



Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Groundwater Sustainability Plan Evaluation Fact Sheet

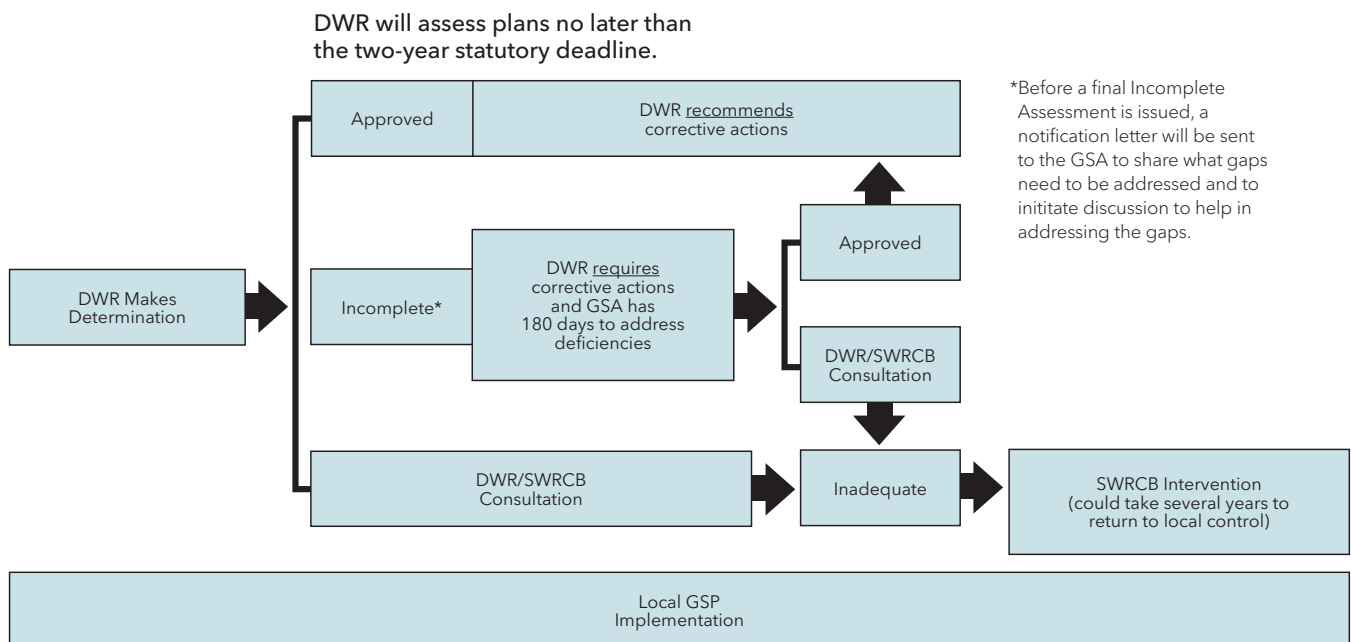
The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) recognizes that groundwater resources are most effectively managed at the local level. SGMA calls for groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) to work with groundwater users in their basin to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) that achieve groundwater reliability within 20 years. GSPs are roadmaps for how GSAs and local interested parties will ensure that groundwater resources are reliable over the long term.

SGMA directs the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to evaluate and assess GSPs to determine if the contents are based on the best available science and information and if the plans are reasonably likely to achieve the basin’s sustainability goal. Evaluations are based on specific criteria outlined in the [GSP Regulations](#). Where there are multiple GSPs within a basin, SGMA requires the GSPs to be coordinated and jointly submitted. In such cases, DWR will provide a single assessment for the basin.

DWR’s evaluation of GSPs will result in three potential determinations:

- Approved with recommended corrective actions
- Incomplete with required corrective actions
- Inadequate

GSP Determination Process Diagram



DWR will continue to review GSPs and track implementation over time, including reviewing initial plans when they are submitted, reviewing annual reports and evaluating five-year plan updates.

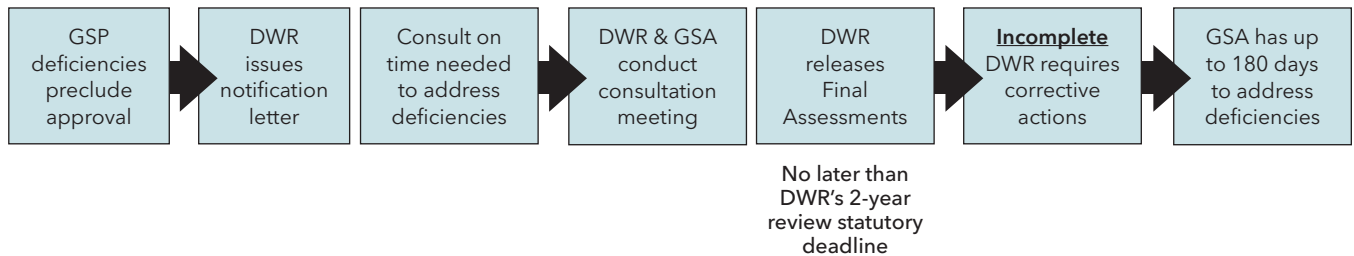
Approved Determination

An approved GSP is overall a good plan. However, it might need some additional information or clarifications to address any items needing more detail. The request for more detail or explanation in this case does not affect DWR's ability to determine if the GSP is reasonably likely to achieve groundwater sustainability within 20 years. The recommended corrective actions should be incorporated into the GSP before its next five-year update.

Incomplete Determination

A GSP is deemed incomplete if it is missing information that DWR needs to determine if the plan complies with SGMA and the GSP Regulations, including whether sustainable groundwater conditions can be reached within 20 years. Before determining a GSP is incomplete, DWR will endeavor to issue a notification letter to inform the GSA of the forthcoming designation and the deficiencies in the plan that will need to be addressed. DWR will then meet with the GSA to consult on the time needed to address the deficiencies. Once determined incomplete, GSAs must correct a GSP's deficiencies and resubmit a revised plan to DWR for reevaluation within 180 days of the incomplete determination. If the deficiencies are not sufficiently addressed within that timeframe, or if the GSA does not resubmit the required information, the GSP could subsequently be determined inadequate. DWR, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), or other agencies or organizations will seek opportunities to provide planning, technical, or financial assistance to support the GSAs.

Incomplete Process Diagram



Inadequate Determination

A GSP deemed inadequate has significant deficiencies that will take more than 180 days for the GSA to address. An inadequate GSP can trigger the state intervention process, which authorizes the State Water Board to step in to manage the basin.

After notice and a public hearing, the State Water Board can designate the basin as probationary. If the deficiencies identified in the probationary designation are not remedied within a year, the State Water Board, after a subsequent notice and hearing, may develop and adopt an interim plan to manage groundwater use in the basin. An interim plan is a temporary measure to protect groundwater resources in the basin until GSAs are willing and able to manage the basin sustainably.

