



## California's Groundwater and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

If you're like 30 million of your California neighbors, there is groundwater under your feet. Groundwater is accessed through wells that pump water from underground to the surface. Groundwater is critical to California's water supply. It provides drinking water, is a source for agricultural use, and helps sustain our natural environment.

### GROUNDWATER SUPPORTS CALIFORNIA'S...

#### DRINKING WATER

- Nearly 40 percent of our water supply comes from groundwater; 60 percent in drought years
- Many CA communities rely 100 percent on groundwater for drinking water

#### AGRICULTURE

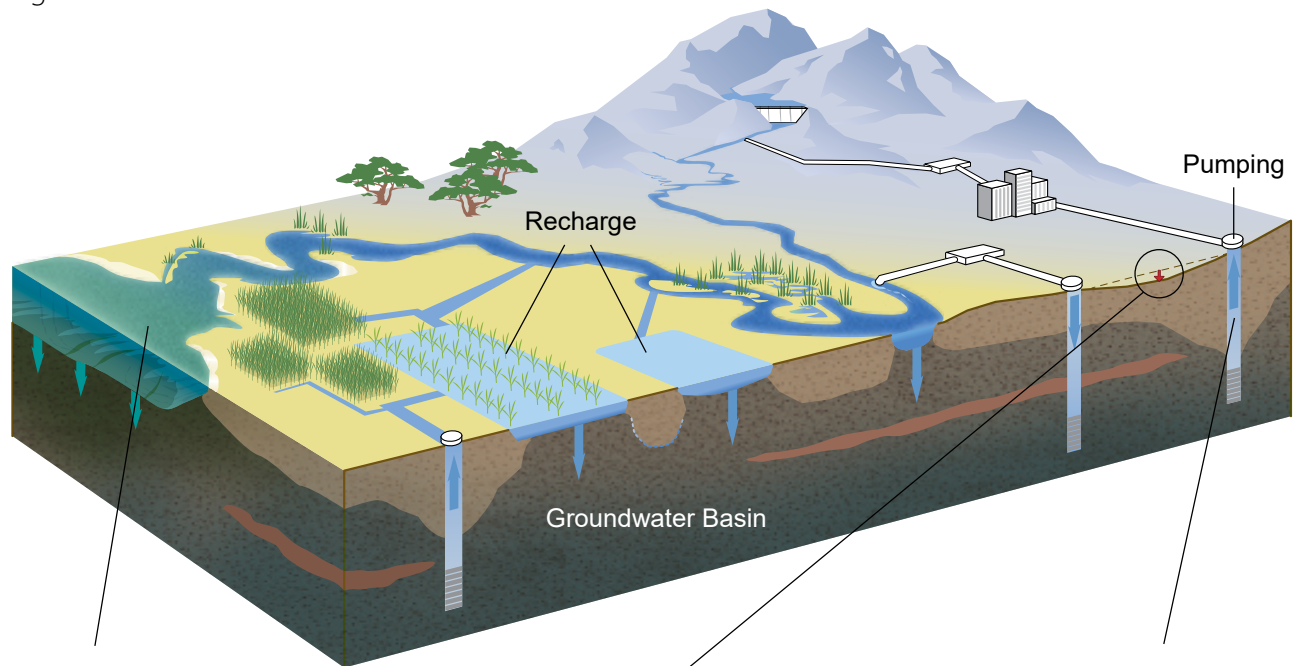
- Nearly all of California's 77,000 farms depend on groundwater
- According to the CA Department of Food and Agriculture, California farms generated \$50B in revenue in 2018

#### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- When groundwater flows to the surface as a spring, it supports numerous plants, animals, micro-organisms and even fungi

### Basins in crisis

For years, some regions have pumped more groundwater than can be replenished, causing historically low groundwater levels in those areas.



#### SEAWATER INTRUSION

When a groundwater basin near the coast depletes, saltwater from the ocean begins to move further inland, contaminating the fresh water with saline. This condition is known as seawater intrusion.

#### SUBSIDENCE

Overpumping of groundwater can cause a basin to collapse, known as subsidence, and lead to permanent loss of storage capacity. Land sinking due to subsidence can impact infrastructure on the surface such as bridges, roads, levees, and canals.

#### DEGRADED WATER QUALITY

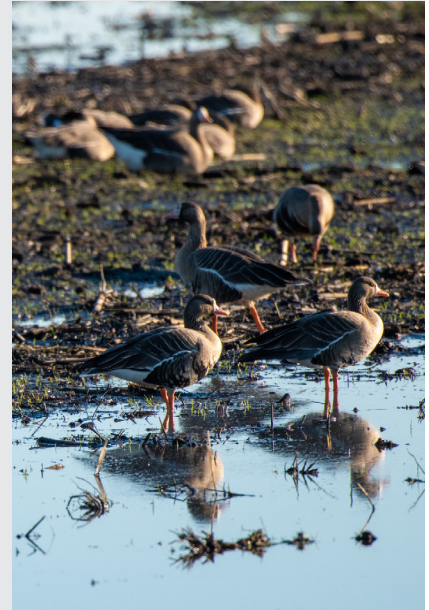
Overpumping of groundwater may contribute to the impairment of drinking water quality.

## ***About the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act***

California enacted the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in 2014 to better manage our groundwater supplies over the long-term, emphasizing that groundwater is best suited to be managed at the local level. SGMA directs local agencies to work together to create a plan to balance the amount of water pumped out and put back into a basin. The goal of these plans, known as Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs), is long-term sustainability of basins.

### ***What's next?***

- Plans for basins that are in critical condition are due to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in January 2020
- Plans for basins that are high or medium priority are due in January 2022
- All basins should be managing sustainably by 2040 or 2042 depending on condition
- After more than 100 years of actively managing surface water, SGMA provides California a framework for actively managing groundwater for future water sustainability
- Local agencies are crafting GSPs
- State is creating programs and policies that can assist groundwater managers
- Public input is critical to the success of SGMA. GSPs are open for comment for 75 days, and are accessible at [sgma.water.ca.gov/portal](http://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal)



### ***What is sustainability?***

In the context of water, sustainability means managing our water resources to meet the needs of today – drinking water, farming, the environment – while not impacting the ability of future generations to also meet their needs. SGMA requires local agencies to define sustainability but doesn't prescribe the path to reach sustainability.

