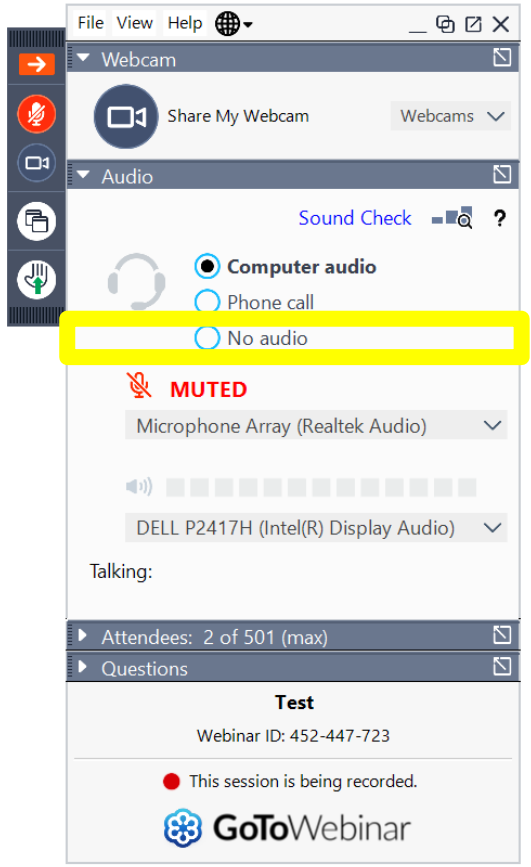

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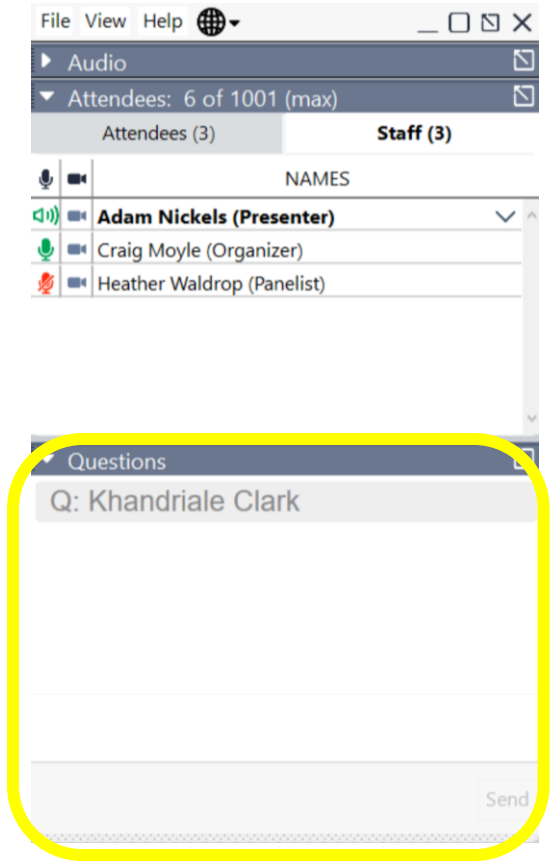

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April 21, 2021 Executive Drought Proclamation

Action 11. To ensure the potential impacts of drought on communities are anticipated and proactively addressed, the Department of Water Resources, in coordination with the Water Board, shall develop groundwater management principles and strategies to monitor, analyze, and minimize impacts to drinking water wells.

Goals

GOAL 1:

Present clear principles and vision from the state on how to anticipate and address potential drought impacts to communities who rely on drinking water wells

GOAL 2:

Develop strategies for the state, in coordination with local entities and community leaders, to use for drought management decision-making

FINAL PRODUCT:

A shared policy document capturing both principles and strategies

Public Engagement Process

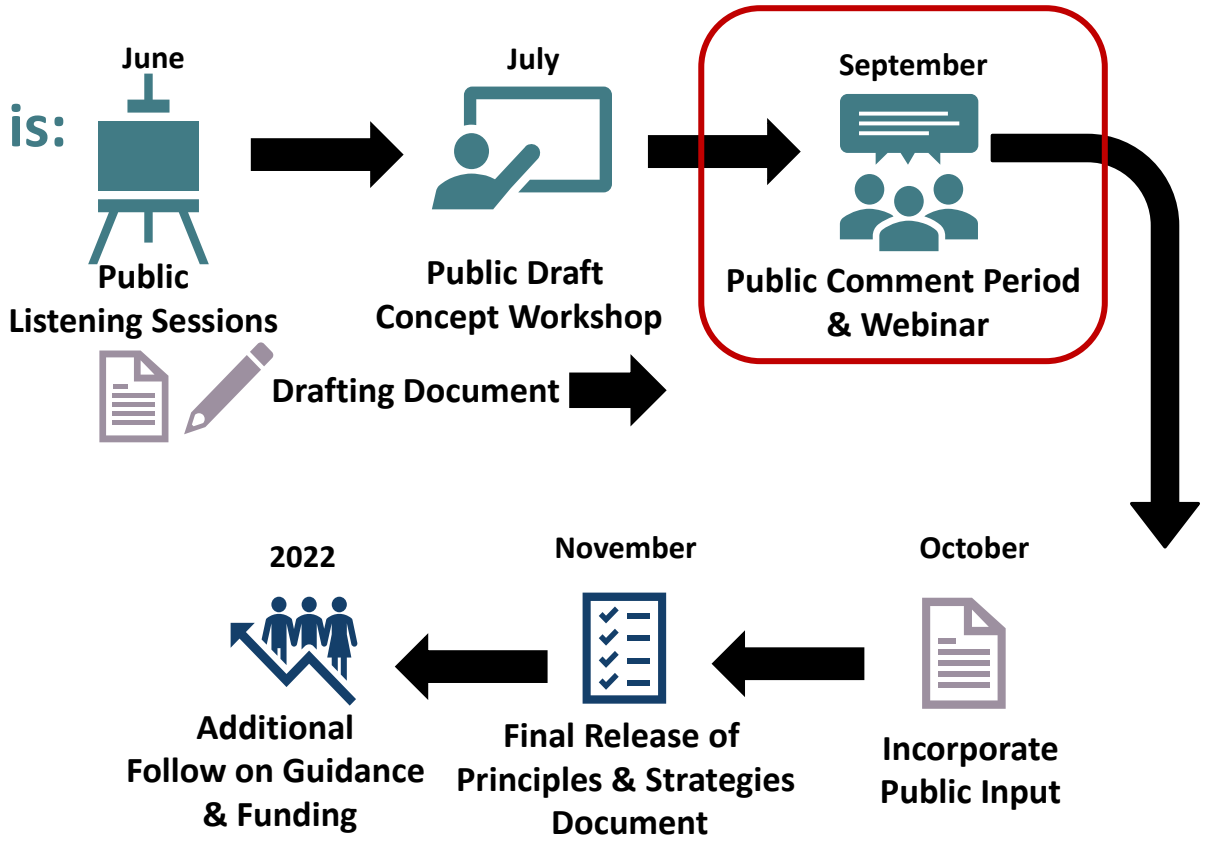
Outcomes:

1. Create a public process that is:

- Robust
- Inclusive
- Transparent
- Accessible

2. Final product is:

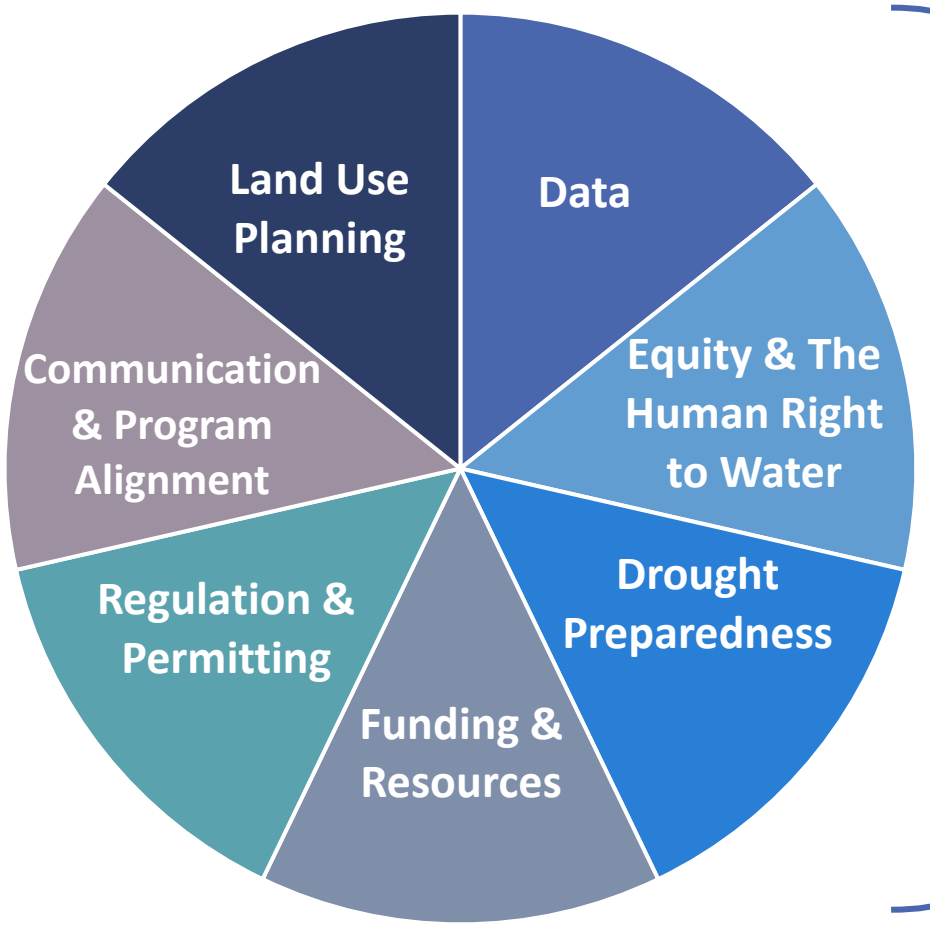
- Foundational
- Vetted
- Applicable
- Realistic



From Input to Draft Document

Listening Session
Public Comments

- **Who is Involved**
- **Drought Impacts**
- **Identified Barriers**
- **Challenges & Solutions**



DRAFT GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES & STRATEGIES TO MONITOR, ANALYZE & MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO DRINKING WATER WELLS:

A Framework for State Action to Support Drought Resilient Communities

PREAMBLE

As California's climate conditions continue to intensify and drought periods become more frequent and severe, the State acknowledges that less snowpack, precipitation, and surface water are leading to an increased reliance on groundwater. However, our groundwater resources in some areas of California have been overdrafted for decades, where many users, including agriculture, business, people, and the natural environment, rely on groundwater. Rural communities that are highly dependent on groundwater for drinking water typically rely on wells located in the shallow portions of groundwater aquifers, increasing exposure to potential impacts from intensifying changes in climate and groundwater use. Such circumstances can leave too many Californians with dry wells and few options for identifying alternative water sources. These principles and strategies provide a framework to guide State action, including immediate and long-term drought-related groundwater management actions by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board). Taking these actions can improve the water supply reliability of many Californians and communities who use groundwater wells for drinking water and household purposes now and into the future.

The State has experienced several drought cycles in the last decade. As documented in the most up-to-date statewide groundwater report – California's Groundwater (Bulletin 118) published by DWR and the recent Drinking Water Needs Assessment authored by the Water Board, the following conditions provide a clear need for developing these drinking water well principles and strategies:

- Droughts are extreme and climate change is exacerbating drought conditions to be more frequent and severe.
- Groundwater acts as a drought buffer and helps lessen the water supply impacts of our changing climate – groundwater provided nearly 60 percent of the State's total water supply in 2015 during the peak of the 2012 to 2016 drought.
- Approximately 82 percent of Californians – 33 million people – rely on groundwater for some portion of their drinking water or other household uses and nearly six million Californians are entirely dependent on groundwater for drinking water supplies.
- Nearly 1.5 million Californians rely on domestic wells and one-third of community water systems rely on only one well for drinking water and other potable uses.

Draft Principles & Strategies

Achieve	Drinking Water Resilience	6 strategies
Integrate	Equity	9 strategies
Address	Underlying Challenges	8 strategies
Lead	With Best Available Data	7 strategies
Build	Trusted Relationships	6 strategies
Implement	Lasting Solutions	9 strategies

Achieve Drinking Water Resilience

Principle:
Implement ongoing drought planning and responses and other groundwater management programs to effectuate necessary changes with the goal to achieve drought resilience for drinking water well users.

Strategies:

- Inter-agency drinking water well work team
- Emergency funding and assistance
- Engage with locals on drought contingency plans
- Spotlight successful drought management efforts
- Continue long-term SGMA groundwater management efforts
- Continue drinking water & water quality efforts, including SAFER, CVSALTS, ILRP

Integrate Equity

Principle:
Recognize equity needs to be integrated in drought-related planning processes to inform outcomes; Ensure there is equitable access to available drought assistance where barriers may exist for drinking water well users.

Strategies:


Educational materials on drinking water wells


Avoid red tagging based on dry wells & water contamination


Continue providing translation services


Programs to protect reliability of drinking water wells


Guidance on community engagement


Apply the polluters pay principle, where appropriate, for solutions


Safeguards within basins for groundwater trading


Conduct open and transparent public meetings


Align state funding and local fee authorities for solutions

Address Underlying Challenges

Principle:
Deliver targeted drought assistance by addressing the underlying challenges drinking water well users face to provide near-term relief, resolve fundamental issues, and anticipate and mitigate future drought impacts.

Strategies:

- Improve procurement to help repair dry wells
- Efficient water use during drought
- Coordinated land use planning efforts
- Engage with locals on informed well permitting
- Provide guidance on State program alignment
- Energy incentives for groundwater pumping practices
- Guidance on sustainable land use practices
- Provide economic development assistance

Lead with Best Available Data

Principle:
Prioritize the alignment, centralization, and accessibility of available well data and information to clearly identify emerging and existing groundwater and drinking water issues for improved drought management.

Strategies:


Identify and track drought hot spots


Inventory and centralize active well information


Encourage use of drinking water wells as part of monitoring network


Promote well metering or evapotranspiration data


Increase access and provide guidance on data platforms


Develop pilot program to disclose well and water quality information


Increase frequency of groundwater monitoring

Build Trusted Relationships

Principle:
Emphasize that prioritizing and building trusted relationships with drinking water well users create opportunities for effective coordination, communication, and decision-making.
Strategies:

Recognize community members as experts

Identify operational skills gaps to building community capacity

Encourage participation in mutual aid organizations

Engage government to government with Tribes on drought efforts

Promote best practices for public engagement when working with communities

Training efforts for drinking water well users to measure levels and test water quality

Implement Lasting Solutions

Principle:
Recognize that there are no one-size-fits-all solutions to address drinking water well challenges and that solutions need to be specific, effective, and lasting with clear commitments to engage, empower, and support drinking water well users.

Strategies:


Deploy funding incentives to mitigate impacts


Guidance on mitigation strategies


Report out on progress being made in state programs


Encourage regionalization or consolidation as a potential solution


Promote tools that help prioritize funding


Pilot alternative water supply projects


Work with locals to improve decommissioning of abandoned wells


Promote the availability of data to assess feasibility of recharge projects


Incentivize recharge projects through streamlined permitting processes

Next Steps & Implementation

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- 30-day public comment period through **October 7, 2021 by 5PM**
- Submit written comments to: SGMPS@water.ca.gov

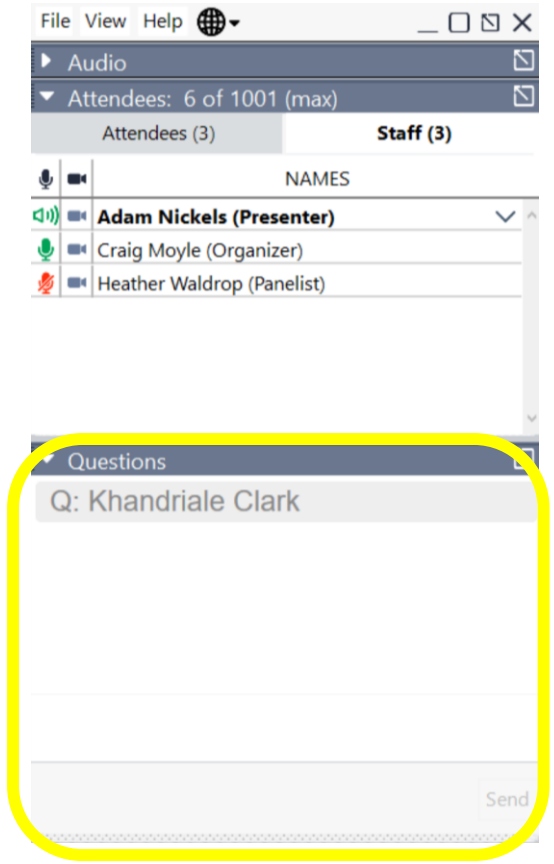
FINALIZATION

- Public comments will inform the Final Principles and Strategies
- Target to Release: **November 2021**

IMPLEMENTATION

- Implementation Plan for the Final Principles and Strategies will be outlined in an appendix

How to Make a Public Comment



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Questions for Audience

- What principles do you agree or disagree with and why?
- What strategies or actions do you want to see the draft document?
- Are there specific strategies or actions that you would like to see prioritized in implementation?

Thank You

REMINDER: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- Public comment period through **October 7, 2021 by 5PM**
- Submit written comments to: SGMPS@water.ca.gov
- More information can be found at:
  - https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Drinking-Water-Principles